

Running head: TOWARDS A GENERAL LOGIC MODEL

Towards a General Logic Model for Recreational Youth Development Programs

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Table of Contents

Abstract	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Definitions.....	5
Significance of the Research.....	8
Purpose of Study	9
Research Questions	10
Chapter 2: Literature Review	12
Positive Youth Development	12
Positive Youth Development and Developmental Systems Theory	13
The Search Institutes' 40 Developmental Assets.....	14
Life skills.	17
The Five Cs.	20
Mechanisms Driving Positive Youth Development through Sport	24
The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine's 8 Setting Features.	24
Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR).....	25
Models of PYD program delivery in youth sport.	26
Empirical research of PYD program contexts.	28
Empirical research of PYD program activities	32
Scope of Research.....	34
At-Risk Youth.....	36
PYD Program Staff.....	37
Community Recreation for Youth	38
Research Contexts - Recreational PYD Organizations.....	41
Agency A.	41
Agency B	43
Agency C	44
Theoretical Paradigm	46
Chapter 3: Methodology	49
Case Study	49
Participants.....	49

Data Collection	53
Construction of Interview Guide	56
Analysis.....	58
Chapter 4: Results	63
Case One – Agency A.....	63
Inputs.....	63
Contextual factors.	64
External assets.....	69
Activities	74
Direct strategies.	75
Indirect strategies.....	79
Outputs.....	85
Outcomes	86
Life skills.	86
Impacts.....	87
Competence/Skill transfer.....	87
Caring/Character.	89
Confidence.	94
Connected.	97
Contribution.	97
Case Two – Agency B	102
Inputs.....	103
Contextual factors.	103
External assets.....	114
Activities	121
Direct strategies	121
Indirect strategies.....	129
Outputs.....	139
Outcomes	141
Life skills	141
Impacts.....	142

Competence/Skill transfer.....	142
Caring/Character.	143
Confidence.	145
Connection.	149
Contribution.	150
Case Three – Agency C	155
Inputs.....	157
Contextual factors.	157
External assets.....	167
Activities	175
Direct strategies.	175
Indirect strategies.	184
Outputs.....	193
Outcomes	194
Life skills.	194
Impacts.....	196
Competence/skill transfer.	196
Caring/Character.	200
Confidence.	205
Connection.	208
Contribution.	211
Chapter 5: Discussions.....	217
The Final Logic Model	217
Themes Consistent Across the Three Cases	224
Themes Consistent Across At Least Two Cases.....	227
Themes Mentioned by One Case	231
Relations to Previous Research.....	234
Inputs.....	235
Activities	239
Outcomes	242
Impacts.....	245

Comparison to previous models.....	248
Implications.....	250
Theoretical implications.....	250
Practical implications.....	254
Limitations	256
Future Research	259
Conclusion	262
References.....	265
Appendix A – Interview Guide for Youth	278
Appendix B – Interview Guide for Employees.....	282
Appendix C – Informed Consent for Youth	286
Appendix D – Informed Consent for Employees	288
Appendix E – Recruitment Text	290
Appendix F – Debriefing Text.....	291
Appendix G – University of Ottawa Ethics Approval	292
Appendix H – Request for Modification to Research Project 1	293
Appendix I – Request for Modification to Research Project 2	294

Tables

Table 1 – Themes for Agency A.....	100
Table 2 – Themes for Agency A (continued).....	101
Table 3 – Themes for Agency B.....	153
Table 4 – Themes for Agency B (continued)	154
Table 5 – Themes for Agency C.....	215
Table 6 – Themes for Agency C (continued)	216
Table 7 – Comprehensive List of Themes.....	219
Table 8 - Comprehensive List of Themes (continued)	220
Table 9 - Comprehensive List of Themes (continued)	221
Table 10 - Comprehensive List of Themes (continued)	222

Figures

Figure 1 – Logic Model of Positive Youth Development.....	223
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Abstract

Recreational organizations that deliver activities to youth within their communities can provide an effective setting for positive youth development (PYD) endeavours due to being fun, engaging, and an environment where skill-building is inherent. However, not all recreational organizations offering PYD aimed programs are successful and many are cancelled after a short amount of time. A framework or guide for (1) promoting PYD through community recreation and (2) evaluating and identifying PYD outcomes does not yet exist. This research seeks to develop a model to inform recreational program design to bring about positive developmental outcomes in youth participants using empirical data collected from three successful organizations. Both one-on-one interviews and a focus group with youth participants and adult staff were utilized following a qualitative multiple case study approach. Data collected was concerned with the positive developmental outcomes experienced by youth participants in the organizations and mechanisms used to realize these outcomes. The key themes, derived through inductive and deductive analyses, are presented as a five-step logic model. These themes help identify the intended results of programs along with the resources and processes needed to achieve these results, thus making this study's findings easy to integrate into recreational programming. The model's process factors included a series of inputs (i.e., contextual factors and external assets) and activities (i.e., direct and indirect strategies). Findings identified as intended PYD outcomes included outputs (i.e., objective measurable indicators), short-term outcomes (i.e., life skills), and long-term impacts (i.e., the four Cs including life skill transfer and contribution). This study elaborates on concepts identified in previous research that are conducive to PYD while bringing them together into a framework for designing recreational

programs with the goal of promoting positive developmental outcomes in youth. However, further testing through quantitative, longitudinal, and intervention research may be needed.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Youth are increasingly exhibiting risky problem behaviours, such as delinquency and drug use, which can continue well into adulthood (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). Concerns with at-risk youth are not entirely new and have been the subject of study for many years. However, the way in which research and interventions are seeking to alleviate these issues has experienced a paradigm shift over the years. Previously, a ‘deficit reduction’ approach to youth behaviour problems was utilized in research in which negative behaviours were specifically targeted and interventions were designed to reduce them. This approach has more recently been replaced by a positive youth development (PYD) framework which emphasizes building youths’ potential to be competent and successful (Catalano et al., 2002; Small & Memmo, 2004). This newer PYD perspective involves seeing youth as resources to be developed as opposed to problems to be fixed with an emphasis on building their innate strengths and increasing their developmental resources (Lerner, Aalmerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005). PYD based programs seek to provide experiences and opportunities that will increase physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and vocational competence, as well as provide youth with the types of experiences they need in order to mature successfully into their adult lives (Edginton & Randall, 2005).

Park and recreation agencies, not-for-profit youth groups, churches, sports and camps are some of the domains that offer opportunities to promote PYD through recreational activities (Bocarro, Greenwood, & Henderson, 2008). Much interest has been expressed recently on the role that sport programs play in promoting PYD (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004; Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005). Moreover, there is also much potential for PYD through youths’ engagement in programs offering a variety of recreational opportunities (Barker &

Forneris, 2012; Bean, Forneris, & Halsall, 2014; Bean, Kendellen, & Forneris, 2016; Beaulac et al., 2010; Flouris, Crane, & Lindeman, 2016; Forneris, Whitley, & Barker, 2013; Larson & Walker, 2010) and camps aimed at positive development (Mainieri & Anderson, 2015a; 2015b; Wright, Whitley & Sabolboro, 2011).

Research is well aware however that regardless of the type of recreational venue utilized for PYD, such programs need to be intentionally designed or structured around the positive development of youth and recreation itself is not automatically conducive of such outcomes. For instance, youths' participation in sports has been associated with increased aggressive behaviours, negative peer pressures (e.g., coercing teammates into using drugs and alcohol) and even inappropriate adult behaviour, especially when PYD is not the central objective (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Fredricks & Eccles, 2008; Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003; Le Menestrel & Perkins, 2007). Indeed, PYD is more likely to occur in youth sport if those in charge intentionally design their programs around it (Danish et al., 2004; Danish et al., 2005; Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2005; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005) and the same can be said for structured recreational opportunities (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Though research in behavioural psychology, which brought the PYD framework into fruition, often utilized recreational settings (e.g., 4H) for data collection, little description of the contextual and human features that allow PYD to occur in these environment were provided. Recent research within the recreation profession has started to reveal the various mechanisms that promote the onset of PYD outcomes within structured youth recreational settings (Bean et al., 2016; Flouris et al., 2016; Mainieri & Anderson, 2015a; 2015b). Nevertheless, there are many youth development organizations which are ineffective at teaching life skills successfully as they are

not well informed on best practices (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007) and have yet to implement the teaching of life skills in a systematic manner.

Wells and Arthur-Banning (2008) indicated that one promising method for intentionally programming youth activities towards positive development uses logic models. A logic model has five stages, two of which highlight the planned work that goes into a program: (1) resources or inputs (human, financial, organizational, community resources) and (2) activities (what the program is going to do and implementation) and three stages that specify the intended results of a program which include: (3) outputs (organization specific by-products of the activities), (4) outcomes (short-term changes in attitudes or behaviour in participants), and (5) impacts (long-term changes in attitudes or behaviours). Wells and Arthur-Banning (2008) explained that logic models provide a mental picture of what is going to happen in a program allowing agencies to map out a step-by-step process behind running their program based on informative research. These models provide an explicit structure to determine the most critical aspects of the program so that the right adjustments can be made with minimal negative effects on the desired outcomes and impacts. Furthermore, they simplify the evaluation of a program, an often daunting process for those untrained in such procedures, since they specifically lay out the intended results. Therefore, this research intends to disseminate its findings as a logic model that can be utilized in practice by any youth recreation organization seeking to achieve PYD in participants.

Several advantages should accompany the formation of these results of this research as a logic model. First, this should provide a clearer idea of how to design a recreational program in order to achieve PYD outcomes in youth participants in addition to pinpointing what particular outcomes should be sought out and identified. Second, the simple and visual style should be relatively easy to understand and apply as all recreational programming can boil down to some

combination of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Lastly, when running programs and organizations becomes challenging and those in charge lose sight of their intended goals and how these are achieved (e.g., a focus on gaining funding when financial resources are low rather than benefitting a community's youth) a logic model provides much needed structure to keep such organizations on track (Wells & Arthur-Banning, 2008). However, it is acknowledged that recreation organizations are different from each other (e.g., some youth programs are daily while others are weekly) and it is difficult to integrate a single model in every organization the same way. Some programming aspects that may work for one organization may not work as well for another. Thus this general logic model is meant to be an informative guide in that it is expected that recreation programs, aimed at PYD, pick and choose which components work best for them. It would be unrealistic for the model to be used prescriptively and expect programs to implement and achieve every component listed.

This dissertation study explored a growing body of research investigating recreational programs aimed at youth development. This particular research examined three separate organizations, utilizing a case study methodology in each, so that results could better inform the logic model disseminated from the findings.

In order to fulfill this thesis' purpose of generating a logic model two particular goals were fulfilled, each addressed utilizing semi-structured interviews with youth and staff in all three case studies. First, it sought to determine how youth members of PYD focused recreational organizations and the staff delivering these programs perceive PYD occurring out of youths' participation in recreational programs. Specifically, it established what they perceive as (1) the outputs, (2) the short-term outcomes and (3) the long-term impacts of youths' participation in these organizations. Second, it aimed to find out what youth and staff perceive as the underlying

mechanisms of recreational organizations that lead to PYD. Specifically, it established what they perceive as (1) the inputs and (2) the activities used in these recreational organizations that lead to the outputs, outcomes and impacts explored. It should be noted that this logic model is not intended to be a theoretical framework but simply a guide to aid in recreational program design and implementation around the positive development of youth participants. Furthermore, though this model is grounded within this study's data, it is not evidence that the inputs and activities indicated will predict the outputs, outcomes, and impacts listed for all community recreation organizations. Before this can be implied the model disseminated will need to be analyzed through quantitative research or tested through intervention study.

Definitions

Positive youth development has no widely accepted definition (Holt, 2008). However, it can be understood in this study in terms of its philosophical approach and overall objectives. On the one hand, PYD is a framework of youth development unlike the deficit-reduction approach in its strength-based conception of development (Lerner et al., 2005). Specifically, it is “a unifying philosophy characterized by a positive, asset-building orientation that builds on strengths rather than categorizing youth according to their deficits” (Small & Memmo, 2004, p. 7). On the other hand, the end goal of this approach, as is suggested by the name, is the promotion of the onset of positive development in youth. That being said, Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, and Foster (1998) suggest that “positive development is defined as the engagement in prosocial behaviours and avoidance of health compromising behaviours and future jeopardizing behaviours” (p. 426). Henceforth, PYD will be understood in this paper as an asset-building orientation that builds on youths' strengths and teaches them to engage in prosocial behaviours while making them resilient to the onset of behaviours that negatively impact their health and future. Moreover,

organized activities are a context in which youth can be provided with positive developmental opportunities (Larson, 2000). Assets, specifically developmental assets, are defined by Benson, Leffert, Scales and Blyth, (1998) as “a set of ‘building blocks’ that when present or promoted appear to enhance significant developmental outcomes among youth” (p. 8). These include external assets (i.e., relationships and communities) and internal assets (i.e., life skills).

Furthermore, life skills are described as those abilities which allow for adaptive and positive behaviours that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (World Health Organization, 1996). Youth who are ‘at-risk’ are often targeted as the individuals most in need of endeavours aimed at PYD because, in their current state, they are likely to develop negative behaviours that they will carry into adulthood (Catalano et al., 2002). Furthermore the external and internal assets often associated with positive development are typically not made available to them (Travis & Leech, 2013). Therefore, at-risk youth can be defined as “a segment of the population that under current conditions has a low probability of growing into responsible adulthood” (Dryfoos, 1992, p. 128).

Recreation will be defined as voluntary, pleasurable, and intrinsically motivated activities or experiences that occur in leisure (Kraus, 2001). Community-based recreation programs by extension will be understood as those recreation-based services that occur within close proximity of residents intended for their use (Autry & Anderson, 2007; Outley, Bocarro, & Boleman, 2011; Zieff, Chaudhuri, & Musselman, 2016). Furthermore, “when provided as part of organized community or voluntary agency programs, recreation should be socially constructive and morally acceptable in terms of prevailing community standards and values” (p. 45). For the purposes of this study leisure will be understood as a valued component of community development with a series of advantages and benefits. In terms of being a means for community development, The

World Leisure and Recreation Association (2003) defines leisure as “a form of human expression that varies from the very casual and informative to the highly committed and formal”.

(p. 97). Also, as explained by Sivan and Ruskin (2000):

Leisure refers to a specific area of human experience with its own benefits, including freedom of choice, creativity, satisfaction, enjoyment and increased pleasure and happiness. It embraces comprehensive forms of expression or activity whose elements are as often physical in nature as they are intellectual, social, artistic or spiritual. (p. 1)

These authors also add:

To reach a state of physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and realize aspirations, satisfy needs and interact positively with the environment. Leisure is therefore seen as a resource for improving the quality of life.

(Sivan & Ruskin, 2000, p. 1)

Non-profit recreation organizations focused on the positive development of youth will be understood in this study as delivered under a top-down or bottom-up/grassroots format. Top-down organizations will be understood as those that possess an overarching governing body which is in charge of operational guidelines (e.g., policy, administration, mission, values, goals, objectives) and may provide support (e.g., funding, resources) to subsidiaries. In these types of organizations the governing body is in charge of various subsidiaries (which may have more and more subsidiaries under them) that manage their more local context the further down the hierarchy they go. On the other hand bottom-up or grassroots organizations typically begin due to a felt need by a member or members of a community (e.g., neighbourhood, city, reserve). These individuals then work within their communities to bring an organization into fruition which fulfills this felt need. These organizations work to be self-sufficient and most have to

secure their own finances, locations, staff/volunteers, operational guidelines, interest from the community, among other needs.

Significance of the Research

This research should be instrumental in furthering our knowledge of recreation's role in PYD within the community context. Recreational programs must be designed or structured in a manner that allows for the positive development of youth participants as these activities are not automatically conducive of these outcomes. Sport psychology research has made it clear that careful planning and purposive structure is necessary for sport programs to be able to develop the life skills and assets needed by youth to develop positively (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Gould & Carson, 2008; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Petitpas, et al., 2005). Research coming out of recreation and leisure studies has this same knowledge and is working on indicating, through empirical evidence, what mechanisms allow for such activities to be successful (Flouris et al., 2016; Mainieri & Anderson, 2015a; 2015b). What is needed however, and is currently absent from the body of literature around PYD, is an intuitive step-by-step process of running recreational programs to promote PYD based on empirical findings that would be useful to practitioners in the field (Wells & Arthur-Banning, 2008). Specifically, a model that outlines the mechanisms needed and PYD outcomes that should be sought out could help fill in this gap in the body of knowledge.

Despite the presence of various models and frameworks, especially coming out of sport research pinpointing the means to which PYD can occur (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Gould & Carson, 2008; Petitpas, et al., 2005), the creation of this logic model fulfills two objectives not being addressed. First, individuals delivering recreational programs aimed at PYD may not be effective at transferring the theoretical knowledge prevalent

in the PYD literature directly into their work. The logic model will identify specific program facets that allow already successful PYD programs to achieve those outcomes in addition to what positive developmental benefits should be sought out. This model should help ease the transfer of knowledge between research and practice by presenting empirical data through a step-by-step framework that specifically functions as a programming aid. Second, none of the previous research acknowledges that, at the practitioner level, the day-to-day logistical requirements of running a program and unanticipated problems (e.g., reduced funding, staff changes) often leads to a loss of focus on the overall outcomes and impacts that the programs seek to achieve (Wells & Arthur-Banning, 2008). In this case, “logic models provide a structure to determine the most critical aspects of the program so that the right adjustments can be made with minimal negative effects” (p. 195). Thus, the logic model derived from the results of this research, specifically through in-depth case studies of three recreational organizations aimed at PYD, could be valuable to practitioners with regards to clearly communicating the aspects of a recreational program that lead to their success.

Purpose of Study

This dissertation research disseminated its findings as a logic model that can help provide a general guideline for recreational programs seeking to foster the positive development of its youth participants. Specifically, youth and staff participants from three separate recreational organizations focused on PYD were asked several questions about the positive developmental outcomes (i.e., outputs, outcomes, and impacts) experienced by youth or witnessed by the staff and the facilitative techniques utilized at these locations (i.e., inputs/resources and activities) to achieve these results. Thus, the purpose of this case study research was to uncover what youth and staff perceive to be the inputs, activities, outputs, short-term outcomes, and long-term

impacts of three different PYD organizations (each constituting this study's three instrumental cases) offering an assortment of recreational activities. These data were collected through the use of qualitative one-on-one interviews and an one-hour long focus group where participants were asked questions specifically designed to uncover these five facets of their respective organizations. Interviews were voice recorded, transcribed, read, and analyzed in order to uncover the inputs, activities, outputs, short-term outcomes, and long-term impacts that would make up this study's logic model. Results were then disseminated into the logic model intended for use to help design future recreational programs to facilitate the positive development of their youth participants.

Research Questions

This dissertation consists of three case studies of three different recreational organizations focused on PYD. The overall study intends to answer the following research questions. The sub-questions that follow indicate the specific means to answering the broader research question:

1. How do youth and staff perceive youth development as a result of youths' participation in community based recreation programs?
 - a. What do youth and staff perceive as the organization-specific **outputs** of community based recreation programs contributing to youth development?
 - b. What do youth and staff perceive as the short-term **outcomes** of community based recreation programs contributing to youth development?
 - c. What do youth and staff perceive as the long-term **impacts** of community based recreation programs contributing to youth development?

2. How do community based recreation programs achieve positive youth development as perceived by youth and staff?
 - a. What do youth and staff perceive as the **inputs** of community based recreation programs contributing to positive youth development?
 - b. What do youth and staff perceive as the **activities** of community based recreation programs contributing to positive youth development?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Positive Youth Development

Replacing the traditional approach of simply preventing problematic behaviour, PYD represents a more positive psychological vantage point towards preparing youth for adulthood by developing their innate strengths. Small and Memmo (2004) identify four assumptions of the PYD approach:

(1) Helping youth achieve their full potential is the best way to preventing them from experiencing problems; (2) youth need to experience a set of supports and opportunities to succeed; (3) communities need to mobilize and build capacity to support the positive development of youth and; (4) youth should not be viewed as problems to be fixed, but as partners to be engaged and developed. (p. 7)

Two theoretical frameworks in particular, both rooted in and validated by empirical research of adolescent development, have been influential in this field. The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets framework (Benson, 1997) provides an idea of what internal and external factors can contribute to youths' positive psychosocial growth. Also, the 5 Cs framework (competence, connection, character, confidence, & caring) asserts that youth experiencing positive developmental outcomes can become ideal adults and positive contributors to their communities (Lerner, Fisher, & Weinberg, 2000) while providing a reliable and valid measure of PYD (Lerner et al., 2005). Before these frameworks are described, PYD and developmental systems theory will be addressed as this is the main theoretical framework guiding this research and idea behind the logic model that development is a product of interactions between youth and their environments.

Positive Youth Development and Developmental Systems Theory

PYD itself is a theoretical framework that emerged in the early 1990s asserting that all young people have the potential and capacity for successful and healthy development (Lerner et al., 2005). PYD is grounded in developmental systems theory which maintains that human development results from dynamic and systemic (bidirectional and mutually influential) relations between humans and their contexts (Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003). Families, peer groups, schools, communities and cultures heavily influence people's developmental processes. Also explained under this framework is that changes in people's living contexts and life circumstances alter their developmental trajectories. This is understood within developmental systems theory as 'relative plasticity' legitimizing that proper alignment between the characteristics of individuals and their ecologies, even as an intervention, can promote positive developmental change (Lerner et al., 2003).

The developmental systems stress on relative plasticity provides a foundation for an applied developmental science (ADS) aimed at enhancing human development through strengthening adaptive developmental regulation, that is, interrelations between an individual and his or her context that maintain and perpetuate healthy, positive functioning for all facets of the relationship (the system). (Lerner et al., 2003, p. 173)

PYD emerges as an applied theoretical approach and youth centric school of thought based on developmental systems theory in which positive development occurs through beneficial changes in the relationship between the person and the context in which their development is being supported. Using developmental systems theory as a guiding model in the study of youth helped add greater theoretical clout to research focused on addressing youth using tried and tested models of human development. Thus the PYD approach emerged as a more dominant framework

guiding research which studies the problematic behaviours and risk factors individuals experience during adolescence than the deficit reduction approach that preceded it (Lerner & Steinberg, 2004).

The use of recreational opportunities as an effective means to promote youths' positive development is present in PYD research within developmental psychology (e.g., 4H program in Bowers et al., 2010; Jellic, Bobek, Phelps, Lerner & Lerner (2007); Lerner et al., 2005; Phelps et al., 2009) and is further implied by PYD's adoption and popularity in sports research (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Petitpas et al., 2005). However, little attention has been paid to the recreational activities themselves and the features they must contain in order to be effective ecological contexts for the healthy development of its participants. Using PYD and its grounding developmental systems theory as a guiding framework for this dissertation, the logic model being derived should help contribute to previous research by further supporting recreational activities as an effective context for positive development in addition to highlighting what features allow them to achieve success. The dissemination of this model is meant to help inform recreational practitioners how shaping the ecological context of their programs can support youths' healthy development thus having them take part in the relative plasticity which gives applied relevance to developmental systems theory.

The Search Institutes' 40 Developmental Assets. Forty developmental internal and external assets are outlined in Benson (1997). The forty assets of this framework also fit into eight broader categories, four of which concern the 20 external assets (Benson et al., 1998). The external assets in this framework refer to youths' relationships and communities and the positive developmental opportunities that they provide. First, the support assets cover youths' opportunities for experiencing affirmation, approval, and acceptance, within multiple settings

(i.e., family, intergenerational relationships, neighbourhood, and school). Second, the empowerment assets refer to factors that lead youth to become valued and useful actors within their communities. Third, the boundaries and expectations assets include clear and consistent rules of behaviour in a number of different contexts in which adolescents are involved. Lastly, some of the assets pertain to constructive opportunities that encourage youth to use their time responsibly.

Benson et al. (1998) also described four broad categories of the 20 internal assets in this framework. Internal assets refer to competencies, skills, and self-perceptions that young people develop gradually over time. First, various assets imply a commitment to learning and include things such as beliefs, values, and skills that enhance academic success. Second, six assets refer to positive societal values which reflect significant public consensus in contemporary societies. Third, the social competencies assets cover the skills needed to deal with the choices, challenges, and opportunities present in complex social contexts. Lastly, positive identity assets focus on young peoples' sense of purpose and help them view themselves in relation to their future.

Research from the Search Institute has revealed several benefits experienced by youth associated with the possession of several of the assets within this framework. For instance, youth possessing more of these 40 internal/external assets are more likely to experience thriving behaviours: school success, leadership, helping others/volunteering, physical health, valuing diversity, delaying gratification, and overcoming adversity (Scales, 1999; Scales, Benson, Leffert, & Blyth, 2000; Scales, Leffert, & Vraa, 2003). Furthermore, Scales et al. (2000) reported that several assets contributed to more than one of these thriving behaviours. This included time spent in youth programs (five thriving behaviours), cultural competence (four thriving behaviours), personal power and self-esteem (three thriving behaviours), motivation to do well in

school (two thriving behaviours) and planning and decision making (two thriving behaviours).

Scales (1999) also explained that youth affluent in developmental assets are less likely to engage in substance use, violence, and risky sexual behaviour. In addition, this author stated that resilience to developmental risk-factors (e.g., violence, unsupervised time alone, physical abuse) is typically higher in asset-rich youth.

Scales (1999) asserted that the average young person only has 18 of the 40 assets with only eight percent of youth being asset-rich, with about 31-40 of the assets, while 20% are asset poor, with only 0-10 of the 40 assets. It is also apparent that the amount of assets youth possess tends to decline with age. Research by Scales, Benson, Roehlkepartain, Sesma and van Dulmen (2006) reflected this trend as a decline in assets appeared to be typical in students moving from middle school through to high school. However, these authors also found that study participants (students) whose level of assets stayed stable or increased were more likely to experience thriving behaviours (i.e., higher grade point averages) compared to students whose assets decreased. Based on these findings they suggested that “if school-based [and high school based] positive youth development strategies can simply help maintain students’ earlier asset levels, much less increase them, subsequent GPA may be favourably affected” (p. 703).

The 40 Developmental Assets framework can be criticized for some of its overarching ideals. For instance, it is heavily implied by the model and its supporting research from the Search Institute that youth possessing greater amounts of assets are less likely to engage in problem behaviours and anti-social activities. However, research outside of the Search Institute reported that even asset rich youth who possess several protective factors can engage in problem behaviours and anti-social activities (Evans et al., 2004; Zweig, Phillips, & Lindberg, 2002). It has also been reported that the presence of one risk factor (Small & Memmo, 2004) can multiply

the chances of youth engaging in problem behaviours in spite of them being asset rich. Furthermore, Search Institute research tended to view the assets equally and asserts that thriving behaviours are associated with youth possessing a greater number of assets. However, research external to the Search Institute found that particular assets seem to have varying degrees of effectiveness with regards to reducing specific risk behaviours (Evans et al., 2004; Oman et al., 2004; Oman et al., 2005; Reininger et al., 2005; Vesely et al., 2004). Price and Drake (1999) also explained that it is illogical for the same assets to have the same effect across all genders, ages, socioeconomic strata, and various racial/ethnic groups” (p. 216). In support of this notion research reported that ethnicity (Evan et al., 2004; Reininger et al., 2005), age (Scales et al., 2000), and gender (Oman et al., 2004; Reininger et al., 2005; Scales et al., 2000) influence the relationship between asset possession and the avoidance of problem behaviours.

Life skills. Many programs aiming to promote positive development in their youth participants systematically design their activities to have youth learn and practice a series of life skills. Life skills can be understood as a set of abilities or traits taught to youth that are transferable to, and useful within, their everyday lives while also helping them to prepare for the future (Danish, 2002; World Health Organization, 1996). According to Gould and Carson (2008) life skills can be classified as physical, intellectual and psychosocial. Specifically, physical life skills include those such as fitness, positive health practices, and athletic performance. Second, school achievement and school engagement classify as intellectual life skills. Lastly, psychosocial life skills include a wide variety of outcomes including goal setting, work ethic, teamwork, communication, stress management, preparation, leadership, organization, respect, optimism, responsibility, and moral development.

Research looking at the onset of life skills within youth has been plentiful within sport-based research in examination of programs intentionally designed around that outcome. Two large scale sport-based programs aimed at PYD have been the subject of evaluation research seeking to discover what life skills youth were able to develop throughout their participation. Riley and Anderson-Butcher's (2012) examination of the LiFEs Sport camp found that youth participants developed enhanced social skills, personal skills, and emotional regulation skills through opportunities offered by the camp for peer interaction, positive uses of discretionary time, and the direct teaching of these life skills. The First Tee life skills program, based heavily on the framework by Petitpas et al. (2005), was also evaluated by Weiss, Stuntz, Bhalla, Bolter, and Price (2013). These researchers found that youth participants successfully developed interpersonal skills (i.e., starting and maintaining a conversation and respecting self and others), self-management skills (i.e., maintaining a positive attitude, counteracting negative thoughts and converting frustration to constructive actions) and life skills generalizable to situations at school, home, with friends, in the workplace and other public venues.

A study by MacDonald, Côté, Eys, and Deakin (2011) explained that processes within the sport environment can help athletes develop cognitive abilities, goal setting skills (in response to how athletes use individual and team goals in the sport environment) and initiative. Another study by Camiré, Trudel, and Forneris (2009) found that life skills can also be developed in the high school sport context which youth in this study reported as time-management skills, the ability to compromise, the ability to work with others, self-efficacy, confidence and leadership abilities. Also, Holt, Sehn, Spence, Newton, and Ball (2012) in an examination of an inner city school's PE program, intramural sports program, and sport teams found that the development of empathy in youth (i.e., understanding and caring for others) and the enhancement of social

connections was made possible when these programs prioritized students' development over winning. Additionally, in interviews with parents, Neely and Holt (2014) found that intrapersonal skills (positive self-perceptions, personal responsibility, fair play), interpersonal skills (friendships, teamwork and cooperation, learning to respect authority, and engagement in school), and physical skills (sports skills, health and wellbeing) were perceived as the result of their children's participation in the sports program examined. In a qualitative study by Vella, Oades, and Crowe (2011) coaches believed that they were responsible for the development of life skills that have use both inside and outside of the sports environment. The four core life skills that coaches felt responsible for were goal-setting, communication skills, leadership skills and interpersonal skills. However, even outside of the sports context, in an examination of a camp aimed at instilling life skills and civic engagement in youth Mainieri and Anderson (2015b) reported that participants developed a variety of collaboration skills including an improved attitude towards teamwork and working with others, listening to others, patience, and trusting others more.

Life skill transfer. Research by Bean et al. (2016), which involved interviews with youth participants, helped pin-point where and how they had been able to transfer various life skills into their everyday lives. First, stressful situations and frustrations at school (e.g., remaining calm during a test) and home were made easier to manage through youths' enhanced emotional regulation skills. Second, youth also developed an increased capacity for respect which was explained as being useful at school (e.g., developing relationships with peers who were subjected to bullying), in regular social situations (e.g., paying attention to others when they speak) and in their sports participation (e.g., being respectful to referees). Third, through the enhancement of youths' social skills, participants explained that they were more inclusive, worked more easily in

team settings, and became comfortable interacting with new people. Fourth, one participant found it easier to complete their assigned homework more regularly through their increased capacity to focus. Fifth, in order to achieve future aspirations (i.e., becoming a famous chef) one participant was able to implement their goal setting skills and made practicing on a regular basis an objective. Lastly, responsibility was described as a skill that was enhanced in the youth program and utilized in a variety of ways by participants including: (1) one helping her mom with dishes at home, (2) another following self-obligations to complete school assignments, and (3) another taking on the task of learning to act more appropriately in the public eye.

The Five Cs. Programs that are effective in delivering the developmental resources needed for youth to grow positively into adulthood should foster five qualities in these individuals that Lerner et al. (2000) call the 5Cs (competence, connection, character, confidence, and caring). These authors further indicate that when these five sets of outcomes are developed in youth they will be able to give back to their communities (a sixth C of contribution) helping to enhance their society and, in turn, be promoting the positive development of the next generation of youth. These 5Cs, and the associated sixth C are understood as definable, identifiable, and measureable elements of PYD.

The 5Cs have also been conceptualized in a model of the thriving process explained in Lerner et al. (2003). Thriving, as explained by these authors is when an individual is involved, across time, in healthy and positive relationships with his or her community and is on the path to being an “idealized person”. This is an adult status marked by making culturally valued contributions to self, others, and institutions (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1998). The idea behind this model is that relationships between individuals and their contexts can propel them along a healthy developmental trajectory through life. The model specifies that, when there is an

alignment between the individual (development of their strengths) and contextual assets (that promote healthy development), the growth of functionally valued behaviours or positive development (the 5Cs) will occur. This development of the 5Cs will thus result in the idealized positive adulthood in which individuals are able to contribute (the sixth C) to their selves, their families, their communities, and civil society. In short, youth who are thriving are engaged in mutually beneficial interactions with their context and these individual-context relations support the positive development of youth and the development of civil society.

Lerner et al. (2005) provided the first evidence of the empirical reality of the 5Cs using data from their 4-H study showing that the measured variables adequately loaded onto the latent variables of the 5Cs (competence, confidence, caring, character, and connected) in addition to their convergence as adequate indicators of the latent PYD variable. This study was able to support that the 5Cs were adequate indicators of positive development cross-sectionally for youth in the fifth grade. In addition, Jelenc et al. (2007) demonstrated the temporal validity of the theoretical framework using the first longitudinal sample of the 4-H study two years later. What was found was that fifth graders who reported high levels of PYD demonstrated low levels of risk behaviours (i.e., substance use and delinquent behaviours) and depression, and moderate levels of contribution to their families, communities, and societies a year later in grade six. Phelps et al. (2009) further found that the 5Cs model continued to be a robust construct for measuring PYD in their longitudinal sample of participants from Grades five to seven from the 4-H study. In addition to being adequate measures of PYD for those grades it was also shown that PYD endeavours in earlier years lead to positive outcomes (the 5Cs) in later years. Bowers et al. (2010) further assessed the fit of the model with grades eight, nine, and ten. After a revision to the model, changing the item of athletic competence to physical appearance on the

competence index, the validity and utility of the 5Cs model was extended to these older aged participants demonstrating that it effectively measured PYD. All together, the four studies described above demonstrate empirical support of the 5Cs as specifiable and measureable PYD outcomes, especially for youth between Grades five to ten.

Qualitative research by Fuller, Percy, Bruening and Cotrufo (2013) found that minority males participating in a sport-based afterschool program in an urban environment demonstrated growth across the domains of competence (i.e., social, physical, nutritional, cognitive), confidence (i.e., self-concept, self-worth, self-efficacy), connection, character, and caring. Also, research by Vella et al. (2011), involving qualitative interviews with coaches, found that they unanimously agreed that it was their role to develop qualities of character, competence, confidence and connection (four of the 5Cs) in their youth athletes aside from sports skills and life skills. Furthermore, it was found through longitudinal examination of youth in The First Tee that they compared favourably to youth not in the program on scores of confidence (Weiss, Bolter, & Kipp, 2016).

Research in PYD that examines contribution as an outcome is sparse within the field (Coakley, 2011). However, research by Mainieri and Anderson (2015b) examining a camp program aimed at inducing a sense of civic engagement in youth participants helps shed light on this. In particular, several outcomes related to youths' civic engagement in their home communities after the camp were uncovered. First, youth reported that, unlike when they entered the program, they now 'wanted' to contribute to their communities and also felt more capable of doing so once they came out of the program thus demonstrating increased motivation and confidence towards their contribution. Second, youth came out of the program with changes in their preconceived notions of volunteering. For instance, youth began to understand the

intrinsically rewarding nature of service to others in that doing so resulted in genuine positive feelings of oneself. Moreover, the participants now understood that adults and organizations wanted teenagers to help serve the community and were actively looking for youth and wanted to work closely with them thus changing preconceived notions that society generally lacked respect for young people their age. Lastly, youth emerged with an increased sense of community awareness developing knowledge of (1) what areas were in need, (2) who in the community already helps, (3) what others do to help, and (4) who to keep in contact with in order continue helping their communities.

It is worth mentioning however that high inter-factor correlations within the 5Cs have been found in some of the 4-H research (e.g., caring-character and competence-confidence; Jellicic et al., 2007) to the point where they could have possibly represented the same constructs resulting in fewer than 5Cs.

The 4Cs. Recent research reports that the 5Cs can result from youths' participation in a wide variety of activities aimed around PYD but shows mixed results when it comes to the model's operationalization as five Cs. For instance, Jones, Dunn, Holt, Sullivan and Bloom (2011) quantitatively supported the development of the 5Cs in a sport context utilizing a sample of 258 youth sport participants replying to a 30-item instrument measuring the 5Cs of PYD. However, considerable conceptual overlap was found between the Cs as a result of confirmatory factor analyses including between the three caring, character and connection variables (dubbed as a 'pro-social values' variable) and confidence-competence. These authors theorized that the three overlapping Cs simply represented three versions of the same concept while self-worth (confidence) could be seen as synonymous with demonstrating one's aptitude of their hard skills (competence). Côté and Gilbert (2009) and Côté, Bruner, Erickson, Strachan, and Fraser-Thomas

(2010) write that caring and character tend to not differentiate well in research. For instance, in a sport context both caring and character could be seen more broadly as sportpersonship (Côté et al., 2010) and it may not be surprising that they can be seen in other contexts as simply the outcome of positive or pro-social behaviours. Based on this knowledge these authors have suggested a collapsed 4Cs framework that integrates caring into character due to their inability to differentiate well in quantitative analysis. A tool to empirically measure the 4Cs was also developed by Vierimaa et al. (2012) which has particular use within sport environments. A collapsed caring/character category also made the most sense for the organization of lower-order themes in this dissertation research and thus a 4Cs model was followed as the theoretical framework guiding thematic analysis of the impacts themes.

Mechanisms Driving Positive Youth Development through Sport

The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine's 8 Setting Features. With regards to youth programs being conducted in proper settings, the NRCIM (Eccles & Gootman; 2002) suggests eight features of settings most likely to foster positive development in youth. These include: (1) physical and psychological safety and security, (2) clear and consistent structure and appropriate adult supervision, (3) supportive adult relationships, (4) opportunities to belong, (5) the promotion of positive social norms, (6) supporting efficacy and sense of mattering, (7) provision of skill-building opportunities, (8) and the integration of family, school and community in the positive development endeavours. Perkins and Noam (2007) furthered refined the NRCIM's eight features in order make them fit within a sports-based youth development context. These authors also added five additional setting features (cultural competence, active learning, opportunities for recognition, strength-based focus and the provision of ecological and holistic programs) that have particular importance within sport.

However, these additional setting features have not yet been examined empirically as a whole (Strachan, Côté & Deakin, 2011).

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR). This model was developed by Hellison (1995; 2011) with the intention of formulating physical activity or sport programs around the positive development of at-risk youth, though facets of the process outlined here are also very relevant to a wide variety of recreational programs. The intended outcomes of the model are a series of positive personal and social outcomes (e.g., leadership, compassion, responsibility, and teamwork). However, programs designed around TPSR go through a series of cumulative levels, each of which are intended to be the subject for a day's activities that are ideally covered in logical order from levels one to five. Level one is called *respecting the rights and feelings of others* which deals with helping youth control their attitude and behaviour while learning to respect others. Level two is called *effort and cooperation* and involves helping youth understand the important role that effort plays in one's life while teaching youth to work with others in a program. Level three, *self-direction*, teaches youth to take responsibility for their wellbeing (e.g., independence from the leader on tasks and goal setting). Level four, *helping others and leadership*, is described as instilling youth with sensitivity and responsiveness skills, to act out of caring and compassion for others, and to contribute to their communities without expectations of extrinsic rewards. Also involved is the ability to direct groups towards an agreed upon goal while facilitating their needs and interests (i.e., being an effective leader). Lastly, level five is labelled *transference outside the program* or the application of the four other levels outside the context of the program in youths' everyday lives.

Programs based around TPSR are designed to implement these components within a daily routine which is composed of five stages. Each day commences with *relational time* in which

program leaders connect, on a personal level, with the youth participants. The second stage is called the *awareness talk* which is the designated teaching time utilized to inform youth of the level of TPSR that is being focused on (i.e., beginning with respect and effort, eventually adding self-direction, helping and transfer) while also making youth aware of their responsibilities for the day. The third stage is *the activity* (e.g., sport, physical) that is designed to be intertwined with the TPSR lesson that is the focus for the day. Immediately following is the *group meeting* in which the youth and the leader debrief on the day's lessons and activities. This is an opportunity for youth to provide input and have discussions with program leaders on topics that involve the day's lesson including: progress made, their peers' (or even leader's) performances, any challenges or difficulties faced, and possible solutions to those dilemmas. Closing out the daily TPSR program is *reflection time* in which youth engage in an evaluation of their performance during the day.

Models of PYD program delivery in youth sport. Three notable models of youth sport delivery, based heavily on the 40 assets, life skills, and Five Cs frameworks, have helped to bring the concept of PYD into the realm of sport research. One of these was proposed by Petitpas et al. (2005) in which several aspects of a youth sport program that lead to PYD are outlined. First, youth must be engaged in an appropriate environment (context), over an adequate amount of time, in which activities are intrinsically motivating, voluntary, and have clear rules, goals and incentives. Furthermore, the youth should be given a valued role within a group while the environment should be psychologically safe allowing participants to take risks and to learn from their mistakes. Second, PYD must be mediated by the presence of external assets. This can involve close relationships with caring adult mentors (program leaders/staff), the involvement of parents in the lives of the youth and, if possible, the opportunity for youth to engage in

community service to develop their sense of agency. Third, the youth should be provided with opportunities to develop their internal assets. This involves the development of particular competencies such as goal-setting, social, and problem-solving skills but also extend to things such as a sense of identity and purpose. Petitpas et al. (2005) also explained that the competencies developed in sports must be utilizable in situations outside of the sport itself.

To be effective, youth development programs should assist participants in identifying their transferable skills, create opportunities for them to use these skills in different contexts, and provide them with the support and encouragement necessary to enable them to gain confidence in their ability to use their skills effectively in various situations. (p. 71)

The last aspect of this framework recommends various ways in which research in PYD should be carried out such as the assessment of outcomes, processes, and program implementation variables. This model by Petitpas et al. (2005) has been utilized as the framework driving the First Tee life skills program (Weiss et al., 2013).

Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005) presented an applied sport-programming model which utilizes the 40 internal and external developmental assets framework (Benson, 1997), the DMSP model by Côté (1999) and NRCIM's eight features of settings most likely to foster positive development in youth (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). The 5Cs (Lerner et al., 2005) is also included in this model as outcomes of youths' participation in these programs. Using the model as a framework of PYD through sport programming Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005) suggested that:

If policy-makers, sport organizations, coaches, and parents are successful in developing and implementing youth sport programs that consider youths' stages of development, are conducted in proper settings, and foster developmental assets youth will subsequently

have positive sport experiences, and emerge as competent, confident, connected, compassionate (caring), and character-rich members of society. (p. 33)

On the other hand, if sport-based endeavours in PYD are not successful in the ways described above, youth will encounter less positive experiences in sports and will likely not develop the 5Cs.

Another model, suggested by Gould and Carson (2008), addresses how coaches can foster PYD outcomes in their athletes. This model explains that by working with youths' current internal assets (current life skills and abilities, personality characteristics) and external assets (parents, siblings, peers) and through the use of direct and indirect teaching strategies to develop life skills, one's participation in a sports program can lead to the development of these life skills which are transferable to environments outside of the sport itself. Here the sport participation experience is treated as the domain where life skills are taught and personal development is initiated by the adults in charge of the program. Teaching strategies can be direct, meaning that skill development happens out of clear and consistent instruction, or indirect, with skill development occurring from the demands of the sport, role modeling of the adults in charge, and the social norms in place. The last aspect of this framework is transferability or bringing the life skills and competencies developed into other aspects of life such as school, work, and the community. These transferable life skills further add towards participants' internal assets making this a circular (or spiral) model.

Empirical research of PYD program contexts. Several studies described a variety of contextual factors of PYD programs as being conducive of positive development within sport and recreation. For instance, the study by Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012) found that various contextual mechanisms behind the sports program they explored mediated the connection

between youths' involvement in the sport and positive developmental outcomes. These groups of mechanisms included: opportunities for learning; a focus on program structure (being aimed at social skill development); fun and challenging activities; provision of valuable resources (free camp, meals provided, transportation); and a focus on providing something positive for youth to do during discretionary time. Studies in sport and recreation also suggest that, in order for benefits to occur, there should be a substantial amount of developmentally supportive adults present in a program that has youth involved in structured activity (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Moreover, PYD programs that are considered by youth to be fun and having them be involved in engaging activities can be instrumental to PYD program success (Flouris et al., 2016; Mainieri & Anderson, 2015b; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). It is not surprising that the ability for programs to remain both engaging and challenging could be seen as critical as this would help keep youth motivated and interested in taking part. This therefore makes sport and recreation particularly significant contexts for PYD.

Gano-Overway et al. (2009) also emphasized the importance of a psychologically safe environment within PYD-aimed sports programs stating that:

When youth athletes feel safe and secure in their environment and when they feel accepted and respected for who they are as individuals, they are more likely to express and manage their positive emotions. These positive emotions may allow for a greater social connectedness among youths. This greater connection and closeness can create a collective sense of being that makes it less likely that youths will act in ways that harm others. (p. 338)

Gano-Overway (2009) et al. also found that psychologically safe environments encourage youths' willingness to help each other, enhance social connectedness, and allows youth to

experience empathy thus enabling them to experience others' emotions and increase their willingness to be kind towards other young people. Moreover, they found that perceptions of a caring climate were inversely related to participants' antisocial behaviours towards their peers.

External assets. External assets were described by Benson et al. (1998) as positive developmental experiences of relationships and opportunities that adults provide to youth. These authors also explain that PYD is not likely to occur unless youth have access to these external assets which includes an external support system and a caring community. Program leaders and staff are a particularly important part of this external support system as these individuals teach the skills and instill in youth the behaviours that constitute positive development. Moreover, these individuals spend a lot of time with youth at these programs developing relationships with them and acting as role models. Empirical research has examined the developmentally supportive adults in these settings who encompass a variety of positive qualities and make an effort to cultivate positive relationships with the youth. For instance, the study by Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012) found that one mechanism of success for the LiFE Sports Summer Camp program was the adult staff attributed as being encouraging, caring, and personable around the youth participants as was discovered in interviews with parents. Also, Mainieri and Anderson's (2015a) research looking at the reasons for the success of a civic engagement focused camp program found that the camp facilitator was knowledgeable on educational and instructional theory and knew how to deal with teenagers making the individual well prepared for delivering the program to this group. In another paper by these researchers it was reported that the success of this program was also a result of the facilitator making adaptations to the curriculum when campers needed it demonstrating the individual was attentive towards the youth and their needs (Mainieri & Anderson, 2015b). In a study by McDonough, Ullrich-French,

Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, and Riley (2013) the presence of high quality social relationships between participants and leaders within PYD aimed programs was related to the onset of social responsibility in the youth. Research within sport contexts also support the presence of positive relationships and mutual trust between players and coaches as a mechanism of life skill development (Flett, Gould, Griffes & Lauer, 2013; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). However, these studies also report that a critical component of life skill development is that coaches maintained high expectations of the youth (also consistent with the external asset ‘adults have high expectations of youth’; Benson et al., 1998).

Within recreational PYD programs youth workers, coaches, teachers, and other interested and caring community members may find themselves taking on the role of a supportive adult, a positive role model, or a mentor (Edginton & Randall, 2005). In such a context, the adults should be prepared to perform the sorts of ideals, skills, and competencies that youth are believed to require in their positive development and serve as models of what youth should aspire to be like. Moreover, youth who are involved in these programs will also form their peer groups from other participants. These youth will spend considerable amounts of “down-time” together, developing new friendships, sharing experiences, discussing values, goals, and aspirations, and thus constructing peer cultures with collective behaviours (Eccles et al., 2003). Therefore, adults involved in delivering these programs should ensure that these collective behaviours are constructive. Neely and Holt (2014) also write that youths’ progress in a PYD program is enhanced when parents are supportive of their children’s development and reinforce the skills and values being taught to youth at home. Furthermore, resulting from their examination of recreation programs in Australia aimed at the positive development of indigenous youth, Flouris

et al. (2016) point out the importance of collaborations with other community services as this can help provide many additional and important resources for PYD program efforts.

Empirical research of PYD program activities. Research also helps address what program leaders or coaches must do in programs in order to bring about PYD outcomes in youth. Examinations of sport and recreational contexts aimed at instilling positive developmental outcomes in their young participants reveal the direct and implicit strategies utilized by program leaders or coaches that can help inform the implementation processes of PYD programs.

Role modelling on the part of program leaders of important life skills and positive behaviours that they want youth in their programs to adopt is one of the most reported strategies utilized in PYD aimed endeavours (Bean et al., 2016; Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2012; Flett et al., 2013). For instance, in research by Bean et al. (2016) it was reported that, in an afterschool recreation program, leaders would model the behaviour that they wanted the youth to take on, including respect. Also, within the sport context, it was found that coaches would take it upon themselves to role model the life skills that they wanted the youth to adopt when those coaches were invested in their athletes positive development (Camiré et al., 2012; Flett et al., 2013).

The use of lessons and activities that directly teach life skills is also well documented in studies of youth development programs. The use of skill building opportunities or activities aimed at skill development are integral facets PYD programming models such as the TPSR (Hellison, 2011) and the NRCIM's eight setting features (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Empirical data also supports that these activities can be particularly effective for recreational programs to facilitate the development of life skills. For instance, in Bean et al. (2016), an activity was utilized in which youth were tasked with completing a number grid game while leaders knowingly made distractions in the background. This particular activity was designed around

teaching youth focus and having them put this skill to work. Also, both the LiFE Sports Summer Camp (Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012) and the First Tee Life Skills through Golf program (Weiss et al., 2013) use sport-based activities specifically designed around the development of a life skill. Specifically, in the LiFE Skills Summer camp, in-depth lessons of the social skills being worked on occur near the beginning of every day with various sports designed around practicing those skills occurring immediately afterwards (Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Research with coaches have also found that, those who are successful at bringing about PYD outcomes, implement opportunities within a sport for youth to learn life skills (Flett et al., 2013; Fuller et al., 2013). However, it is generally agreed that skill building activities are preceded by general discussions or in-depth lessons with youth as is implied by the awareness talk stage of TPSR (Hellison, 2011) and several PYD-based studies (Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Moreover, these activities are often followed by another group discussion with youth in which they are provided with feedback by program leaders on their progress and performance while the activity is also related back to the day's lesson. This stage is known as the group meeting or reflection time within TPSR (Hellison, 2011). In Bean et al. (2016) it is described that these discussions (i.e., debriefs) occurred after the day's activities in order for leaders to reiterate the life skills of the day, clarify their relation to the activity, and discuss how they could be applied to other life domains. Debriefs are also reported as being utilized in a similar fashion by coaches who are intent on instilling PYD outcomes in their athletes (Trottier & Robitaille, 2014).

Research also supports the idea that youth should be prepared to engage in the skill building activities that they are expected to partake in (Bean & Forneris, 2016). In Flouris et al., (2016), interview participants expressed that the evolving nature of the skill building activities

offered, which are adjusted to the youths' skill level, was an important feature in the various PYD programs examined, being offered to indigenous youth. Also, in Mainieri and Anderson (2015b) the camp examined was designed to follow a logical progression. Specifically, it was deemed crucial to program success that content lessons (i.e., awareness talks) preceded the activities in which the content was applied. Furthermore, these steps needed to come before the community interaction stage (where youth were introduced to key community members) which was also a vital step needed before the service activities (youth volunteering within their community) took place. Designing the program to progress following these steps helped ensure that the youth were prepared and confident enough to take part in the various tasks provided.

One of the most important qualities of a life skill is that it is transferable to contexts outside of the venue in which it was taught (Danish, 2002). Coaches who prioritize life skill development in their athletes appear to be aware of this and studies have reported that these individuals make an effort to teach athletes how to use these skills in non-sport settings (Camiré et al., 2012; Flett et al., 2013; Fuller et al., 2013; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). The use of teachable moments by adults has also been brought up in empirical research of PYD contexts. Specifically, this is where coaches or leaders discuss where the skills being taught within a program can also be applied in youths' everyday lives (Bean et al., 2016; Camiré et al., 2012).

Scope of Research

Participants' responses in this research were disseminated into a logic model that can help guide recreational program design for practitioners seeking to achieve the positive development of youth members. All of the theoretical frameworks and previous empirical research explained above helped to inform the elaboration of the findings in this study, including the planned work that goes into a PYD program (i.e., inputs/resources and activities) and the intended results of

these organizations (i.e., outputs, outcomes, and impacts). For instance, the inputs/resources needed for a youth sport program to achieve PYD involved a focus on providing youth with external assets and fostering the aspects of the program context most conducive of positive development (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Petitpas et al., 2005). As highlighted by Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005), the individuals involved (e.g., program leaders and parents) were examined as resources or inputs needed for a program to achieve PYD and were taken into account as external assets in the logic model. Also, the activities section of the logic model, or what needs to be done in the program to achieve the desired results, were disseminated as the direct and indirect teaching strategies which Gould and Carson (2008) describe as the means to which coaches (or program leaders and staff in this case) teach life skills to youth participants. Direct strategies are described by Gould and Carson (2008) as those which focus on such practices as having clear and consistent rules, providing leadership opportunities, and engaging in team building efforts. Examples of direct strategies in previous research include pushing youth to be better people by having explicit, high expectations; enforcing consequences for bad behaviour; exhibiting consistency/repetition of values and rules; balancing challenge with positive, supportive actions; and intentionally reinforcing positive changes in life skills (Flett et al., 2013). On the other hand, indirect strategies, as described by Gould and Carson (2008) and Flett et al. (2013), include those which focus on the demands of the activity, program success, modeling of life skills by those involved, social reinforcement from peers, positive social norms, developing positive relationships with youth, and fostering a positive climate.

The intended results of PYD organizations were also asked of participants in this study and can also be informed by previous theoretical frameworks and empirical research in the literature. However, outputs are difficult to relate to previous theoretical frameworks as these are

organization specific by-products of program success and have not been the subject of previous study within the PYD literature. These are, nevertheless, reported in this study for each of the three organizations explored and are included within the final logic model. The short-term outcomes section of the logic model encompasses the life skills that research participants indicate as resulting from the youths' participation in their recreational PYD organizations. These are considered short-term results because structured programs within these organizations directly teach these on a daily basis and youth are intended to emerge from these sessions with knowledge of (and perhaps even having tested) these life skills. The long-term impacts can include the enhancement of the 5Cs in youth (plus the sixth C of contribution; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Lerner et al., 2005). This includes life skill transferability and how youth utilize the skills they learn in their PYD programs into other life domains (Gould & Carson, 2008) which is categorized in the results as competence. These are considered long-term results because it is not expected that youth develop the 5Cs, become community contributors, or learn to transfer their life skills immediately but instead are instilled with these outcomes over time and pro-longed engagement in their respective PYD organizations.

At-Risk Youth

At-risk youth are often sought out as the participants of programs aimed at PYD because, in their circumstances (e.g., low socioeconomic status; SES), their probability of growing into responsible adults and contributing and thriving members of society is lower than youth considered not at-risk. Travis and Leech (2013) explain that at-risk youth may be those who are members of the lower socioeconomic class subject to a range of inequalities such as lower household incomes and neighbourhood segregation. The young individuals in these circumstances are limited in their access to resources that help improve upon the functional

competencies needed to flourish in mainstream society. This is, in-part, due to the costs of programs delivering these capacities and their locations which are typically closer to more affluent communities. At-risk youth are, therefore, in the greatest need of opportunities to develop the skills needed to succeed as adults.

Although studies generally disclose significant relationships between SES and positive development closer examination reveals that a combination of mediating factors may better explain this connection (Letourneau, Duffett-Leger, Levac, Watson, & Young-Morris, 2011). Exposure to violence, environmental hazards, and lower quality institutional resources are some of the environmental influences encountered by at-risk youth of a lower SES on a regular basis (Bennett, 2011). In a meta-analysis conducted by Letourneau et al. (2011) it was found that a lack of positive development for youth of lower SES was more associated with: lack of family cohesion, lower quality parent-child interactions, type of parental discipline employed, whether parents deal with depressive symptoms and increased life stress, family support, exposure to violence within the family, and neighborhood safety. Though low SES is a tough issue to resolve, these ‘risk factors’ can be more easily alleviated through the development of resiliency and external/internal assets in youth which can be accomplished through programs aimed at PYD (Scales, 1999).

PYD Program Staff

Staff at PYD programs fulfill an important role in the youths’ learning experience. First, these are the individuals who must ensure the fulfilment of the organization’s PYD goals since they are present during youths’ engagement in recreation delivering the activities on the frontlines. This ideally requires staff to have knowledge in PYD program delivery principles or at least be trained in the guidelines that their specific organizations utilize to promote program

success. Second, being adults in youths' lives who are not teachers or parents, youth will naturally develop much respect for them and model a lot of their behaviours after theirs. Thus, it is important that how they behave and conduct themselves in the presence of these youth is taken very seriously.

Perkins and Noam (2007) highlight three particular responsibilities of staff related to the active goal of PYD. First, they must provide opportunities that nurture positive relationships among youth and adults and among youth and their peers. Second, they must identify and target specific knowledge, skills, and competencies that they want the young participants to learn and develop. Moreover, they must adopt and use teaching strategies and activities that help bring about the knowledge, skills, and competencies being sought. Third, they must tailor the experience to the unique individual needs of the participating youth. Therefore, high-quality PYD programs are not a one size fits all endeavour but are, instead, intentional and deliberately focused on building capacity and skills in all of the participants with help from program staff.

Community Recreation for Youth

The outreach and inclusion of youth by recreation centres within communities has been the subject of ample research over the past few years. In addition to school and home, recreation services are a context in which youth may spend a significant proportion of their time and can thus heavily influence them during their young lives. As explained by Outley, Bocarro and Boleman (2011), park and recreation agencies were sought out as a resource for solutions to youth issues (school dropouts, gang membership, teenage pregnancies, drug use) in the late 1980s and early 1990s as they have good access to youth within troubled communities. These authors also stated that community recreation programs can counter negative neighbourhood environmental conditions through the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive developmental

benefits that they offer to youth by “providing a holistic strength-based approach that capitalizes on the potential assets that exist in each community” (p. 63). In many low-income communities, often located in inner cities with few spaces intended for active and fulfilling leisure, park and recreation facilities may be the only place for children to be physically active outside of school (McKenzie, Moody, Carlson, Lopez, & Elder, 2013; Zieff et al., 2016). However, these authors also indicate that such neighbourhoods are often underserved by parks and recreation (among other services) and residents either possess a lack of such opportunities and places to recreate or must settle for poorly funded, unmaintained, and sometimes unsafe locations. However, in an article by Morgan, Sibthorp, and Wells (2014) it was argued that recreational programming provides an effective context for youths’ positive development and the establishment of important life skills. Specifically, such activities are (1) fun and enjoyable (thus providing an educational context that is intrinsically motivating, engaging, and laden with positive emotion); (2) goal oriented, challenging, and directed towards skill development; and (3) a positive social context lead by adult and peer role models who help guide youth towards skill development and a program’s intended outcomes.

Recreation programs offered outside of school time and within communities can help provide safe spaces, reduce crime rates, and decrease risky behaviours in at-risk youth within underserved neighbourhoods (Briand, Sauvé, & Fréchette, 2011; Witt, 2001). In research with at-risk youth, Langager and Spencer-Cavaliere (2015) found through qualitative interviews that the children in a community recreation program called UrbanKidz experienced enhanced opportunities that were generally not available to them in their everyday lives. These were categorized into ‘opportunities to do’ (i.e., participate in activities that helped fulfill their needs), ‘opportunities to connect’ (i.e., with peers and centre staff), and ‘opportunities to be’ (i.e., feeling

safe, having food, and having a place to rest and be when parents were not home). The provision of opportunities to youth through recreational programs that allow for their positive development was also prevalent in the findings of this dissertation study as will be discussed in chapter four. Also, in an endeavour entitled Play Streets in San Francisco, urban streets and parking lots are closed off to motorized vehicles for open recreational space for underserved communities. Zieff et al. (2016) found that the innovative community endeavour attracted families with young children who did not live in close proximity to spaces built and intended for recreation (i.e., facilities and parks). Results demonstrated that this model of increasing a community's recreational capacity utilizing existing infrastructure has potential to support the physical and social health of residents. The existence of community-based recreational opportunities and spaces was also voiced by residents of a low-resource and crime heavy neighbourhood as a means of positively developing youth and benefitting families and society (e.g., declines in crime and drug trafficking) through the development of social capital (Autry & Anderson, 2007). Lastly, McMahon and Sharpe (2009) explain that community recreation programs that embrace youth development and asset building can play a role in supporting and providing opportunities to at-risk youth. Their research asserts that programs can be inclusive of youth with behavioural difficulties (common in at-risk youth) when behavioural management policies are (1) consistent with the organization's mission, culture, and program goals; (2) are considered within the program structure and planned out during program design (as will be seen in this dissertation's logic model which includes effective youth-centred approaches to discipline); and (3) include the training of staff in effective approaches to addressing problem behaviours.

Research Contexts - Recreational PYD Organizations

The organizations examined are loosely guided by PYD principles but are not necessarily up to date with theoretical developments or keeping to strict PYD frameworks at all times. The choice of these organizations was based on their reputation (from colleagues who study PYD and professionals within PYD focused recreation practice) that they successfully produce youth who benefit from their programs and grow into well rounded adults. However, Agency A does utilize the Search Institute's internal and external assets framework to both guide and evaluate its programs. One of the questionnaires that it has youth and their parents fill out on an annual basis is designed to address the eight asset categories. Agency B is currently based on its transformative recreation model which uses recreation to teach a set of skills aimed at enhancing overall character, social competence, and mental wellbeing. However, Agency C is not designed around a particular PYD model nor does it cater to at-risk youth but is a unique case of a recreation organization, similar to one explored by Mainieri and Anderson (2015b), that had a goal of enhancing youths' capacity and desire to engage in community contribution. The organization's Leaders in Training (LIT) program also teaches a variety of life skills including leadership, behaviour management, and various others. This program was based on knowledge of best practices on how to teach youth leadership at the time that it was designed. The three organizations in this dissertation will be named Agencies A, B, and C in order to maintain their anonymity.

Agency A. Agency A is an international, non-profit organization, with its Canadian based governing agency managing and providing support services to all of its Canadian based locations. Programs that are initiated and run by Agency A conform to the organization's four pillars. These include education; physical activity/healthy lifestyle; leadership and social skills;

and creative arts. The overarching goal of the organization is to develop social skills in its youth and to build strong and productive community members, positioning itself as a PYD organization.

The case under examination is a location in eastern Ottawa that, like other locations, runs independently with its own set of administrative and managerial processes and challenges. Youth can attend the program after school from 3:30 pm to 9:00 pm at night with the first hour being solely dedicated to homework or quiet time. Before attending youth must become members, though this process is simple and comes at no cost. Youth can come into the organization any day they wish (transportation from schools is offered at this location) as it is not mandatory. However, once signed in they are under the responsibility of the staff and must conform to a set of rules while younger participants must be picked up by their parents or guardians.

Free time begins after 4:30 and continues until nine with youth having the ability to choose to do any activity they want. Some of these may simply involve playing the games available (e.g., pool, table soccer), socializing with friends, or playing sports in the gym. However, a wide variety of structured programs are available, all which must conform to the four pillars of Agency A of Canada, thus providing youth many opportunities benefiting their education (e.g., homework club), physical activity/healthy lifestyle (e.g., sports leagues, cooking club), leadership and social skills (e.g., leadership training, the sports and leadership league, the positive development program for girls), and creative arts (e.g., arts club). Staff are advised to make a strong effort to encourage youth, without forcing them, to join the programs even going so far as to determine which programs may be best for a particular youths' development. Sometimes this is even discussed and planned out during occasional staff meetings.

Agency B. Unlike the international scope of Agency A, Agency B is a not-for-profit, bottom-up organization based only within Ottawa that targets at-risk youth within specific Ottawa neighbourhoods. The mission of Agency B is as follows: “to enrich the lives and prospects of economically disadvantaged children, by providing quality year-round community and camp programs to develop physical, artistic, and social skills, positive attitudes and personal qualities”. Programs are provided at no cost while the organization strives to remove any barriers youth may have towards participation (e.g., providing them with free bus tickets).

Since its establishment Agency B ran a summer camp which occurs on property that the organization owns. Today the camp caters to all male and female at-risk youth within the Ottawa region and offers a variety of skill building recreational opportunities and a positive environment for these individuals. This camp is also free for all youth involved. Community based programs run by Agency B, established in 1985, occur from the early fall until late spring. Agency B does not have its own facility for its community based inner city programs but operates out of various community centres, close to social housing neighbourhoods, in partnership with the city of Ottawa. Unlike the two other organizations in this study, Agency B is not a drop-in program. Instead inner city programs occur on a weekly basis and staff and volunteers expect to see the youth who are enrolled in the program session every week as attendance is mandatory. Activities that occur in the community programs are diverse and while many of them fall into sport activities others range from visual to music arts, to cooking classes, to yoga and other exercise, to science and robotics.

Similarly, leadership programs run by Agency B (entitled Leaders in Training [LIT] 1-3), also occurring out of the City of Ottawa’s community centres on a weekly basis with mandatory attendance, are aimed at developing the program’s older youth into strong leaders in their

schools and communities by providing volunteer experiences (internal the organization) and a variety of life skill building opportunities. Youth are able to enter the program at as young as 13 years of age and can graduate from three levels over the course of three years. These include LIT 1 (focusing on building self-awareness and the personal attributes of each unique leader), LIT 2 (focusing on building group leadership skills and interpersonal leadership), and LIT 3 (focusing on peer led activities that involve community building and engaged citizenship practices). The idea behind these LIT programs is to prepare youth to be successful in school and employment while building their commitment to community building and volunteerism.

Agency C. Agency C is a non profit community group incorporated in 1975, run by a volunteer based board of directors and operated by paid staff and volunteer workers, located out of a municipally owned community centre. It is an entity responsible for providing recreational programs out of the community centre on behalf of the city of Ottawa but following its own mission and values. The space is provided by the city of Ottawa at no cost but Agency C funds its own operation through small service fees, fundraisers and grants. The mission of Agency C is to enrich its community by delivering recreational, cultural and social activities and services that are creative and innovative but also keep up with trends and demographic changes. With regards to children and youth, Agency C runs an afterschool program which is a semi-structured program that requires youth to involve themselves in at least one of a wide variety of supervised activities (e.g., active games, sports, arts and crafts, chess, cooking, homework/quiet reading). However, it is the more intentionally designed leadership training and subsequent volunteering and community outreach programs (e.g., the community action program) that demonstrate the strongest qualities of a PYD endeavour.

LIT is offered to youth starting at age 12. It contains two levels including the original and the more advanced step-up program for those who passed the original. The original LIT is offered as a one day a week program occurring after school throughout the school year or as a two week summer day camp occurring throughout the day, every day. Step-up LIT occurs as a daily camp only, occurring over the course of three weeks during the summer with the middle week being devoted to a volunteer placement where supervised youth take on many of the responsibilities of staff or counsellors (though options to volunteer for the week somewhere external to Agency C are also available through several partners). During both levels LIT is guided by a leadership manual which directly explains to youth all the skills that they are supposed to learn and how these skills are useful to leaders. The lessons and skills directly taught in the manual include behavioural management, commitment, various leadership styles, problem solving (and conflict resolution), professionalism, programming, various aspects of responsibility, self-discipline (emotional regulation), social/communication skills and teamwork/cooperation. Youth can earn a certificate at the end of both LIT sessions indicating that they had passed the program (similar to a course) with a grade of at least 75%.

Their community action program is a community outreach endeavor intended for older youth who are interested in engaging in volunteer activities within the city. Usually by working with other organizations and partners the types of volunteer activities engaged in by the youth and the staff involved can vary. This includes visiting homes for the elderly or individuals with exceptionalities, building houses alongside other non-profits, and attending fundraisers aimed at raising money for homeless youth shelters. The kitchen community action program on the other hand engages in similar activities insofar as it incorporates a cooking component. This program's

efforts have involved feeding people living in homeless shelters or providing food for fundraisers.

Theoretical Paradigm

The overarching principles that guide this research are informed by the views of a post-positivist paradigm. Ontologically, this project adopts what Guba and Lincoln (1994) call a critical realist view that reality is assumed to exist but is only imperfectly apprehended. Fully grasping the theoretical construct being studied (i.e., PYD) is unfeasible and thus it cannot be understood outside of people's perceptions of it. The research questions reflect this inapprehensible view of reality by specifically stating that only participants' perceptions are being sought out. However, these perceptions are not representative of the absolute true state of affairs with regards to PYD but can help us obtain an in-depth understanding of it.

Epistemologically, post-positivist research mostly abandons the dualist perceptive which is commonplace within the positivist paradigm (Crotty, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Within dualism, as explained by Guba and Lincoln (1994), "the investigator and the investigated 'object' are assumed to be independent entities, and the investigator to be capable of studying the object without influencing it or being influenced by it" (p. 110). Alternatively, dualism was not considered possible to maintain in this study and the influence of the researcher on the objects of inquiry and vice-versa was acknowledged, embraced, and taken into account.

Like most post-positivist research, and similarly to positivist paradigms, objectivity remains intact in that this study attempted to report on a reality that was described by people but exists separately from their perceptions of it (which differs from constructivists' and critical theorists' idea of reality being a product of people's perceptions). However, post-positivists assert that this objective reality can never be fully or perfectly apprehended due to flawed human

intellectual mechanisms and an intractable nature of phenomena (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Nevertheless, this objective reality can be supported through new knowledge's fit with previous knowledge, it's backing from the critical community, and replicated findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The findings of this research were heavily informed by, and were compared to, previously existing theories and concepts in the PYD literature in addition being subject to critical examination from professionals in the field. Regardless, this objective reality that we report is always subject to critical examination.

Methodologically, this dissertation avoids the positivistic aspects of experimental design and the verification of hypotheses (Crotty, 1998). Alternatively, the methodology utilized in this thesis match Guba and Lincoln's (1994) description of post-positivist research. First, data collection occurred in a more natural setting, specifically the locations of the youth recreational programs themselves, so that situational information could be collected. Second, discovery was included as an element of inquiry. Rather than having participants respond to pre-established questionnaires or structured interview guides, semi-structured interview questions were utilized to encourage participants to contribute more freely to an in-depth understanding of the subject matter at hand. With that said, emic (language based) data were collected through interviews in order to assist in answering this dissertation study's research questions and fulfill its purpose of developing a well-informed logic model (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The logic model required qualitative work to come into fruition as it was a product participants' descriptions of good practices and positive developmental outcomes they experienced resulting from their respective organizations. Quantitative means of model creation would involve and imply participants evaluating whether or not, or to what degree, items listed in a questionnaire or scale as predetermined by the researcher apply to their organizations.

However, since no model similar to the logic model being disseminated exists within recreation, and the principle investigator has never led or been a member of PYD programs, it was deemed inappropriate to assume from the beginning of the study what might be included. Instead it was believed that more accurate findings would occur from themes grounded within the collected data from participants who experience recreation based PYD programs first hand.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Case Study

A qualitative case study methodology was utilized for this research. Yin (2009) explains that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomena within a real-life context. Case studies were utilized in this research as a means to explore the potential fundamental links in real-life interventions (Yin, 2009), specifically the factors that drove outcomes associated with PYD in youth participants. A multiple-case study design utilizing an instrumental approach was used to study three separate recreational youth development organizations. As an instrumental case study, these organizations were examined as a means to facilitate and advance our understanding of a theoretical concept (Stake, 2005), in this case, PYD. Each organization studied constitutes a single instrumental case which provided insight into and advanced our understanding of PYD in recreational organizations. The multiple case design permitted the gathering of information from three different youth recreation organizations thus generating a well-informed logic model that can be used as a general guideline for recreational organizations aiming to promote PYD.

Participants

Participants of this research included a purposive sample of youth involved in the recreational youth development organizations, and the staff who run these recreational activities. The three organizations approached for data collection in this study which will be named Agency A, Agency B, and Agency C are all based in Ottawa, Ontario. For organizations to be included in this research they had to conform to a set of three characteristics to be considered a recreational PYD program. First, the organization had to offer recreational opportunities, though these could fall into a wide variety of categories such as sport, art, camp, educational, and volunteer

activities. Coincidentally, all three organizations were non-profits which is a common quality of PYD focused recreation endeavours. However, Agency B and Agency C are grassroots establishments that began in, and are still run by, members of the communities that they cater to. Agency A also has a community board of directors and operates independently but is a subsidiary of higher order, governing, administrative bodies (i.e, Agency A of Ottawa/Ontario/Canada) and is considered a top-down, as opposed to grassroots, organization. Second, these organizations had to deliver these activities to youth participants. However, they did not have to cater to youth exclusively (i.e., Agency C offers programs for adults as well) and they did not have to only involve at-risk youth (i.e., Agency C's youth are not considered at-risk). It was determined that knowledge collected from an organization where youth were not at-risk could offer unique insight into how they approached PYD. Third, the organizations studied had to offer at least one structured program that was geared towards positive developmental outcomes for youth. Specifically, they had to offer at least one structured program that taught one or more skills that could be considered life skills (e.g., all three organizations had leadership programs) or instilling positive qualities in its youth participants (e.g., sense of civic engagement). The three organizations that were selected as this study's cases each had multiple programs focused on teaching a variety of life skills (which will be further elaborated in the results) while Agency C had three programs specifically geared towards instilling a sense of community stewardship in youth. All three organizations had also garnered a reputation within the Ottawa area as being particularly successful with its youth members with regards to their positive development.

This research attempted to gain an in-depth understanding of the PYD outcomes that occur among youth participants at these three organizations and how these organizations pursue

these outcomes. Participants in a case study are typically chosen for the opportunities they offer to learn about the phenomenon under question (Stake, 2005). Therefore, in order to get the most informed idea of the positive developmental outcomes youth gained in these organizations in addition to the factors that allowed these outcomes to occur, the youth approached in this research had to have been in the program long enough to have experienced positive development. At Agency A the youth questioned were attending a leadership camp which was an exclusive opportunity for those who had demonstrated the most positive change during their time in the program. This is with the exception of one participant, though senior staff had pointed this individual out as also having demonstrated much positive change but could not attend the camp at the time. The youth at Agency B were members of Leadership in Training (LIT 3) which is the highest level offered at the organization and implies that each participant fulfilled the requirements needed to graduate the previous two levels. Lastly, the youth at Agency C were currently volunteers at their afterschool program. However, this implies that they had graduated the two levels of the LIT program at Agency C, as this is a requirement to be a youth volunteer here, while also being selected as the best choices from a pool of LIT graduates as this volunteer position is highly sought after but contains limited space.

On the other hand, the employees interviewed included a mix of senior and junior staff who have been associated with or worked in each organization for enough time (at least two years) to have generated a deep understanding of it. Also, it was preferred that the staff interviewed (even senior staff) consistently interacted with the youth in the program so that they could adequately address questions concerning developmental outcomes they noticed in them. All the staff interviewed had established deep relationships with youth members with some being pointed out as key role models for many of the organization's youth. Also, it was preferred that

the staff were on the frontlines of their organizations and were involved in delivering the activities or structured programs that took place so that they would adequately address what program features and strategies are utilized to help promote youths' positive development. All the junior staff interviewed had frontline responsibilities and were either in charge of, or were involved in delivering activities. The senior staff interviewed had a variety of administrative responsibilities but were also highly involved in frontline program delivery and interacted with youth members on a consistent basis. Administrative staff who had no frontline responsibilities and had minimal interactions with youth (e.g., a volunteer coordinator) were not approached for data collection.

Considering the scope of this research, to generate a model of PYD focused recreation program delivery that is both detailed and functional for other organizations, it was determined that a significant number of participants involved in each of the three organizations under study would be required. That being said, qualitative research can be time consuming and it would have been unreasonable to interview every single youth participant and each employee delivering these programs. Regardless, interviews were conducted with an above average number of participants for qualitative case studies ($N = 48$) including youth ($n = 26$) and staff ($n = 22$). Specifically, there were 11 youth and eight staff from Agency A, eight youth and five staff from Agency B, and seven youth and nine staff from Agency C. Determining the adequate number of participants required for a case study is difficult since the scope of the research using this methodology varies so significantly (e.g., some case studies only utilize one participant). The final number of participants was the result of exhausting the informational resources available at all three organizations. Specifically, it was acknowledged that there were few or no more staff or youth members at each location who could contribute any more useful information to the study

through interviews. Regardless, it was deemed that 48 participants provided more than enough in-depth information to understand youths' experiences of positive development, the organizational processes that lead to this development, and then to make a model of recreational program delivery.

The recruitment technique consisted of asking the organizations' program directors for permission to interview the youth participants and several of the employees who deliver the activities. The program directors and participants (who have been interviewed) were also asked to help facilitate recruitment for data collection by making other youth and staff aware of this research. Approval to recruit participants was provided through the University's Research Ethics Board.

Data Collection

This study utilized 40 semi-structured, in-depth, one-on-one interviews in addition to one focus group occurring with all eight of the youth from Agency B. The youth focus group was conducted with the same interview guide as the one-on-one youth interviews. Interviews were described to participants as lasting 30 – 40 minutes though the shortest full interview lasted 28 minutes and 51 seconds (an interview with a youth) while the longest full interview lasted one hour, 18 minutes and 53 seconds (an interview with a senior staff). The youth focus group lasted 42 minutes and 23 seconds. All interviews were audio recorded. One-on-one interviews with 10 of the youth at Agency A occurred during a leadership camp, held annually for youth who demonstrate positive change and good leadership. The physical setting was one of the cabins at a camp ground owned by the organization. All 10 interviews were conducted over the course of two days. Interviews with Agency A staff and one youth occurred at their Ottawa location in a variety of secluded rooms during the afterschool program time. These interviews occurred over a

span of nine weeks. The Agency B focus group occurred one time at the Ottawa-based community centre in which many of its activities are based out of. This occurred during program time in a secluded space where they hold their LIT 3 program typically utilized as their teaching area. Agency B senior staff were interviewed, one-on-one, at the office building in which the organization's administration is housed in a variety of secluded rooms during working hours. These interviews with the staff occurred over a span of five weeks. All interviews with staff and youth at Agency C occurred at the community centre where the organization mainly operates, alternating between a secluded office or in their auditorium. The interviews with youth and staff at this location occurred over a span of nine weeks either a few hours before or during the after school program.

Each one-on-one interview with youth at Agency A, at the request of their senior staff, were monitored by a member of the organization's junior staff. The focus group at Agency B was supervised by three members of their senior staff. Interviews with youth at Agency C were unsupervised but occurred at the location of their afterschool program in which many junior and senior staff were present. Youth participating in this research from Agency C were former members of the LIT program at some point while many also use to attend their camps and afterschool program. However, at the time of the interviews, unlike the other two organizations, these youth were volunteers at Agency C.

As will be described later on, Agency B has programs of short time duration with youth attending each program only once a week, and staff inevitably wanting to ensure that youth spend as much time benefitting from the organization as possible. This being the case, the organization was concerned that long individual interviews with each youth would be a constraint and take many of them away from important activities in LIT 3. It was therefore

decided between the principal investigator and the staff that a single focus group involving all the youth occurring over a block of one hour would be the best approach for data collection with this group.

By avoiding the use of highly structured interviews, participants were not limited to a small set of response categories while the principal investigator was able to probe more deeply into topics brought up by participants that were potentially relevant to the purposes of the study. More open ended questions allow for greater variation in participant responses, an element of discovery, and more in-depth understanding (Fontana & Frey, 2005). However, this research sought to obtain particular types of qualitative data that can help generate a logic model and is looking, specifically, for inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts in participants' narratives. With that said, some structure was needed to direct participant responses.

Steps were taken during the data collection process to help uphold the reliability and validity of the qualitative data collected. For instance, the data was triangulated by obtaining the views of the participating youth and the staff delivering the activities, both of whom were asked very similar questions, in order to get multiple view points on similar factors. Triangulation can be understood as "a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation" (Stake, 2005, p. 454). As explained by Stake (2005), case study research in particular should follow disciplined practices of analysis to tease out experiential knowledge from what may simply be participant's opinions or preferences. Secondly, after the interviews have been conducted and transcribed, they were sent back to the participants for member checking. This process is vital because it helps uphold the accuracy of the information collected from the youth and staff. As Fontana and Frey (2005) explain "the spoken or written word always has a residue of ambiguity no matter how carefully we word the

questions and how carefully we report or code the answers” (p. 697). The participants were asked to review their transcript to verify that they are accurate and represent the perspectives they wanted to share concerning the issues addressed. However, considering the dynamic nature of recreational organizations (i.e., some youth and junior staff were gone once their transcripts were transcribed; youth and junior staff rarely know ahead of time when they will be at their locations) not all participants were able to be involved in member checking. Nevertheless, eight of the senior staff interviewed in this study agreed to undergo member checking. Senior staff are stable employees at the organizations and tended to be present during every weekday. A member of the senior staff at Agency B also volunteered to member check the focus group transcript as he was present during the interview and was able to verify its accuracy.

Construction of Interview Guide

The questions drafted for the interview guide were directed towards gathering particular bits of information needed to create the logic model being disseminated. This guide included questions about what youth and staff perceived as being the immediate developmental benefits (short-term outcomes) of youths’ participation in these organizations (e.g., Youth – What skills do you believe you have learned in this organization? Staff – What skills are you teaching the youth participants through these organizations?). Also, questions were utilized to discover what participants perceived as having been the longer-term developmental impacts of youths’ participation in these organizations. These involved questions asking whether or not participants were developing the 4Cs and utilizing the learned life skills outside of the organization itself (e.g., Youth – Have you used any of the skills you learned in this organization in places other than the organization itself?). Furthermore, questions were aimed at discovering some of the mechanisms that the organizations use to drive the PYD outcomes that they seek to bring about

in youth such as the inputs (e.g., Youth – What is it about this organization that makes you able to learn new skills? Staff – What key features does this organization use that allows you to more easily teach youth new skills?) and activities utilized (e.g., Youth – How does [leader's name] teach you new skills? Staff – What strategies do you use to teach your participants new skills?). Additional questions aimed at gathering other bits of information (i.e., participant demographics, outputs) were included in the interview guide as well.

In total, five steps were carried out in order to construct the semi-structured interview guide used in this dissertation study for data collection. First, a review of existing questionnaires within the PYD research was conducted in order to determine the best questions to ask youth and staff involved in this study regarding the topic under exploration. The second step was to draft two interview guides based on the information gathered: one directed at the youth and one directed at the employees of the recreational organizations. The questions were specifically aimed at collecting information regarding each step of the logic model including several supplementary questions that could further spark participant's thoughts if the vaguer leading questions were unable to uncover this information themselves. The third step was to pilot test these instruments on individuals who were not involved in the study but were similar to the types of participants being sought out in order to judge the accuracy of the information being collected from these questions. Two youth, including a female (age 12) and male (age 10), that were engaged in recreational programs in their community (e.g., sports) were recruited to pilot test this early version of the youth questionnaire. This pilot test helped to determine whether the questions, as they were written, made sense to participants around this age group and resulted in the types of responses being sought out in this study. Two adults, one male and one female, with experience leading community recreational programs (e.g., sports) were also recruited to pilot

test the early version of the questionnaire aimed at employees. Again, this pilot testing helped to determine whether the questions, as they were written, made sense to participants and resulted in the types of responses being sought in this study. The fourth step in the creation of the interview guide was to apply any necessary revisions based on the results of the pilot tests. Both pilot tests made it clear that the questions were appropriate for seeking out the information needed for this dissertation research but that some questions were confusing to the participants and should be re-phrased in order to enhance clarity. This re-phrasing included removing some of the jargon that people outside of the study of PYD may not understand (e.g., the term ‘life skills’ could be supplemented with just ‘skills or lessons useful in youths’ everyday lives’). Lastly, the fifth step was to put together the final drafts of the three interview guides. The interview guides were relatively long and interviews with each participant took quite a bit of time (between 28 minutes and one hour, 18 minutes). However, this length was necessary in order to ensure every interview addressed each stage of the logic model.

Analysis

Deductive and inductive analyses were utilized in this research to disseminate its key themes and create the final logic model. With regards to this study’s deductive analysis, the use of existing research and theory guided a portion of the analysis and provided focus and sensitizing concepts (which help researchers see what they might not have otherwise noticed; Gilgun, 2011). Many of the themes in the model were informed by previous theories and concepts in PYD (e.g., life skills, the 4 and 5Cs, external assets) and such facets were specifically sought out and coded within participant’s transcripts when they came up. Inductive analysis was also conducted in order to find new themes that had not been examined in previous research in addition to adding new dimensions to previously existing concepts and themes found

in this study through deductive analysis. During initial coding (occurring during the second read-through of transcripts) participant quotes that appeared to serve the purpose of the research and address the research questions, yet were not discussing phenomena related to previously existing PYD theories and concepts, were highlighted and coded. Such inductive approaches allow research findings to emerge from frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies (Thomas, 2006).

Themes were kept in the logic model when they were mentioned by several participants or were well explained in-depth by one participant (more than just slightly mentioning a particular concept). Themes were also consolidated into one when they appeared to be duplicates of each other. For example a theme called ‘offering tangible rewards’ was determined to be an aspect of the theme ‘positive reinforcement’ and all participant quotes and codes associated with the former were moved to the latter. Furthermore, themes were removed when it was deemed that they were not necessarily an important aspect of PYD outcomes or a pertinent facilitating factor needed in recreational programming. For example, youth learning cooking skills, while beneficial, does not constitute a life skill as these are useful in a specific situation while life skills are useful across a variety of contexts (Danish, 2002; World Health Organization, 1996).

A database was created on the computer-based qualitative analysis program NVivo to organize and document the qualitative data collected (Yin, 2009). Data analysis occurred in the study utilizing four basic steps as outlined by Giorgi and Giorgi (2008). The first step was to read the entire transcribed narratives obtained through interviews with participants. Before coding began a holistic understanding of the data was needed. The second step consisted of a second read-through of the transcripts but involved the separating of the parts of the transcripts into meaning units (i.e., participant quotes that were particularly relevant to the purpose of the

research and addressing the research questions). This was as simple as using highlights within the text to signify quotes that had particular importance in meaning to the topic at hand. These meaning units were assigned a code or informative notes to help categorize them for when they were organized into themes in which they would act as supporting evidence. Data coding occurred simultaneously with data collection as recommended by Stake (2005) since this can further our understanding of the phenomenon being studied and better inform our data collection procedures. At the end of this process a list of codes utilized was developed.

The third step was the transformation of meaning units into thematic categories. This occurred during a third read-through of the transcripts and involved grouping the codes (and their associated meaning units) into the study's themes. As described by Giorgi and Giorgi (2008), this step also involved (1) turning implicit meanings into explicit ones, (2) taking a broad view of specific situations, (3) and articulating and rendering visible the social/psychological meanings that play a role in the phenomenon being explored. Essentially, connections were made between the codes that drew them together into the themes that would eventually make up this study's final logic model (see Figure 1). The fourth and last step was to derive the overall broad structures of the experiences described in the interviews. This step entailed determining what themes were essential in accounting for the concrete experiences being reported. The themes selected to be in the model were determined to be important and relevant when mentioned by multiple participants or having received an in-depth explanation from one of the participants. Moreover, themes chosen to be in the model also had theoretical backing from previous PYD research and were also practices utilized and outcomes sought out by already existing recreation-based PYD programs. Several themes were selected to be in the five steps of the logic model mostly based on their consistent appearance in existing PYD theories and research (e.g., external

assets, direct and indirect strategies, life skills, the 4Cs) while others were subthemes that added more dimensions to these overarching themes. Themes that were unique to this study, coming about through inductive analysis, had support in the form of descriptions from participants that made clear how they addressed this study's research questions. For instance, it was understood from interviews that the inductively coded theme Active Pursuit was a strategy (thus categorized under activities) utilized to ensure program success. Every single overarching theme and its associated subthemes were grouped under the five sections of the logic model based on whether the finding was an input, activity, output, outcome and impact..

Themes going into 'inputs' (i.e., contextual features and external assets) were those that were components needed by the organizations in order for their organizations to achieve success. Themes going into 'activities' (i.e., direct and indirect strategies) were actions going on during programs in order to ensure positive development. 'Outputs' were results that were understood as an objective, often numerical, measure of PYD and were directly asked of staff participants. Short-term outcomes (i.e., life skills) were positive developmental benefits that were described as results of youths' engagement in their respective organizations that they could receive more immediately (sometimes at the end of a day or session). Long-term impacts (i.e., the 4Cs) were developmental benefits that youth would require a significant amount of time being a part of their respective organizations to gain. Existing models of PYD programming have identified the Cs as an outcome that occurs later in the process even after the development of internal assets (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). Meanwhile previous research has also examined the Cs and skill transfer in the later stages of longitudinal examination taking into account that it takes time for youth to develop these capacities (Bowers et al., 2010; Jelicic et al., 2007; Phelps et al. 2009; Weiss et al., 2016).

This study sought to derive a single logic model based on the findings generated from all three case studies of the different youth recreation organizations. However, the results of this dissertation research first report the relevant findings and themes for each of the three organizations explored to give readers an idea of what each organization does similarly and differently. Specifically, before presenting the logic model, this dissertation discusses what mechanisms each organization utilizes to promote the positive development of their youth participants and what PYD outcomes (i.e., internal assets/life skills, the 5Cs) were experienced or demonstrated by the youth participants at each organization. These are all presented as themes throughout the results section. Participants' quotes are utilized to support most themes, though some themes are supported by more participant quotes than others as these particular narratives provided very coherent and comprehensive descriptions of these concepts. Moreover, some themes are not supported by quotes as these were not very descriptive but simply resulted from participants stating the concept in response to interview questions (e.g., the life skills were mostly stated by participants as opposed to described). These data are also presented in the five stages of a logic model (i.e., inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, impacts) for each case and also presented in lists at the end of each case's sections (Agency A in Tables 1 and 2; Agency B in Tables 3 and 4; and Agency C in Tables 5 and 6), based on the findings from each organization. These themes are then presented in a comprehensive list of themes from the three cases (see Tables 7-10) which then was the basis for the final logic model for PYD focused recreation organizations (see Figure 1).

Chapter 4: Results

Case One – Agency A

Out of the 48 participants in this research 19 were members (n = 11) and staff (n = 8) of Agency A. Specifically, all staff and youth were recruited at one particular location in Ottawa. Interviews with ten of the youth occurred at a leadership camp run by Agency A on an annual basis. Youth who have demonstrated exceptional behaviour and leadership at their respective locations are selected, as a reward, to participate in the weekend long leadership skills training program consisting of a variety of activities aimed at leadership skill building and team building in addition to regular social and camp activities. Considering the criteria required for the youth to attend this leadership camp the ones interviewed had: (1) been a member of the organization for a prolonged amount of time and (2) have both achieved and demonstrated positive development during their time as members of the program. One of the youth and all of the staff were approached at the actual location of Agency A in Ottawa on several nights throughout a two month period during the organization's after school program. The one youth was identified by a senior staff person as a 'shining example' having achieved similar positive development to the youth who had attended the camp. Two of the staff questioned were employed as experienced senior staff with administrative responsibilities while the other six were junior staff with varying levels of experience in the program, though four of the six indicated that they were also former members turned volunteers and then staff. See Tables 1 and 2 for a complete list of themes derived from interviews at Agency A.

Inputs

A variety of themes emerged from interviews with the participants that conform to the five stages of the logic model being disseminated from the research findings. In the

inputs/resources category themes were separated into ‘contextual factors’ (properties of the organization itself) and ‘external assets’ (including the people who are involved in supporting the youths’ positive development).

Contextual factors. One of the main themes found in the interviews is the provision of *opportunities for skill building*, which refers to there being a structure in place in which youth can actually pick up and learn skills and habits that are expected to contribute to their positive growth into adulthood. Some of these opportunities are actual programs held at the organization intended at having youth develop skills. For instance, leadership programs (e.g., leadership training, the leadership camp, the youth council, etc.) are aimed at teaching youth a variety of leadership skills. Also, a cooking program is implemented to teach youth how to cook and provide knowledge about proper nutrition. Third, sports, exercise and physical activity programs (e.g., a sports leadership league, crazy games, kids yoga) are described by participants as having intentional and non-intentional effects on youths’ leadership, teamwork, social skills, and emotional regulation (the latter described as a result of kids yoga in particular). Lastly, academic programs (e.g., homework club, debate club) help youth learn skills helpful in the academic environment and contribute to their school engagement. Also noteworthy is a particular program for girls which is aimed at teaching a variety of life skills to the female members of Agency A at this location and some visiting from another Agency A location. An alternative program to this one, specifically for boys, was indicated as being instrumental towards developing confidence in the male members of the organization.

In addition to actual programming, another theme derived from participant interviews, *opportunities for youth to interact*, referred to youth being provided with moments in which they could communicate and relate to other youth in the program helping to contribute to their

own social and communication skills while helping them establish peer connections. According to Agency A junior staff member Rochelle, “we have a group of kids and then we make them interact with each other first and then that makes them comfortable with the others”. Also, as described by Agency A youth member Kayla discussing her time in leadership programming, “they would chose, like put us in groups of 3 or 4 and then after we had to communicate to make like a little project”.

Another contextual aspect of the program indicated in interviews as contributing to PYD was *opportunities for skill application*. These are moments provided in which youth can utilize the skills that they learn in order to improve upon them. The opportunities provided that allowed youth to do this included the leadership camp in which the games provided gave youth the opportunity to put their skills to the test. One youth member at this camp provided a description of how the games were designed to have this skill application take place.

Earlier we had to build a tower and we had to all input an idea and we had to work together as a team. Nobody was allowed to talk so it’s hard to input an idea, so yeah it teaches you teamwork skills. (Agency A Youth Member – Brandon)

In addition, the volunteering and outreach components of Agency A, which is mandatory in programs such as leadership training and the youth council but also available to any youth who want to help out, can be contexts in which youth can test their skills. “I’m now a coach at the running club... you have to be a leader to be a coach, like when the kids need to listen, being able to tell them to stop talking and to listen”. (Agency A Youth Member – Martin)

There’s the specific programming too for members who are a part of certain programs, for example [leadership training], uhh, are then given opportunities within the program to actually come in at a volunteer capacity and to help run programs and that’s specific

programming that helps them to grow both personally and again, like I said, in their leadership capacity. (Agency A Senior Staff – Ron)

Opportunities to contribute within the organization are also helpful towards youths' positive development at Agency A and involves youth taking on important or valuable roles within the program including volunteering or helping the leaders. Volunteering opportunities provided for the youth include being a team manager/coordinator for the sport leadership league (i.e., where youth help a coach run a team), assistant referees, score keepers, taking on a role in Youth Council (e.g., president, vice-president), or assisting at the front sign-in desk. There are also opportunities provided for youth to facilitate programs which can contribute to their leadership skills and the confidence needed to be in front of people. Other helpful roles youth are allowed to have in the program include helping leaders set up arts and crafts, helping to prepare the day's snack, cleaning up the facility and putting away equipment, and helping other kids with their homework. It was also explained in interviews that older youth can contribute to the program by being a good role model to the younger members and sometimes stepping in for leaders where needed. For example, Ed indicated that he is able to help in situations of youth misbehaviour that are easily dealt with. "Like if there's kid arguing I'll just be like stop you know there no need for that. Instead of like getting the staff. Some situations are just easy to handle instead of getting the staff" (Agency A Youth Member – Ed). It would be unsurprising if allowing youth to take on such roles can contribute to the development of their leadership and responsibility.

Another contextual theme derived from interviews is a ***comfortable, positive, welcoming atmosphere***, mentioned by 12 of the 19 participants. This theme is consistent with what is often described in the literature as a 'psychologically safe environment' but is described more in-depth

in these results. When asked about the subjective atmosphere or mood of the program participants described it as welcoming, caring, and like a family where it was easy for youth to ‘feel like they belonged’ and to ‘relate to others’. “When I’m there its easier for me to communicate with everybody, and, I don’t really feel that shy there and nervous when I’m talking to people” (Agency A Youth Member – Diana). “Well it was just something, cause everyone there is just really like talkative and it’s just really like very positive so and it just makes you want to like talk more and socialize with others” (Agency A Youth Member – Katherine).

What I like most about [Agency A] is, that, they don’t hesitate to let people join, it’s like, they’re very open to anybody... at [Agency A] I feel really welcome. They just make, they just make everyone feel like they belong there. Umm, when I go in I just like already like know everyone, I feel comfortable going. (Agency A Youth Member – Kendra)

It was clear that the organization was able to achieve such a perceived atmosphere due to efforts on the part of the staff.

When they come in we always have fun with them, we joke around with them, you make sure everyone gets food, everyone cares for everyone. You have to ask a kid if he needs help even if they didn’t ask for it. Just make sure everyone is having a good time.
(Agency A Staff – Shawn)

Another important aspect of this program’s perceived atmosphere is that it is a *safe space* where youth are made to feel comfortable expressing themselves in a place free of judgement. “There’s dance club that’s running right now. Uhh, you know, so people that like dancing can actually be

themselves and sing without having people judging them and that stuff” (Agency A Staff – Joseph).

I just let them, I don’t criticize them, I let them talk as much as they want to, you know sometimes it’s unattractive. So then we see the same kids, each week, improving, their way of expressing, caring, knowing every player’s name and things of that sort. (Agency A Staff – Gary)

Also under this theme was that Agency A is a safe place in a physical sense (i.e., physical safety and security). With regards to keeping the youth out of harm’s way participants mentioned: any hazards are removed (e.g., there was mention of the immediate removal of broken bench), areas deemed dangerous are out of bounds, various rules are set to keep youth safe (e.g., no running in the foyer), there is plenty of staff supervision, and notably the organization itself ensures that youth are not harmful to each other or do not succumb to harm from other youth.

The neighbourhood hockey rink, if there’s nobody supervising the area and a bully shows up the younger ones are going to leave otherwise they’re going to get bullied. You know. Unfortunately that’s...here it’s a different story. We’re not going to allow that behaviour to take place. (Agency A Senior Staff – Doug)

Rules and expectations were described as being particularly useful for not just promoting a safe environment at the organization but also for developing positive behaviours and values for youth to use in the future. Particular rules expected of youth in the organization are: respect others, listen to staff and volunteers, maintain sports equipment, mandatory homework time (3:30 – 4:30), no bullying, no eating in the gym, no electronics, no horseplay, no negative language, no physical contact, no running, no screaming, no vandalizing, participate in programs (expectation, not rule), physical boundaries (e.g., staying out of certain halls, no gatherings in the

bathroom), wear proper footwear in the gym, punctuality at programs, resolve conflicts with words (not violence) or by telling staff, respect others, and sign in once arrived/sign out when leaving. Respecting others (and being inclusive of others) was mentioned by 13 of the 19 interview participants at Agency A. This rule helped ensure that youth treat each other with dignity and respect and thus promote a positive atmosphere. It is also expected that this becomes habitual and youth will respect other people in their lives when they become adults. Mandatory homework time is implemented in various Agency A locations in which youth are not allowed to participate in any activity or make any sort of distraction until homework time ends at 4:30 pm. This is meant to emphasize the importance of devoting time to homework for all members. No electronics, such as smart phones, was described as a particularly important rule for ensuring youth actually interact with their peers and the leaders while encouraging youth to participate in programs and activities as opposed to being sedentary and playing on their devices.

Other contextual inputs included *adequate funding* (so that the organization is able to support its programs financially), *fun and engaging activities* (which is often a factor that motivates youth to join in the first place, remain engaged, and return) and a *variety of activities* being offered (in order to appeal to as many youth as possible with a wide range of interests).

External assets. The individuals involved in supporting youths' positive development is the second component of inputs in the logic model derived from participants' interviews. The individuals included in this category considered particularly important in facilitating PYD in this organization are Program Staff, Families, the Community (including schools) and Peers. One theme that emerged with regards to *staff* were their developmentally supportive qualities. In essence, staff were described as approachable, attentive, caring, enthusiastic, helpful, inclusive, proactive, and respectful.

Approachable: They [the youth] can come to you, they respect who you are and stuff, so...just them understanding that they [the youth] can approach you whenever they need to. (Agency A Staff – Rochelle)

Yeah that's helps because, say you need anything, then you can tell them, and yeah they can help you with it. (Agency A Youth Member – Harry)

Attentive: When we see that their [the youth] behaviour is maybe not them acting themselves or others properly, so we can pull them on the side and we can explain to them why, then we can teach them that this is what you should do next time then we actually see the results, you know eventually they, they're using the skills that you're teaching them in their, how to talk to their peers and employees and stuff and other people. (Agency A Staff – Dora)

Like math cause before I hated math so every time I had math homework I would never do it and just hide it and even if a staff asked me "do you have homework" I would say "no" and then they would say show me your agenda and then they say "see you do have homework" and then they help me do my homework. (Agency A Youth Member – Kayla)

Caring: I think just being, I guess, they [the youth] already have their own issues and whatever going on and some of them don't even have siblings or even older siblings so just being that person that is a listener as well as, wants to have fun with them, as well as instil leadership goals and social goals and all that. (Agency A Staff – Rochelle)

Doug, [names two other staff members] who are like the senior staff, they become a big part in that, they show their support, they show how, how much they really mean to us,

they sort of guide us through everything that we need. (Agency A Youth Member – Nicole)

Enthusiastic: Whenever I come here I just, I'm thinking of lending something of myself on them [the youth] and also giving them something to learn. So, that's why I think it's a very special thing coming here cause they learn something, hopefully, they learn something every day. (Agency A Staff – Gail)

Helpful: She's [a specific senior staff member] like, she's always there like, she helps anybody. Like it's not only me, she'll like help you with like anything you need. (Agency A Youth Member – Katherine)

He [former youth member] speaks very fondly of the time he had here and the people that shaped his life and determine his future and all those type of things. You can make your own way in this world, but it's nice to have a helping hand, somebody pushing you through and they can help you in making good decisions you know. (Agency A Staff – Doug)

Inclusive: Cause like, sometimes they just sit with you, and talk and see how you're doing, they have a small conversation with you. (Agency A Youth Member – Harry)

Proactive: If we see some skill in them we try to send them off to different areas of the city where they have opportunities for camps, we try to find these opportunities for them and off they go and then the next thing you know they could be working here as our arts and crafts supervisor or volunteering for high school you know. (Agency A Senior Staff – Doug)

Respectful: They [the staff] really listen to what you have to say, they [the staff] won't just be like, they won't just be like umm, they won't just let it slip, if you really have to say something they [the staff] will think about it. (Agency A Youth Member – Kendra)

Families were also indicated by interview participants as being important to youths' positive development. For instance, some of the youths' families (parents, siblings, cousins) were described as *reinforcing youths' development at home* further promoting the life skills, values, and lessons that are pushed on them within the organizations. "My family actually, are always encouraging me to umm, use anything, responsibility, cooperation, perseverance, and like everyday stuff like perseverance, like, don't give up cause if you do nothing good is going to come out of it" (Agency A Youth Member – Kendra). Also, *families and staff converse often* and this can involve families requesting their child's participation in programs and activities that can strengthen particular qualities or the family is informed of the youths' progress.

So, sometimes the parents themselves they ask "how is he/she doing this" "how is he/she doing that" or sometimes one parents will come up and say "hey I would like my child to be more involved in social activities, can you make sure that happens?". So, we make sure the child gets involved in the skills that the parents want them to learn, and then the parents come back we actually tell them "oh he did this today" or "she did this today" "he was involved in this" or "she was involved in this". (Agency A Staff – Dora)

If a parent has a concern too or if they feel their kid is not getting a certain thing they want out of it they can always come to staff like, at [another location], the other [Agency A], parents have come in and said that their kid needs to go to homework club and they haven't been going to homework club so then the staff will make sure that kid always goes to homework club. (Agency A Staff – Shawn)

Also mentioned was that staff will involve families in extreme situations where they have trouble with youths' misbehaviour (e.g., advice on how to deal with the individual).

At first, if we're having a problem with the child we first try different ways of getting through to the child and if that doesn't work we get the parents involved, but most of the time what we try with the child helps and a few other times we have to get the parents involved. (Agency A Staff – Dora)

We would contact families, so it's not just the kids, it's just us kind of thing. We're always involved with families when we need to. So they need to know what's going on in the lives of their children as well too. (Agency A Staff – Doug)

Communities were also mentioned as being particularly instrumental for youths' positive development at Agency A. Members of the community can obviously be involved in terms of *volunteering* at the organization. However, it was also mentioned that Agency A routinely utilizes presentations from guest *motivational speakers and educational speakers* from the Ottawa community out of good will who can teach youth important lessons while providing them with important messages.

We had one of the athletes from the Red Blacks [Ottawa CFL team], he came in and he gave a speech, a motivational speech, on how he grew up, how he focused on his goal, how it helped him to kind of deal with some of the trouble he had during his childhood, growing up. Instead of focusing on those negative things that he said he instead focused on football. (Agency A Staff - Dora)

Also, *schools* within youths' communities, specifically teachers, had a brief mention of having some involvement in the PYD process. For instance, teachers function as a good contact for Agency A to reach out to children. Agency A will routinely call teachers to see if any children in

their classes might benefit from being a member. Contact with youths' teachers on their homework performance was also mentioned as occurring at the program. Additionally, Agency A staff will, in extreme situations, contact teachers or principles at the school if youth are experiencing serious issues that they feel are not being dealt with adequately (e.g., bullying).

Peers were also mentioned as playing the role of external assets. Older youth are routinely utilized as role models at Agency A with youth participants in this study mentioning that they strived to act appropriately in front of the younger youth at the organization. However, it was also mentioned that many of their behaviours were modeled after older youth members that they use to look up to when they were younger members.

When I was younger I use to look up to many of the kids that are now like volunteers and knowing that, they become what they are so that makes me think, I've followed their steps and I became this person and I came so far, so, I just help others that are younger than me look up to like what they could be. (Agency A Youth Member – Nicole)

Though this could be seen as applying pressure to older youth in this organization, youth interview participants did not mention difficulties doing this with some even embracing it and indicating happiness towards being able to act as a role model to younger youth (as described above).

Activities

Both youth and staff at Agency A were asked about what actions were taken by leaders during program implementation that seemed most pertinent to the end goal of PYD including any strategies aimed at building youths' skills and encouraging positive behaviours. These approaches were categorized into a set of direct and indirect strategies. Themes categorized under direct strategies referred to practices specifically aimed at immediately promoting skill

development or behavioural change in youth. On the other hand, indirect strategies were understood as more covert actions which were intended to promote skill development and behaviour change in youth over time.

Direct strategies. The most mentioned strategy for teaching life skills (n = 14) was the use of skill building games and activities. These games, typically designed around the teaching and testing of a particular skill, are utilized within programs at Agency A such as the leadership training program, the leadership camp, and the positive development program for girls. An interesting note was that these programs seemed to follow the same structural format highlighted in Hellison's (2011) TPSR. The *progression of programs* begins with *relational time*, an *awareness talk* or a teaching and discussion of the skill in question, *the activity or game* that has youth utilizing the skills taught, and a *debrief* and *reflection* discussion afterwards (though this is not surprising for the positive development program for girls as it was designed after TPSR). Debriefs and reflections in particular were described as having two objectives in mind. One is to discuss youths' performance in the activities, specifically, what youth think were the pros and cons of their performance followed by the leader telling the youth what they believe were the pros and cons of their performance. Second, debriefs were in place to relate the activity back to the lessons from the awareness talk in addition to highlighting potential areas in youths' lives that such a skill could be utilized (i.e., teachable moments).

A second direct strategy was the use of *teachable moments*. This is described in other literature as taking advantage of moments where leaders/coaches can inform youth and provide contexts in which skills can be applied (Bean et al., 2016; Camiré et al., 2012).

At the end of each of the activities, we would get together and do a little debrief and say, how does this apply to leadership in your everyday life? Where is somewhere where you

would be able to take this communication activity that we did and actually make it work for you in your everyday life? (Agency A Senior Staff – Ron)

Though this is obviously the intent of debriefs and reflection, described above, teachable moments do not appear to be limited to just the skill building games themselves. One staff member in particular mentioned a clever tactic he utilized while coaching the basketball team in the sport leadership league which is designed around helping youth understand the importance of teamwork and cooperation:

Like...lets say they have all five guys on offense and I'll have one guy play defense against all five. And all five will just play monkey in the middle. And then I'm like ok, I dare you to touch the ball and then he would not touch the ball. Then I would bring two or three other guys to help him out. They will not be as effective as five on five so that'll teach them, this is what happens when you have five guys so you need the other four. No individual person can take on five teammates that are working together. (Agency A Staff – Gary)

A third direct strategy was coded as *mentorship/offering guidance*. Participant quotes pertaining to this theme depict how leaders at Agency A would often get into discussions with the youth and give them helpful advice to take with them in their everyday lives. This strategy is well described by one of the senior staff at the organization:

Just giving them good advice. You know, they're coming to us and we're talking to them about school, about homework, about situations at or something else at home that isn't very positive. We sit down and we talk to them, we give them, you know, we try to give them the best possible sound advice. "Talk to your teacher, let's try to get this person in

here, let's try to solve that problem". So we're always trying to do the right thing for the best benefit of the kids. (Agency A Senior Staff – Doug)

One leader described how the advice she gave one youth member helped solve her frustrations at school in her role as a bus monitor:

The kids would always not listen to her and I would figure out that maybe the approach that she uses on the kids to calm them down is different so just explained to her a different way like "don't yell at them, come up closer to them, talk to them and make sure they have your full attention". And then she actually came back and she was so happy that she used, you know, that approach and they actually listened to her and now she loves the job that she does. (Agency A Staff – Dora)

Another youth described a good piece of advice, likely expressed by a variety of staff members, which ended up being very useful towards his school habits: "Cause like, if I was, on a test, they would be like, you shouldn't like wait until the last moment to study. You should study days before" (Agency A Youth Member – Ed). It was mentioned by both staff and youth that leaders will actively talk to youth for a variety of reasons (e.g., they seem distressed, they are having difficulty with homework, they are misbehaving) and proceed to alleviate whatever seems to be the issue (e.g., offer advice or help solve the issue they are dealing with, help them with their homework, deal with the misbehaviour). Though due to the amount of youth at the program it is often difficult to speak to them one-on-one as often as leaders would like. Instead some messages and lessons are expressed to youth through group discussions, often occurring during programs that occur at the organization. For instance, one member who was a part of the positive development program for girls described a group discussion leaders had with the whole cohort of girls about helping them to solve problems at school.

They said, if there's like a problem at school they ask everybody if there was a problem at school a lot of people said yes and then you had to explain to them and then they would tell you what to do and what to not do like. In the end we did a list and then they listed what to not do like do not hit them, no punching, umm, no saying bad words and what to do is go tell the teacher, if the teacher doesn't listen tell the parents, if they don't listen tell someone at [Agency A] so they can talk to the principle. (Agency A Youth Member – Kayla)

Another staff, often in charge of the sport leadership league mentioned voicing his expectations of his basketball team hinting that sport performance is not the only thing being focused on in this particular sports league.

One of the first things I tell them is as soon as they make the basketball team one of the first things I tell them is, now that they've made the basketball team, "your behaviour doesn't stop at the basketball court. I'll be watching how you behave at Agency A. I also will hear about how you behave outside of Agency A and into the community". (Agency A Staff – Gary)

Another strategy referenced in the above quote, and also mentioned by one other participant, is that program leaders clearly ***communicate rules and expectations*** to the youth to ensure they understand proper behaviour and conduct. According to Agency A Senior Staff member Ron, "when a new member comes in they kind of get the basic guidelines of 'at Agency A this is what is expected of you'ummm....and that's communicated in a very quick kind of way".

Also noteworthy as a direct strategy is the organization's disciplinary approach. Several youth and staff generally described the ***approach to discipline*** as having three steps: (1) *separating the youth from the rest of the group*, (2) *explain what they are doing wrong*, (3)

discuss what they could do right the next time. This approach is interesting in that staff are not described as being harsh or stern with the youth but, instead, engage in a conversation with them with the purpose of helping them understand what the correct approach to behaviour is in the future. This approach has been discussed in the PYD literature before as being a ‘youth centred’ manner of dealing with behavioural issues (Forneris, Whitley, & Barker 2013; Larson & Walker, 2010).

Indirect strategies. In addition to direct strategies a set of implicit indirect strategies are in place at Agency A as well. One of the most frequently mentioned of these strategies is ***role modeling*** on the part of the staff involved. Specifically, the staff at Agency A display the behaviours that they want youth themselves to adopt. Thus, staff are cognizant about the way they act both inside and outside of the organization as these will likely be the behaviours youth decide to take on as well.

I think probably one of the strongest tools that Agency A has is, the staff themselves.

Strong, positive role models, in the lives of these young people. Umm...where they can look up to somebody and think that they’re a cool person, but at the same time, realize that that’s a person who’s not swearing, realize that that’s a person that, you know, who’s doing their work, who’s putting the effort in, and who’s....when they see that they think to themselves “I want to be that person too”. That’s probably one of the most powerful tools that we have. (Agency A Senior Staff – Ron)

Another indirect strategy was coded as ***offering the youth motivation/encouragement***. Staff were described as consistently pushing the youth to be better. Some youth and staff in the interviews explained that program leaders actively helped youth realize their future goals and aspirations and encouraged them to achieve that goal.

Whenever I hear the kids say whatever they dream I was like “it’s possible if you want to be a basketball player, you can go ahead and be a basketball player, it’s just, you gotta work for that right?” And that’s what we’re here for, to help them have a bright future and the potential future that they want. (Agency A Staff – Shawn)

I’m trying to be a better baller so that I can make it to the NBA...[the leaders] tell me what I’m doing wrong and they’ll push me to work harder. So like, I use to be not so confident in my game so I wouldn’t drive in a lot more. I would probably just pass the ball so that other people would play it in. And then Doug would encourage me...he would tell me “just take it to the paint, you’re taller than everybody, so you should probably take it to the paint” so I started taking it to the paint more...I became a better baller and I got stronger. (Agency A Youth Member – Brandon)

Positive reinforcement was another tactic utilized by staff at Agency A. There were numerous situations in which this could come up. For instance, the staff would acknowledge youth when they were performing tasks or activities adequately and up to standard in contexts such as skill building activities that occur at the leadership camp, leadership training, and the positive development program for girls or tasks youth were in charge of in the youth council. Another instance would be when youth were generally showing good behaviour and staff members acknowledged that in a positive way. This is especially important when the youth may have formerly been prone to misbehaving but have since begun to show improvement:

I always encourage them “you know what you have achieved so much...if I see that [a youth] has changed and most likely he [or she] has, you know I go up to him and say remember last year around this time, you know the trouble you were in? Huh. You know, I’m glad that you’ve changed”... I catch them when they’re doing something right.

Encourage them, if you see an attitude change or behavioural change, make sure you sit with them and let them know that you're proud of them and you did notice the behaviour change and to keep up the good work. (Agency A Staff – Gary)

However, even when youth are having difficulty or are behaving poorly it was described by the participants that staff consistently let the youth know that they are 'there for them' and youth can 'come to them' for anything. It was also mentioned that Agency A periodically offers its youth participants a variety of substantial rewards, incentives, and opportunities, as a form of positive reinforcement, for their improvement and good behaviour. Some of the rewards that are offered to members of Agency A are opportunities to attend NHL, NBA, MLB and World Cup Soccer games along with opportunities to go to camp (including a leadership camp that offers youth the possibility of a university/college scholarship) and more. One of the senior staff, acknowledging that Agency A was lucky to have these kinds of opportunities, discussed how their presence was a key factor in encouraging positive behaviours out of the youth.

In order to qualify and to go to these events and to be a part of these activities they have to show us that they're good citizens and that their behaviour and their conduct in this facility and their consistent attendance, merits some of these opportunities. (Agency A Senior Staff – Doug).

These opportunities are not offered to youth who misbehave or do not show any developmental progress but are promised to them in the future if they chose to adopt better behaviours.

If we're struggling with their behaviour inside of the building then we're sure as heck not going to have them go out and represent our organization in public if they're not going to listen to us there or, you know, embarrass themselves for their families so they don't get to go. So they say "well why don't I get to go to this game"? "Well, because this, this,

this, and this”. “So if we see an improvement in this, this, this and this then guess what, you’re on the next bus to the game”. (Agency A Senior Staff – Doug)

As mentioned earlier Agency A offers a variety of programs that are aimed at benefitting youth participants and contributing to their skill development and positive behaviour. This being the case, staff here are instructed to ***encourage youth to join programs and activities***. At its base Agency A is a gathering place for youth after school (considering that they are members) and they are not obliged to join the programs offered but are allowed to simply ‘hang out’ at the organization location and play games or socialize with friends. But since youth have a lot to gain from some of these structured, supervised programs these opportunities are heavily pushed, without being forced, upon the youth. For instance, staff might try simply to make youth aware of a program:

If somebody just wants to come on Thursdays and wants to play ball hockey then that’s what they’re going to do. You know we’re not going to stop them. We’ll encourage them and say, “hey, you know what, on Wednesdays we’ve got a leadership group here”.

(Agency A Senior Staff - Doug)

Sometimes a particular activity might be pushed upon the youth, especially if the activity is seen as being particularly beneficial to that youth’s development:

They have like this like talent show that we were doing and she [a senior staff] wanted me to like go on stage and perform and at first I’m like “no you’re crazy”, but at the end I actually did like perform something that I wrote. So... she helped me, like, build on my confidence actually. (Agency A Youth Member - Katherine)

What is key to this process however is that staff at this Agency A are highly aware of each youth’s progress and will periodically have meetings in order to discuss what opportunities

might help with particular youth who are struggling or continue to foster the development of specific youth who are excelling.

So periodically we have meetings where we talk about members and how they're struggling and what's best fit for them. Some remedies might be afterschool one-on-one counselling, or [leadership training program]. If we see a youth member that's very excelling and beyond the average youth we identify that kid and then we take them to the right program whatever it's the [leadership training] program, so they can better develop. (Agency A Staff – Gary)

Another strategy is ***developing personal relationships and trust*** with the youth. Forming personal relationships with the youth can be a useful indirect strategy since by having such close relationships with the youth, leaders have a good idea of where and how to approach their positive development by noticing their strengths and weaknesses.

You have to start with a personal relationship with all the kids, you get to know them and then, ok this child wants to learn math, so when they come in and say “hey I’m going to do math work today” like you can help them and accomplish that goal so just following up. (Agency A Staff – Dora)

It is also a way of knowing about any problems or issues in a youth's life and being the one to help them address it. “She [a senior staff] like works like with me and so if I have like a bad day she knows right away, and uhh, she's just like always like there, she's like the main thing, person” (Agency A Youth Member - Katherine). The process is done mainly, as described by staff, by *engaging in conversations with youth every day*. “I guess just talking to them and understanding them. I guess, yeah talking to them and seeing what...where they're at right now and working towards that” (Agency A Staff – Rochelle). Another way that staff can go about

developing relationships is by *playing games with the youth*. This Agency A location contains many games and fun activities for youth to engage in during their free time (e.g., board games, pool, table tennis) and it was mentioned in interviews that staff may play some of these games with youth in order to develop a greater rapport with them. However, there are a couple of other reasons why regular conversations with youth can be beneficial to them. First, they might be dealing with pressures or issues in their life and by coming out to a staff member that individual can provide some help or support for the youth who are rarely well equipped to deal with those issues on their own. Another reason is that the staff can come to realize some of the youth inherent interests and/or future prospects and dreams and recommend programs or opportunities that might go towards helping that youth participant.

Also interesting, as mentioned by a senior staff member is that they ***encourage youth to contribute to the community***. Youths' engagement in community service is a component of several programs at Agency A which could easily be seen as an activity that directly helps youth understand the importance of community contribution.

[In] some of the programs that we run here, we'll take kids and we'll take them to a seniors home and have them make, through an arts and crafts program, we'll have them make mother's day cards, and we'll give those to a senior citizens group, there's a bunch of moms there, or a bunch of grandmas there, but we, you know, give away the cards.

(Agency A Senior Staff – Doug)

Another theme derived from interviews is ***lifting youths' participation barriers***, specifically making the program being *free for all youth* so that financial barriers do not prevent them, many of whom hail from the surrounding low-income communities, from participating in the program. In addition, *transportation is provided* to the organization from youths' schools and *all necessary*

equipment is provided when needed (e.g., hockey equipment for the sport leadership league).

Lastly, a theme emerging as an indirect strategy was labeled ***assisting with youths'***

achievements. Specifically, Agency A has instructional opportunities in place to *help with drafting resumes, interview preparation, helping youth write university applications, and offering potential post-secondary scholarships* (provided to one member annually who attends the yearly leadership camp). Furthermore, youth who grow up through the program are often *provided volunteer and job opportunities* at the organization itself. Moreover it was mentioned in interviews that Agency A Staff take youth to *attend special events* aimed at youths' positive development (e.g., We Day – where kids meet inspiring role models).

Outputs

Within the interviews a few references to some objective measures of PYD program success had been brought up. Each of these factors can be measured numerically, though particular numbers being sought out were not made clear and would likely differ from program to program. One of these factors is categorized as ***number of registered members*** to determine whether enough individuals are enrolled in Agency A in order to make a difference in the surrounding communities. Other factors are categorized into '***youth engagement***' which determines whether youth are involved enough in the program, whether that entails attending the organization enough or being enrolled in actual skill building programs, in order to gain the most out of Agency A. These measures include: *attendance numbers* (at each program at Agency A and the number of times they show up to the organization weekly), and *how many youth participate in at least one structured program*.

Other indicators of positive development can be seen through youths' achievements within and outside of Agency A. Several measures of ***youth achievements within the program***

are: *number of youth moving from 'problem child' status to 'well behaved' status* (typically discussed between staff at meetings), *number of youth earning rewards*, *how often does each member qualify for rewards*, and *number of youth becoming volunteers or staff at Agency A*.

Several measures of **youth achievements outside of the program** are: *report card grades* (are they receiving adequate grades?), *how often do youth complete their homework* (an indicator of school engagement), *number of youth (at legal working age) employed in part-time jobs*, *number of youth graduating secondary school*, and *number of youth intent on post-secondary education*.

Youths' report card grades can be a telling objective measure of their positive development from an academic scope in that it is a sign that they are attending (and not skipping) their classes, are engaged (e.g., paying attention in class), and taking their school work seriously (e.g., completing assigned schoolwork and homework). Academic engagement is considered an important aspect of youths' positive development (Benson et al., 1998).

Outcomes

Short-term outcomes are the particular developmental benefits that are immediate or close to immediate results of youths' participation in particular programs, and from being a part of Agency A in general. For example, when youth engage in a skill building program it is acknowledged that they likely come right out of it with knowledge of the new skill in addition to having tested it in an activity. However, whether they can transfer and utilize the skill to other aspects of their lives remains to be seen and thus data concerning things like life skill transferability and other long-term benefits of these organizations will be discussed in the proceeding impacts section.

Life skills. Through thematic analysis of participant interviews in which they describe particular abilities that youth have picked up through their time at Agency A, including its

structured programs, a wide variety of life skills were disseminated and included in the short-term outcomes section of the logic model. The skills mentioned by at least 14 of the 19 interview participants or more include **leadership skills** (n = 17), **social and communication skills** (n = 15), **teamwork and cooperation skills** (n = 15), and **academic skills** (n = 14; further broken down into *devotion to schoolwork and homework*, and *school performance*). Other skills mentioned by at least three or more participants include **responsibility** (n = 8), **initiative** (n = 5), **self-regulation skills** (n = 5; further broken down into *time management* and *focus*), **positive attitude** (n = 4), and **problem solving** (n = 4; including *conflict resolution*). Other skills mentioned included **coping skills** (specifically *handling disappointment*), **decision making**, **emotional regulation**, **goal setting**, **work ethic**, **honesty**, **listening skills** (i.e., understanding and following direction and instruction), **trust**, and **patience**.

Impacts

As indicated earlier impacts concern the long-term positive developmental outcomes that had been identified by the study's youth and staff participants that are not an immediate result of youths' participation and attendance at Agency A. Instead these changes occur over a prolonged amount of time, considering youth remain members over that duration. Such results can include whether youth are able to transfer their life skills into other aspects of their lives along with a variety of personality, behaviour, and attitudinal changes (i.e., the 4Cs) in addition to the theme of Contribution or youth willingly volunteering time and effort to their organizations and their own communities.

Competence/Skill transfer. Skill transference, also coded as Competence (one of the 4Cs) is one of the impacts of Agency A as both staff and youth have mentioned experiences in which youth effectively utilized some of the life skills they learned here in places and situations

outside of the actual skill building activities. The skills that were mentioned as being utilized by youth in their everyday lives included academic skills, emotional regulation skills, leadership skills, positive attitudes, responsibility, social and communication skills and teamwork and cooperation skills. Academic skills obviously transferred to the school environment allowing youth to improve their grades, approach their school work and homework seriously, listen to their teachers, focus in class, and start preparing for their post-secondary education.

Emotional regulation skills were described as being useful at home, at school, and in public. One youth in particular, admitting to having had issues with temper, described a time when her ability to control her temper at home came in useful.

At home, my mom, she had to go out for a bit and I babysat my little brother. And he was acting up and I told him, like I tried to get him to calm down and I stayed calm too, I didn't freak out, and I let him watch TV and, like, I didn't boss him around, kinda baby sat him but I made sure he stayed in control. (Agency A Youth Member – Diana)

Leadership skills were utilized by youth on sports teams, at home, in school and within their own volunteering efforts within the community. This following quote described a good example of a youth stepping up to a leadership role to help his struggling basketball team (also showing signs of initiative and positive attitude):

I have been in a basketball game where like I'm down by 4 or 5 in the last quarter and there's a lot of pressure and then someone has to be the leader and step up. And I felt like I was the leader and I stepped up on the team, and said "this is what we have to get done" and then, well like it was like that last 10 minutes and we were down by 5, and then we stepped up and then we ended up winning the game by 10. (Agency A Youth Member – Ed)

Positive attitudes were described as being utilized at school, within the youths' communities, and on sports teams. Responsibility was described as being useful for youth in situations within their own community volunteering, and their jobs. Social and communication skills had a wide range of applicable scenarios for the youth including: with friends and adults in their lives, at home, at school, in the workplace (at the job itself or in a job interview), in the community, in sports, and used with others for the purpose of making new connections. Particular situations in which social and communication skills came in handy, according to the youth, included asking teachers questions for when they needed help, sharing ideas when working in groups with others, giving a good impression of themselves at job interviews, taking on customer service roles at their part time jobs, and meeting and introducing oneself to new peers in situations where the youth did not know anyone else. Teamwork and cooperation skills were also described as being useful at jobs, at school, in community volunteering, and in sports. One youth participant briefly describes utilizing his ability to cooperate with community members in his neighbourhood. "Sometimes we have bar-b-queues and stuff...so like helping the people set up and asking them if they need help and cooperating with them" (Agency A Youth Member – Martin).

Caring/Character. Through interviews it was expressed that, over time in the program, youth developed qualities that fell into one of the categories of the 4Cs Caring/Character (the second of the 4Cs to be discussed here). It was decided to go with the 4Cs model utilized in previous research (Côté & Gilbert, 2009) since thematic analysis could not find themes that seemed to differentiate between the definitions of Caring and Character expressed in the 5Cs framework. This is not surprising as significant overlap between the Caring and Character Cs has been reported (Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Jelicic et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2011; Vierimaa, Erickson, Côté & Gilbert, 2012).

An aspect of this overarching theme of caring and character was youth themselves becoming *helpful and willing to volunteer*. There were a variety of contexts and situations in which the youth interviewed mentioned being helpful towards others in their lives. These included willingness to help out at the organization: helping out with the day's snacks, helping others out with homework at Homework Club, teaching a peer to control a ball in soccer in the sport leadership league, helping out coaches at the sport leadership league with coordinating teams (taking on the role of team coordinator/assistant coach), helping out the sport leadership league by being a score keeper, and helping younger peers to read being among those mentioned. However, it was also explained, by youth in the interviews, that some of them carried out helpful behaviours outside of the organization as well including: helping older neighbours with their household chores, helping one's sister with a conflict she had at school (by offering advice on conflict resolution), or another helping to prepare an organ player at his community church group to play at mass being among those mentioned. One particular senior staff had discussed how a youth member, who was once a trouble maker but had since developed better behaviours through the years, ended a fight between other youth within a nearby community before it started.

Ummm, there's another one who's a little bit older, he's one of the seniors who use to be a little bit of a trouble maker, would kind of instigate things, and really recently he broke up a fight of his own kind of...people were kind of egging these two guys on and he stepped in to make sure that nothing bad happened. So I'm really proud of him there...He was taught in [Agency A] that these are the values and this is how we deal with these things...And that fight did not happen on our property. That fight happened off of our property, he decided to step in anyways and break it up. And uhh, he's a great example of

skills being learned at [Agency A] but being put into practice elsewhere. (Agency A Senior Staff – Ron)

Another youth mentioned taking such initiative at school. “Sometimes when I see someone getting bullied I go and help them, I don’t just watch them, I tell anyone, try to help and tell a teacher what’s happening” (Agency A Youth Member – Carlos). This same participant who was proficient in math (which he also ascribes to his time and the help he received at homework club) explained that he helped one of his friends with math homework.

A couple of weeks ago, my friend was having trouble with math, exponents and all that, so I told him to try not to give up fast and to keep going... so I showed him how to do it, and he tried to solve it, and then sometimes he got it wrong, I told him not to get mad, try again, he tried it and then he got it right. (Agency A Youth Member – Carlos)

Developing **respect** was also categorized as a component of Caring/Character. Again, a variety of circumstances arose in interviews in which the youth appear to demonstrate increased respect towards others. Among those mentioned were youth showing respect to referees officiating sports (especially those youth in the sport leadership league when participating in games) and showing respect to teachers at school (which some youth admitted their peers at school did not). However, some great examples of respect are shown by two particular youth, both admitting to once being ‘trouble makers’ and later becoming much better behaved. “It helps me teach like younger people, like little kids, they should like, if they see someone being respectful then they think “yeah I should probably be respectful too” since he’s being respectful” (Agency A Youth Member – Ed).

Parents are coming in I want them to feel welcome and I want them to feel... I want to make them feel safe for their children to come here, I want them to call their family

friends to bring their kids in here and then make them feel welcome and then as I said represent [Agency A]. (Agency A Youth Member – Russell)

Also a part of the theme of Compassion and Character were youth accepting and taking on the part of a **role model for others**. This is especially important within the context of the organization itself where many impressionable young children are present. “I think that a lot of the younger girls look up to me and I do, I do take that as a very important part of the community” (Agency A Youth Member – Nicole). “Everything I learned from the staff, I want to move it on into the younger members and I want to have an opportunity to change their life the way my life was changed” (Agency A Youth Member – Russell). “I would set a good example by doing things the [organization] would say or joining other things and getting other kids to join too so they can try something new” (Agency A Youth Member – Brandon). However, the capacity for youth to be a good role model to others also extended to their influence over their own peer groups outside of the program. “I try to get them more active so they can play sports with me” (Agency A Youth Member – Carlos).

Well I use to be like, one of those kids that always want to start trouble or something and now I’m one of those kids who try to help other people who are like that...there’s like, some of my friends that will still want to be doing those things but I try to convince them how it’s bad and stuff cause I use to get in trouble a lot for doing that. (Agency A Youth Member – Martin)

Another important aspect of Compassion and Character was a **reduction in trouble and problem behaviours**. Various staff members expressed how important the organization and its programs were with encouraging youth to keep out of trouble.

So it's an organization that's very well needed in the community, and it has changed a lot in my opinion it has changed lives in positive ways because, ummm, for many years, and I believe this, what distinguished the youth from the south side of Ottawa, or the east side of Ottawa, the west side of Ottawa, crime wise and getting into trouble, it is the [Agency A] of [their location]. (Agency A Staff – Gary)

Programs here like basketball, drop-in basketball is very important for them because it gets them out of trouble. A lot of them have friends and they, they didn't come to the [Agency A] and whenever they don't they just do a lot of bad things outside. (Agency A Staff – Joseph)

One of the staff members mentions two examples of youth who started off in the program being badly behaved but had later on shown much improvement.

Yeah well he goes to school, well he was not actually going to school, he dropped out of high school but then came back, and now he's in university. Not, yeah. So he's studying something good. I think he's studying, I forgot what he's studying but he's in the university and he comes to [Agency A] sometimes. (Agency A Staff – Joseph)

She was one of the members we had trouble with a lot, like every staff were complaining to our supervisors that she doesn't want to listen, she doesn't want to respect the staffs. And when she joined that program, the Youth Council program, she completely changed. She has younger sisters and... whenever they don't want to listen to us she would come and she would actually back us up and say, "ok whatever you're doing right now, it's not right, listen to the staffs". (Agency A Staff – Joseph)

Other youth members mentioned, over their time in the organization, adopting better behaviours.

Yeah, cause then like, I use to get in trouble like a lot, so like ok, I'm gonna try to be good, so one day I tried, like I was good, and that's how, it just like...I saw like, how like, everybody else was like being treated, like respectfully, so if I was treating someone respectfully then they would treat me like in the way I would want to be treated. (Agency A Youth Member – Katherine)

I remember I was just a very bad trouble maker when I was younger, so I was like...learned right from wrong, even more when I was there. So they sort of like, helped me lead into a path that was more positive rather than going back and forth and creating more problems. (Agency A Youth Member – Nicole)

Others mentioned how the organization and structured programs made available took them away from negative influences in their lives.

Well back then I didn't actually try to be a good leader most of the time cause actually like, I was a really bad kid back then, but ever since I joined [Agency A] I find out how important it is to lead and be a leader... I use to have a group of friends that were really bad, and I used to always hang out with them. Ever since I joined [Agency A] I stopped hanging around them. (Agency A Youth Member – Martin)

I live like in, a [rough] neighbourhood so I might've just turned into one of the hooligans outside. Like, I probably, might try to think that I'm like a gang member or something like that, like some of my friends, they're already getting involved in gangs. (Agency A Youth Member – Brandon)

Confidence. Many participants expressed that youth become more confident during their time at Agency A. However, various types of confidence were expressed through interviews and a total of four subthemes were deduced from inductive thematic analysis of the data. The most

common type of confidence expressed by participants was youth being able to speak out, socialize with others more easily, and cease to be as shy as they once were. This was labeled ***coming out of shell***. It was repeatedly mentioned that youth who may have once been shy had become much better at engaging in conversations with people, speaking out, and developing connections. “I’m more outgoing than like before. When I’m with my peers, cause before [Agency A] I wasn’t as talkative as before, but now I like to talk a lot with my friends” (Agency A Youth Member – Harry).

Before I was always like, in the back, like, I...I would always have everybody else’s input and I never input mine in. But now I, I like being a part of the group and sharing my ideas that I have. I’m confident...I learned how to, to be engaged more at class, like in school, for my teachers, I would always be like the shy one to never really raise my hand, so that helped me a lot...I use to be like, I use to be that shy person, and I never wanted to be like involved with people, but like once I was a part of a team, I overcame that and I’m, now I am still struggling on it but I think I am past it. (Agency A Youth Member – Katherine)

Before I didn’t really like talking to people and I was scared so I stayed in my room and stuff... I was really really scared of talking to people... Yeah and now if people bother me before I couldn’t tell them to stop because I was scared of everybody except for my parents and my brothers and sisters, and now if somebody bothers me I can tell them stop. (Agency A Youth Member – Kayla)

Well, I wasn’t that big or much of an open kid before but now that I’ve been going to [Agency A] I was able to be open to the staff and other people and like when it came to

recreational sports I was able to open up to other people around my age. I was able to communicate and use team work. (Agency A Youth Member – Martin)

Cause like now I'm not just shy to like say hi, like if I don't know someone I'm going to go "Hi my name is Ed", I'm going to introduce myself. I wouldn't be shy. I don't know. I would introduce myself... If I was put in a group with random people and then like I need to get something done, I wouldn't just like stay back and just be one of the odd people out, I'll go into the conversation and be like yeah this is what we should do. To get stuff done. (Agency A Youth Member – Ed)

Another form of confidence described by participants fell into the category of youths' **positive views of themselves** acknowledging that they had skills and qualities (teamwork, leadership skills, physically active) that were not common among peers in their community. Also within the overarching theme of confidence is the category **sure of self** which is where youth become confident in their own abilities. An example of this is expressed by a senior staff member who routinely runs the sport leadership league.

This year I have a 12 year old, probably one of the best basketball players I've seen at 12 years old ever. He's shy, he's timid, and for the first game he didn't even want to come out from the bench. I told him ok it's your turn. He goes "coach can I skip this game". I ask why...he's very scared of attention. So, so it takes me about a month or two to instill in him that he can do this and eventually he'll come out of the bench and he'll start playing and play well. (Agency A Staff – Gary)

Lastly, it was described that youth in this program develop a **positive view of their future** having made a decision of what they want to do when they are adults and striving to achieve that goal.

A lot of them have, I guess, discovered, kind of what it is they want to do with their life. Whether it's...a good number of them might be professional athletes, that's what they want to do, so some sense of meaning, some sense of direction. (Agency A Senior Staff – Ron)

Connected. This fourth C was also apparent within the responses of the participants. Among the venues where youth have been able to develop connections with important individuals in their lives are *at the organization* itself including their *peers* at the organization, the junior and senior *staff* and the *volunteers*. However, utilizing new characteristics like their enhanced social/communication skills and confidence, youth are able to make new friends and peers *outside of the organization* as well including one youth in particular, Harry, who became a part of his student council at *school*. Also mentioned was that some youth had been able to, over time, develop better relationships with their direct *family*. However, youth had even mentioned developing connections with *community members* (i.e., adults in their own neighbourhoods) such as one individual, Katherine, who worked with her community to fundraise money in order to build a new park or Brandon who was well connected with his church community. *Teachers* were also individuals who youth mentioned striving to build healthy relationships with due to the benefits that being on good terms with a teacher could have for them.

With teachers, like, not that much people get along with teachers a lot, that's my opinion...now I do... that means like, I might actually focus on the task. If I have a good relationship with them...and they can put a word out to other teachers and stuff. (Agency A Youth Member – Katherine)

Contribution. According to Cs model, youths' development of all the qualities highlighted are more inclined to, and better equipped to, contribute back towards their

community and civil society. Whether or not each youth exemplified all the Cs in this model was not addressed in this study, however, it was discovered that youth who were a part of Agency A were avid *contributors to the organization* and/or *contributors to their communities* at large through volunteering activities. Since Agency A offers youth various opportunities to contribute to the program many of the youth interviewed expressed that they often take up these opportunities on their free own will. For instance the youth will help out with the sport programs (by being team coordinators/assistant coaches, or score keepers), helping to maintain the facility (cleaning, putting equipment away back in storage), helping out with other younger members (helping them with homework, stopping arguments between children, helping kids to read), or assisting leaders with operations (helping behind the coat check/sign-in desk, helping prepare daily snacks in the kitchen). However, it was expressed through interviews that youth are also involved in their schools (e.g., student council) and their own communities.

I remember last year, we had uhh, there's the community rep who was building a play structure and they needed volunteers in the community to help out. And I saw some of the kids from my soccer team (at Agency A) and some of the kids from the [Agency A] leadership program and stuff. Instead of coming to soccer they went there to help out their community build the play structure for the younger kids. (Agency A Staff – Shawn)

Well recently we just built a park in our community...It was like a challenge to raise money, and uhh, all like, like, about like 150 people came together. Just like random people who all built it and it was actually a pretty cool park...We sold food, yeah, and t-shirts. (Agency A Youth Member – Katherine)

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that many volunteers and staff at Agency A, including some of the staff interviewed, were former youth members themselves *choosing later on to volunteer and in*

some cases become staff.

[Agency A] is where I grew up, from 1990 to 1997 I use to be a member for the [Agency A], particularly this [Agency A] where I was a youth, and umm, and it was one of my fond memories so going to a college or a sort of higher education, it was always at the back of my mind but that was something special and I remember how the youth workers use to make me feel so when I had the opportunity to volunteer or come back to the city and volunteer, umm, there was no hesitation and when I was offered a part time position I was very glad, umm, to work with the youth of course. (Agency A Staff – Gary)

Table 1

Themes for Agency A

Inputs	Activities
Context • Adequate Funding • Opportunities to Contribute within the Organization • Skill Building Opportunities • Skill Application Opportunities • Comfortable, Positive, Welcoming Atmosphere ◦ Safe Space ▪ Physical Safety and Security ▪ Judgement Free • Interaction Opportunities • Rules and Expectations • Fun and Engaging • Variety of Activities	Direct Strategies • Communicate Rules and Expectations • Disciplinary Approach – Youth Centered ◦ Separate from Rest of the Group, ◦ Discuss What They are Doing Wrong, • Discuss What They Can Do Right • Mentorship/Offering Guidance • Progression of Programs ◦ 1. Relational Time ◦ 2. Preliminary Discussion ◦ 3. Game or Activity ◦ 4. Debrief & Reflection ▪ On Performance ▪ On Lesson • Teachable Moments
External Assets • Community Assistance ◦ Volunteers/Community Members Contribute ◦ Motivational/Educational Speakers ◦ Schools Cooperate ▪ Teachers (Point of Contact) • Family Collaboration ◦ Reinforce Development at Home ◦ Family and Staff Converse Often • Peers ◦ Older Youth As Role Models • Staff ◦ Developmentally Supportive Qualities ▪ Approachable ▪ Attentive ▪ Caring ▪ Enthusiastic ▪ Helpful ▪ Inclusive ▪ Proactive ▪ Respectful	Indirect Strategies • Developing Relationships and Trust ◦ Conversing Often With Youth ◦ Playing Games with Youth • Encourage Youth to Contribute to the Community • Encourage Youth to Join Programs & Activities • Offering the Youth Motivation/Encouragement • Positive Reinforcement • Role Modeling • Lifting Participation Barriers ◦ Free for Youth ◦ Transportation Provided ◦ All Necessary Equipment Provided • Assisting with Youths' Achievements ◦ Resume Preparation ◦ Interview Preparation ◦ Providing Volunteer and Job Opportunities ◦ Help with University Applications ◦ Post-secondary Scholarships ◦ Attending Special Events

Table 2

Themes for Agency A (continued)

Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
• Number of Registered Members • Youth Engagement ◦ Attendance Numbers ◦ Number of Youth Participating in at Least 1 Program • Youth Achievements In Program ◦ Number of Youth Moving from 'Problem Child' Status to 'Well Behaved' Status ◦ Number of Youth Earning Rewards ◦ Number of Rewards Earned by Each Youth ◦ Number of Youth Becoming Volunteers/Staff at Program • Youth Achievements Out of Program ◦ Report Card Grades ◦ How Often Do Youth Complete Their Homework ◦ Number of Youth Employed in Part-time Jobs ◦ Number of Youth Graduating Secondary School ◦ Number of Youth Intent on Post-secondary Education	• Life Skills ◦ Leadership Skills ◦ Social and Communication Skills ◦ Teamwork and Cooperation Skills ◦ Academic Skills ▪ Devoted to School Work/Homework ▪ School Performance ◦ Responsibility ◦ Self-Regulation ▪ Time Management ▪ Focus ◦ Initiative ◦ Positive Attitude ◦ Problem Solving ▪ Conflict Resolution ◦ Coping Skills ▪ Handling Disappointment ◦ Decision Making ◦ Emotional Regulation ◦ Goal Setting ◦ Work Ethic ◦ Honesty ◦ Listening Skills ◦ Patience ◦ Trust	• Competence/Skill Transfer ◦ At School ◦ With Other People ◦ At Home/With Family ◦ In Sports ◦ At Job/Employment/Job Interview ◦ In Community/Volunteering • Caring/Character ◦ Helpful/Willingness to Volunteer ◦ Reduction in Trouble and Problem Behaviours ◦ Respect ◦ Role Model for Others • Confidence ◦ Coming Out of Shell ◦ Positive View of Self ◦ Positive View of Future ◦ Sure of Self • Connection ◦ Internal to the Organization ▪ Peers ▪ Staff ▪ Volunteers ◦ External to the Organization ▪ Community Members ▪ Families ▪ School Peers ▪ Teachers • Contribution ◦ Member Turned Volunteer/Staff ◦ Volunteering at Organization ◦ Volunteering out of Organization

Case Two – Agency B

Thirteen of the participants in this research were youth members (n = 8) and senior staff (n = 5) of Agency B located in Ottawa, Ontario. All the senior staff, who overlook various aspects of this organization, were interviewed individually at the Agency B head office outside of program hours for a period of five weeks. Meanwhile, the eight youth (aged 15 and 16), including males (n = 2) and females (n = 6), were members of the third (and highest) level of the leadership program, Leaders in Training (LIT). These individuals were approached through an hour long focus group interview and voluntarily contributed to the questions asked of the investigator while senior staff supervised. The group of youth at Agency B were the only individuals in this study to undergo a focus group as a method of data collection. The reason for this is that the LIT program (and all Agency B programs) only occurs once a week, for roughly nine weeks per session, for a period of three hours. This meant that youth were present in this program for a limited amount of time as opposed to the other two organizations in this research where youth are able to come in every day for several hours after school. Therefore, staff sought to utilize every moment available in the highly structured LIT program and it was feared that interviewing each youth for 30 minutes or more would deprive them of an important aspect of the program. The organization agreed to devote an hour of one night to interviewing all of the youth in this particular program as a group.

The youth who were a part of LIT 3 were considered to have undergone substantial positive development and have demonstrated exceptional behaviour, leadership, and life skills as they had to have graduated two previous levels of LIT to get to level three. The senior staff had also confirmed that youth involved in the focus group (1) had been a member of the organization for a prolonged amount of time and (2) had both achieved and demonstrated positive

development during their time in the organization hence why they were in LIT 3 in the first place. Each senior staff interviewed overlooked various aspects of the program with Bruce in particular being in charge of the three levels of LIT. See Tables 3 and 4 for a complete list of themes derived from interviews at Agency B.

Inputs

Interviews with youth and senior staff revealed themes that once again will conform to the logic model format and have several similarities and differences to the findings from Agency A. Similarly, the inputs category was separated into contextual factors (properties of the programs themselves) and external assets (the individuals involved in supporting youths' positive development).

Contextual factors. Once again, one of the main cruxes of an organization's ability to engage in PYD is the provision of *opportunities for skill building*. In the case of Agency B, a variety of sport-based, art-based, and science-based recreational activities are offered through their camp, community programs, and LIT programs that are specifically geared towards the development of life skills, other skills, and positive behaviours. In the LIT program many of these skill building opportunities are team-building activities that take place either on weekday nights in the inner-city community centres (e.g., designing a gumball machine) or at the summer camps (e.g., low rope courses). Furthermore, and unique to the LIT program at Agency B, youth will often engage in special projects with external organizations from the Ottawa community.

With LIT 3 we actually got them to pitch ideas to, uhh... the engineering not-for-profit.

They have applications for large scale projects. If the youth come up with an idea and can market the idea and talk about the idea and work with the university students to get blue prints and a budget for an idea, they can put that in for an application to get funding for

the project that they're planning. So they have a large project in place to hopefully get solar powered water, like solar powered heat, so that they can get hot water on their island at camp. So it's kind of cool that they got to get through this process... They took turns presenting their ideas to the leaders and that truly took a lot of various leadership skills through planning and presentation and all that. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

Opportunities for skill application are also made available in programs at Agency B to allow youth to utilize the life skills they were taught within programming including adaptability, leadership, patience, problem solving, responsibility, and teamwork skills. This can include contributing to the LIT program, community programs, or assisting at the camp.

So every night the LITs have specific roles in the evening, whether it's planning a small game or a reflection question or setting up dinner because we eat dinner together every week or cleaning up after dinner. So, each small group of LITs and one volunteer leader will do a task every week. Ummm...we just need to show that teamwork and small responsibility that they can kind of champion and show that they're doing a good job and taking on that responsibility. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

When they become LITs the following year when they're 14 or 15 years old they have...they become very involved in the program in a very different way. They...still do some of their own skills but they help run programs for the younger kids. So say there's a camp-wide program, they might be helping run a station. They shadow cabins which means they will follow a counsellor around and help a counsellor as they [supervise] their cabin during the day or sometimes multiple days. They will sit with cabins at meals and...ummm...get to talk with the kids and essentially pick up...essentially counsellor related duties. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

Opportunities to contribute within the organization, as was alluded to above, allow youth to engage in voluntary activities that assist the leaders of programs at Agency B. In LIT this can involve helping the staff and volunteers run activities for the younger youth in the community programs or assisting counsellors at camp. However, other ways youth are allowed to contribute across all the programs at the organization include helping out the leaders with important roles (e.g., setting up snacks and dinners, leading activities, cleaning up). “Every night the LITs have specific roles in the evening, whether it’s planning a small game or a reflection question or setting up dinner because we eat dinner together every week or cleaning up after dinner” (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce).

We also do the snack at the end of every, uhhh, every hour or hour and a half of program. Sometime we’ll have the kids arrange that, like set it up, and make sure that every kid only gets one and that sort of thing...sometimes we might ask one of the kids to be a ref or to keep an eye on people who are not following the rules. (Agency B Senior Staff - Loraine)

Another way youth can contribute to the organization is by providing their input and feedback into how Agency B runs.

We evaluate at the end of every session and give them a chance to speak their mind. If they enjoyed the session, if they thought it was helpful...And we're trying to implement the things they say in some way shape or form. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

They have some buy in to this program. It’s not just us sitting there saying this is what we’re going to do. They have a little bit of choice. They can...uhh...offer and input and these are the things we want to do. And sometimes its crazy stuff that we can’t do but

sometimes it's really good stuff that we can work with. (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine)

Opportunities for networking come in the form of having youth connect with each other, having youth and staff/volunteers developing personal relationships, and also exposing youth to individuals from other organizations and entities within the Ottawa community. “Opportunities for connecting with different organizations in the community. We have, I think, five community partners that work with LIT right now. Ummm...so that's exposure to different types of careers” (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce).

[Agency B] have been with me...for the past five years, ever since I came to Canada, and honestly, there's a lot of good people in there, ummm...so people often go but you just come in and every time you...you make a lot of friends, you see the different kind of people that are out there, and it really gives you a chance to interact with other people. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Interview participants described Agency B as being a place in which interactions between peers or between youth and adults are common place and occur with ease. **Opportunities for interaction** that lend themselves towards these programs being an easy place for youth to interact and form relationships include regular ‘check-ins’.

All of our programs start with a check-in so that, they're sitting down in the gym in a circle. And they talk about their day or they talk about their weekend or they talk about anything. The last time I did a check-in I asked the kids if they could meet anybody dead or alive, who would they want to meet? And it's just a nice and fun way to just get them to talk with, so practicing some emotional literacy, talking about how their day was, talking about who their favorite sports figure is. (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine)

Activities that occur with smaller and more tight knit groups in which everyone is working towards a common goal also contributes to the ease at which youth can connect with others.

LIT goals, something I started this year, is something that you're getting a smaller chunk of time with a smaller and specific group of people that might not be your closest friends. You're not just in your clique, you're with another group of people doing a task. So it's kind of building up other relationships as well and I think that's something that's really going to help. I've already seen some positive outcomes but again I think over the long term it's going to work even more. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

A typical session of LIT at Agency B is really small (8 to 10 participants per group) making it an easier and more comfortable environment for the youth to make connections. Moreover, opportunities for youth to get together in an interactive setting such as nightly dinners are also present. Nevertheless, negative interactions between youth certainly occur in Agency B and careful monitoring by the leaders involved is needed to intervene and remind youth that only positive interactions are tolerated. "I mean yeah, there's always going to be some bullying or teasing which we are, we are not ok with and like we will address it" (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie).

Interview participants also described a ***comfortable, positive, and welcoming atmosphere*** at programs in Agency B. Part of the staff's facilitation of this atmosphere is setting a positive tone through enthusiasm and friendliness towards the youth. "Making sure I say hi to every single LIT that's there, and that they know that I'm, that I notice them and that they're there and they matter" (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce). Another component of this comfortable, positive and welcoming atmosphere described through interviews was Agency B being like a family or a community. "This is like our second home, we're really comfortable with each other, we can say

anything around each other” (Agency B Youth Focus Group). Adding to the connectedness and family or community feel of the program is that the senior staff are consistently in contact with the families of the youth, whether that is on the phone or going right to their communities and homes, through a strategy entitled Active Pursuit.

We talk to the parents every week. Ummm...soo there's always feedback. I'm always walking in the community and kids are running up to me and chatting with me. Parents are talking to me. You're at parents' doors for an hour or an hour and a half. So you're, you're just a big family because you know everybody. You know all the kids, you know their story, you're seeing them constantly, consistently. So that's...we just...we all care about each other and I think that's very different than a lot of other programs. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Another component of the subjective atmosphere is that it is a *safe space* and an environment without judgement where youth are free to express themselves.

When they come to programs it's a safe space, if they need to talk they can talk, if they don't want to that's ok...it's kind of like a safe space and it's like what happens here stays here, like we can talk about whatever you want to talk about, ummm.... Obviously, there's more concerning issues like we'll obviously address them. But like if they just want to talk about their day, if they had a bad day, or if someone is bullying them, or if they got a bad grade, they can talk about it. (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Like I don't know a kid who would talk about sex or drugs or something with somebody else but they're able to come and be comfortable and talk to us about that kind of stuff and know that it's ok. Or talk about mental health or that they've thought about suicide or something like that. So, ummm...I think they just feel comfortable, they feel loved, cared

for, ummm...which a lot of them don't necessarily have elsewhere. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Another aspect of the atmosphere is its *positive focus* as described in this excerpt by Katrina where she explains that youth problem behaviours are seen less as their fault and more a result of a lack of development or a skill deficit.

It's positive because I think we...we try not to focus on what's going wrong with the kids...if a child is exhibiting a certain kind of negative behaviour, it's because of a skill deficit and the focus should not be on just focusing on the kind of bad things on what the child is doing. The focus is on what does this child need right now and what kind of skill deficit might be leading to their behaviours and how can we promote that skill development. And of course that's all done through a very positive approach of trying to look at the opportunity rather than just looking at the negative. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Lastly, it was also mentioned repeatedly that Agency B was an incredibly '*inclusive*' program in which every child, no matter of what challenges they may bring, would be accepted.

They might be coming with physical and emotional, different capabilities, physically, emotionally, behaviourally, umm...you know, a kid pretty much has to like, be really really violent before we don't take them into the program. We'll take just about anything else. So ummm, the idea is that every kid starts at the starting line, and we want to make sure that they progress, uhh, positively and effectively and not all kids can do this in the same way so we make sure that our program, um...we design our program to suit any kid and that might mean having an extra one-on-one, we're going to find a volunteer that can hang out with this kid every single week. So he can succeed just like every other kid who

doesn't necessarily need a one-on-one support...we're not in the business of turning people away if we can avoid that. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

Our programs are constantly changing and being able to include everybody...We have a lot of kids with like ADD and ADHD. We have a kid with autism, and global learning disability. Ummm...kids coming from all types of backgrounds, living all over the city as well...some of them have been moved around, have been in group homes, or foster care for a short time, so it's, again, working with all types of kids. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

It was also explained that, even when the youth had been kicked out of programming due to extreme circumstances (e.g., refusing to listen to instructions after many warnings or violent behaviours), they are always accepted back into the program in the next session to try again.

Ensuring youth spend a *significant amount time in the program and promoting consistency* was also voiced by most of the staff interviewed and the youth focus group as being a particular emphasis of the program. On the one hand, many participants of Agency B will remain members for the greater part of their young lives.

We start when they're six, we let them into the program and most of our kids, if you ask them how long they've been a part of [Agency B], they'll say 7 or 8 years. Which is kind of a testament that we stick with them in the long-term. So that by the time they're in their youth they already have this investment and this care about [Agency B] and that it's been a big part of their lives and I think that's a real strength, is that it's not just something that they found when they were 13 or 14 years old but it's something that's been a part of their lives. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

It is believed by staff at the organization that maintaining youths' participation for as long as possible will be developmentally beneficial for them. For instance, the LIT program, as condensed as it is, involves three sessions of advancing tiers that, if youth remain in the program and continue to enroll into the higher tiers, have them engaged in roughly 30 total weeks of leadership training. The Active Pursuit approach, in which staff consistently communicate with youths' families, was attributed as one of the ways that the program was able to encourage youths' consistent participation. The reason for this is that: (1) it maintains a relationship between staff and youths' families and (2) staff use these conversations to encourage continued membership and enrollment. Another aspect of consistency used in the organization is the employment and recruitment of its staff and volunteers for a long-term basis, with very little turnover. This gives staff and volunteers enough time develop close personal relationships with the youth.

Obviously the kids will have their favourite people at the program like a favourite volunteer or something. So like, that's also a really good thing, cause then they have a good connection with another adult figure so I think, we're able to provide those positive role models in their lives consistently because all our volunteers come every week like maybe on the off week they can't make it, but they're committed from September to May kind of thing. So getting the kids, you know, those consistent people in their lives.

(Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Katrina indicated that since the kids, staff, and volunteers stay a part of the program for many years (some staff and volunteers are present throughout most of the youths' time in the program) it provides the leaders ample time to facilitate changes in the youth who need it. She describes

one particular individual who was disruptive and had difficulties sitting still and focusing and how it took years of work on behalf of consistent staff members to change those habits.

It's patience, and working with him all the time and, expectations constantly like, you know that this is the expectation...But yeah having to be patient and working with him for a long time, cause it doesn't happen overnight, it takes a long time to change a child's behaviour...It's been three years working with him for myself and ummm...be we've seen a huge dramatic change in those three years so being persistent in working with him, it obviously pays off. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

It was made clear in the interviews that ***staff and volunteers are well prepared*** to take on the challenges of running programs at Agency B. For instance, time is set aside for training and ensuring that new staff and volunteers possess the skills they need (e.g., patience) but are also knowledgeable about some of the processes and strategies that are undertaken in the program that aid youths' positive development (e.g., specific questions used at check-in/check-out). Staff must also be knowledgeable about how discipline is to be carried out with youth who misbehave (which here also follows a youth centred approach). Lastly, senior staff, who are very knowledgeable on program goals and objectives in addition to how to deal with youth, are always supporting more junior staff and volunteers in some capacity. This can include regular conversations with the volunteers and staff at various times of the year or senior staff and junior staff or volunteers cooperating on designing and structuring programs together. Sometimes, senior staff also attend programs and supervise junior staff and volunteers. At camp junior staff and volunteers are always supervised by Philip.

I just kind of make sure that...umm...I'm present and certainly, that's what, in terms of [Agency B] staff, we try to do to make sure we're always present. They know we're there

for them. We check in and ask how they're doing, ask how things are going and try to support that way. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

The youth in Agency B are also expected to abide by a set of unwritten **rules and expectations** that are all geared towards not only ensuring the safety of the youth in programs but developing habits that would help them become good citizens in the future. Among the rules of the program, voiced by the interview participants, are mandatory attendance (i.e., you are out of the program if you miss three consecutive weeks), must contribute to check-in and check-out conversations, no bullying, no electronics, no negative language, no physical contact, no violence or disrespect to oneself or others, participate in activities, punctuality (i.e., you cannot participate in activities if you are 15 minutes late to the program or more), respecting others, and talk to staff when facing any issues with transportation to and from programs (they have various means to help youth alleviate those issues). Mandatory program attendance and punctuality were two very unique expectations of youth at Agency B. The staff interviewed made it clear that they do not run drop-in programs and they believe the youth should take them seriously by coming in the same time every week and coming in on time. The reason for this is that every session occurs once a week for only a few hours and, for the youth to actually gain everything they can out of the programming, they must be in attendance at every moment possible within the limited time available. Therefore there are rules in place that dictate consequences for youth who do not show up for a certain amount of sessions and are late (unless there are extenuating circumstances) to drive home the message that attendance and punctuality are important.

Other contextual aspects included **fun and engaging activities** (utilizing activities the youth find inherently interesting to keep them engaged and coming back), **low ratios** (equalizing the amount of staff and volunteers per child as possible to provide greater support– with some

programs having 1:1 ratios), and **structure** (STAR, LIT, and camp are stringently scheduled from beginning to end).

External assets. As is consistent throughout all the organizations in this study, youths' positive development is contingent on the individuals involved in the process. Agency B relies a great deal on the staff and volunteers involved in program delivery but also benefits significantly from the families of the youth in the program, the community at large, and in some capacity the youth and alumni of Agency B. Once again a theme that emerged was that **staff** had developmentally supportive qualities. Unfortunately, information from youth for this case was limited as it was only collected from them during a single focus group in which not a lot of information was divulged about staff qualities. Thus quotes from staff participants make up most of the evidence supporting this theme with focus group quotes only supporting three of the 10 qualities presented. These developmental qualities included being approachable, attentive, caring, enthusiastic, experienced, helpful, inclusive, patient, proactive, and respectful.

Approachable: I know one of my experiences like now from the five to six months, the past two months, really seeing the youth open up more, connect more, like trust you.

Kind of see you as a person that they can go to for things. And with the leaders too, we have some great leaders or volunteers that make a huge difference in the kids as well.

(Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

First we come in, we come and just, we wait for everybody to come inside, ummm...and at that time we start talking to catch up a little bit on what happened during the week when we didn't see each other...Umm...also...gets us to know like, [names a leader] who is a new leader here for 2 weeks, and you could, in between those times, you can just talk to them and learn new things about them. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Attentive: I think you'll see if someone is not having a good night. Our volunteers and myself are kind of good at giving them some one-on-one time. Checking in and seeing how they're doing. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

Caring: They're able to build really good relationships with them which helps show good mentorship, ummm...shows that, uh, they care and that they're invested in them building those skills as well and that they're able to talk to them too is super important. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Enthusiastic: Bringing in the right volunteers, so people that actually want to work with kids and are patient and attentive and are good listeners and are able to really support these kids, again, at face value. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

Experienced: I've been working with [Agency B] through the camp as a junior counsellor in 2005 and have been involved with them in some capacity every year since with the exception of one year. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

Helpful: They have strong mentors who they can use either for advice or just to model their behaviour off of. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

We haven't been with all these same leaders for the last three years of LIT, we've been in contact with many different people and in my opinion, every single one of those people that I came in contact with had taught me something new. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Inclusive: I think that being really flexible as well and adaptable to the children's needs, ummm...and what they want out of it, ummm...works really really well so, if you're noticing that the kids are coming in with a lot of focusing issues or ummm...you know...having programs with emotional literacy or mental health or being able to work

as a team or have good communication, we're going to really build a program that focuses on that. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Also I was so shy at the beginning because I didn't know English so I didn't know what to do when I...now it's just ummm...they...the leaders and the people here include you and it makes you feel comfortable. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Patient: Just by being patient with the kids, ummm...just trying to get the staff to always remember that they're working with kids who live in poverty, they're working with kids that have a lot of challenges. So that they're going, as adult role models they're going to need to be extremely patient with these kids...we train the counsellors to be very patient. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

Proactive: For the program team like we're always thinking about how we can make it better, what can we change, what else can work, like I have a list of stuff at my desk that I want to change or maybe further develop for next year. (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Respectful: It's more my style. I think, being respectful of all who's in there is a part of LIT and if I'm not showing that respect then I can't expect to get it either. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

Older youth are also utilized as role models which provides younger youth an upstanding individual to look up to who is not too different from them while providing the older youth with the opportunity to contribute positively to the program and learn leadership skills. Again, youth participants did not express any pressure or difficulty associated with this role but appeared proud to be looked up to by younger kids in the program.

And yeah, at times things can get out of hand, but like, being a leader shows the kids that

you're that one who's responsible for them so you can make an impact on their life.

So...like, what I mean by that is like, every...like these kids come to camp right? And they look for someone to be like a role model. And we have to be that role model for the kids. Umm...so like we have to have patience, we have to have leadership, we have to have like, enthusiasm, all that stuff. Cause like you have to be responsible for the kids to take them from place to place. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Youths' families are also very involved in the PYD process at Agency B. According to interview participants the *senior staff and youths' families converse often*, typically on a weekly basis. Weekly conversations are a part of a process called Active Pursuit in which, once a youth is registered, senior staff call their homes or go to their homes in person (less often) at some point before the program for the day begins and asks whether or not the child or teen is attending. If youth are members of a variety of programs their families will be called by the senior staff multiple times a week to ensure the youth are attending each of those programs. However, Loraine mentions that doing this not only reminds and pressures the youth to attend the program every week but opens up channels of communication and relationships between parents and staff that can be helpful for the parents.

[They will] actually come back and will ask us for advice or ask us for resources, ummm...because they need some help. And it could be...you know...my kid needs a tutor, I...you know stuff like that. "Awesome, here's a phone number you can call" or whatever. (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine)

Moreover, these calls allow staff to gain information from the parents such as changes that they are noticing in their children as a result of their participation at Agency B which works as feedback for the effectiveness of the programs. "You hear stories from parents telling about how

their youth kind of went through a hard time and is now on the other side of it” (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce).

Having a relationship with the parents, like...I mean...like for every parent it varied but it's really important and key I think for us cause we can, we get a little bit more information maybe than your average organization so we can work to serve our kids a little bit better. (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Though phone calls are the mandate for Active Pursuit it was also explained by Natalie that the use of social media websites (e.g., message applications) may be a better way of reaching some of the parents and will be used if it seems more useful. It was also mentioned that Agency B, to the best of their ability, schedules yearly meetings with parents from the time the youth enroll in programs. Furthermore, before they enroll, entry interviews are conducted with the parents to get as much information on the youth as possible in order to know how to approach them appropriately during program delivery. Meetings and discussions with parents will also be pushed by the staff if they are experiencing significant issues with particular youth. Situations in which meetings concerning youth who create issues occur include: when something is going on with the youth that has staff concerned with their safety and well-being, when youth are being difficult at the program and staff want advice from the parents on how to best deal with them, when youth miss three sessions and must be out of the program as per rules, or when youth want to re-integrate into the program after being removed for extreme cases. It was also described that *youths' families can directly contribute to the organization* by (1) providing input and suggestions for programs and (2) donating resources and money (if possible).

Assistance from the community at large is also a significant contributor to the organization and invaluable towards youths' positive development. First, the various Agency B

programs occur out of *venues provided for free*, specifically community centres run by the City of Ottawa. Second, the organization highly utilizes *volunteers* that consist often of former members but also people from the Ottawa community who donate their free time to help out the program at no cost. Volunteers assist staff in delivering programs and help set up their summer and winter camps before the youth attend. However, the organization's board of directors is also made up completely of volunteers with different professional backgrounds (e.g., child psychology researchers, social service sector employees) determining the direction of the organization. Third, the organization *receives donations, both monetary and resources* (e.g., food for snacks and dinners), from various private donors (i.e., organizations and individuals) from all over the greater Ottawa area. "Auto School Art supports all of our art programs so they pay for all of our supplies and everything for our instructor. So like they are an outside support and help (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie). It was also discussed that the bus tickets that are provided to the youth to ease the cost of transportation are donated by Ottawa's transit department. Fourth, activities that go on in Agency B often occur in *partnership with outside organizations*. In the LIT programs 'workshops' occur in partnership with various community organizations.

We do workshops, so this year we've done, again, the community partners come in and we do workshops based on, kind of those...those things they don't get in school. So if it's workshops like idea generation where they come up with good ideas or we did a marketing and sales one, we did resume prep and interview prep. So some really practical stuff to get your career ready. What it's like to actually move out of your house, how to prepare yourself to be a young adult and things like budgeting and what does it cost to live out in the community. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

On top of that various projects that involve significant work, leadership, and cooperation are

occurring within LIT in partnership with external organizations that allow the opportunity to occur in the first place.

Ummm...so what we did with them [engineering non-profit] was they gave us the opportunity to create a project that we can make a real thing at camp and so we decided to do...hot showers?...Yeah the water, cause the hot water runs out pretty quick so we decided to create a new system to make the water, hot water last longer. And that's environmentally friendly. And of course this costs a lot of money so [engineering non-profit] was nice enough to give us enough money to be able to make this. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Fifth, similar to Agency A, *motivational and educational speakers* from the community will come into programs (especially LIT) in order to speak to or teach the youth lessons that they believe will contribute positively to their lives.

You really need a dynamic group of people to engage a dynamic group of youth. So it's just a mentality, cause there's many people in there. Like we've had engineering, business, marketing, entrepreneur, wildlife conservation, recreation...ummm... trying to get as many different types of careers, oh and we're getting the police to come in. So as much of a spread of different people from different parts so they can get a glimpse of what are all the different things that I could be doing with my life? So that's a big part of it too is...different characters but also different opportunities (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce).

On a last note, it was mentioned by Loraine that various *alumni from Agency B* have the opportunity to contribute to the program as well. One former youth member, now a prominent actor, is a supporter of the organization periodically donating money and consistently posting

about Agency B on social media. Other former members will provide similar support through donations or by contributing volunteer hours. However, it was also mentioned that Agency B plans to foster more relationships with Agency B alumni, something that is currently not a mandate within the organization. The reason for this is to see if they can draw further support from former members who are now experiencing success and may attribute some of that success to their time in the program.

We reach kids up until the age of 17 and 18. We do try to keep in touch with them. It is more formally when they go to college or university or what not. The idea though, this year, is to create a strategy to actually engage them more formally. Whether it's them getting a newsletter on the regular or volunteering or whatever. But trying to keep them within that culture as long as we possibly can. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

Activities

A set of strategies aimed at youths' positive development also came to light through interviews with senior staff and youth at Agency B that also fall into the categories direct and indirect approaches. The following strategies appear to be the most prominent actions used by the organization aimed at building youths' skills and encouraging positive behaviours.

Direct strategies. Once again, in line with Hellison's (2011) TPSR model, all Agency B programs are run utilizing a step-by-step format with what the senior staff interviewed called (1) check-ins (relational time), (2) teaching time (awareness talks), (3) the activity, and (4) checkouts (a mix of debriefing and reflection time). '**Check-ins**' or relational time occur at the beginning of the program for 10 minutes and consist of the youth sitting down in a circle and contributing to a discussion that begins with a question asked by the staff (e.g., How was your day/week? If you could meet anybody dead or alive, who would you meet?).

Basically it's a question or a game that gets everybody involved. Everyone gets to participate in some small way and you can gauge how people are doing with that, you can gauge if they're in a positive mood or if they're resisting participating...But yeah, it's a chance for everybody to get engaged a little bit. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

This is followed by the '*teaching time*' or awareness talk in which the skill, lesson or theme of the day, which will be further developed later in the activity, is taught to the youth (e.g., goal setting, teamwork). For example, in LIT they may have a particular night devoted to learning about goal setting and the youth will learn about the goal setting process using the acronym SMART (i.e., smart, measureable, achievable, realistic, timely). Also in LIT, due to the youth being more mature at that age, the leaders will have more pointed conversations about relevant topics in their lives (e.g., online bullying) by gauging their experiences with the topic but also ensuring they walk away from the conversation more educated on how to better conduct themselves in the future.

Following the awareness talk is *the activity* which provides the youth the opportunity to utilize and engage in the skill, lesson, or theme that is the focus for the day. The activity utilized that is tailored to the teaching of the skill is wide ranging and depends on the actual program that the youth are enrolled in (i.e., a sport in the sports programs, cooking in the cooking programs, art in the art programs).

Like we'll tailor it to be a drill that focuses on that. And then they'll play a game that works on that. And then they'll remind them that like, we're working on teamwork so you have to work...like they'll stop the game and remind them and give them hints and whatever can help work on the teamwork. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

However, the activities utilized in LIT are designed in a way that takes into account that the youth are more mature in this program and are capable of grasping more advanced concepts through more complex processes such as this activity aimed at teaching goal setting.

I blindfolded two people, gave them mini [hockey] sticks and some balls and kind of set them up. And then I put down a target while they were blindfolded and told them “hit the target”. And then we went through the process of like...when we all start in life, we don’t know what are goals are, we don’t have any clue, no understanding of what they are, where they are. So then I took the blindfolds off and said you can shoot at it and they still couldn’t really hit it. And then we got a hockey player and got him to come down and showed them how to do the right kind of shot and then talked about mentors and how we can get people in our lives to inform our plan. So we took it to a very practical level where they got involved and engaged and kind of got them interested in what is the goal. So kind of creative teaching in that way. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

After the activities follows the ‘*check-out*’ which abides by Hellison’s (2011) description of debriefing and reflection. These discussions ask the youth what they learned but also what they believe went right and wrong in the activity along with having the leaders input their opinions of what went right and wrong in the youths’ performance. Good performance is thus followed by positive reinforcement by the staff while areas that need improvement are met with a discussion on how the youth can improve on those areas in the coming weeks.

What they did well, so maybe it’s a certain physical skill or, you know they’re being very reliable or very honest or whatever they have been working on. And then we’ll talk about like, what are some good examples like, tell me how you think you did and what are some examples that you can talk about that show that? And then...if they’re having

difficulty with a certain skill or whatever, we'll talk about some examples or techniques on how they can work on it as well. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

This is also a chance for youth to provide their input on what they would like to see changed and if they have any recommendations for what they would like to do in the next few weeks. As mentioned before, the staff at Agency B are very flexible and are open to implementing youths' suggestions for the most part. Checkouts happen in every aspect of the organization including at the end of the day in the community programs and LIT, at night at the summer or weekend camps before the children go to sleep, and even among the LIT's volunteering at camp in order to gauge their experience (e.g., lessons, challenges, and successes).

The ***approach to discipline*** at Agency B also abides by a youth centred approach showing stark similarities to how it was carried out at Agency A. Once again, poor behaviour by the youth is followed by (1) taking them away from the group, (2) discussing why their behaviour is inappropriate, and (3) discussing how their behaviour can improve in the future. The importance of *taking them away from the group* is to get them to engage in a one-on-one discussion with one of the leaders but also to not call out or publicize their behaviour in front of the entire group which could be seen by the youth as embarrassing or disrespectful on the part of the leader. Discussions with the youth are aimed at *letting them know their behaviour is wrong*, but in a case where the youth is aware of the inappropriateness of the behaviour the leaders seek to find out what factors may be causing them to act out.

We really try to focus on, not just disciplining or not disciplining someone for doing something, but trying to get to the root of what's going on with them now or why are they acting a certain way...it's not happening because the kid wants to be doing this quote unquote bad behaviour, it's because the child has a skill deficit that is not allowing them

to be successful. So there's a certain social skill deficit...there's a certain character skills deficit, there's some kind of skill deficit, there's some kind of reason that the child is not exhibiting a positive behaviour, it's not about the child making a conscious decision.

"I'm going to bully that kid because I'm a mean kid". There's something else going on and we really try to get the staff to try to see it through that perspective so that it's less about punishing or controlling a child's behaviour and more about...trying to find out what those deficit skills are and working on building them. (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine)

The third component of dealing with behavioural issues *is helping youth understand the proper way to behave*, especially when a particular situation comes up in which they had difficulty properly conducting themselves.

Trying to teach them a more positive way to deal with something. So say a conflict comes up, rather than handing out a discipline and trying to talk to that camper or trying to talk to that LIT even and explain the situation and trying to explain or work out a solution that works for them, and one that's a bit more positive...if two LITs are having a conflict our solution is to, of course, to make sure it's a safe space and all that, but to work with them and try to find a solution that doesn't just manage behaviours but actually teaches them some important social skills. (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine)

Other activities that the staff at Agency B heavily utilize were categorized as ***mentorship or offering guidance***. In this way leaders are a good source of advice and life lessons for the youth. "Yeah. They all have, umm...different traits and characteristics and when you get to interact with them all you learn things from every single person so it's kind of neat to do that. To have that chance" (Agency B Youth Focus Group).

Ummm...we haven't been with all these same leaders for the last three years of LIT, we've been in contact with many different people and in my opinion, every single one of those people that I came in contact with had taught me something new. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

However, it is also worth noting that mentorship should not overstep its bounds and that, when providing youth help and support on a task, too much of it can take away from their ownership of their work and dampen their learning experience.

Cause even if some of the kids may need that one-on-one support...they're also capable of so many other things, so just making sure that they have the capacity and like the range to do it and we're not like...overbearing with us trying to help. So just kind of letting them do what they need to and being there if they need it kind of thing. (Agency B Senior Staff - Katrina)

One-on-ones between staff and youth are often utilized for those who appear to be having a bad day or are misbehaving in order for the staff to get a good grasp of what is going on with them and helping to alleviate their issues. For example, staff engage with youth who are involved in conflicts with each other and facilitate discussions to derive strategies to help resolve those conflicts. One-on-one time is also useful for checking on youths' current involvement in programs and near future plans which leaders can also help encourage and facilitate.

Checking with...following up, seeing what they're doing. Asking about their plans, asking about what they want to do after they're done high school. Are they planning to work at camp? If not are they planning to register as a camper in the LIT program? So it's just kind of following up, making sure that they're involved in programs and just asking how it's going in general. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

The LIT program at Agency B is also built around a ***logical progression*** and the skills taught and the activities utilized in each level is appropriate to the youths' stage of development. As indicated earlier LIT contains three levels occurring over a course of three years (thus youth involved can range from ages 13-16 – Grades 9-11). In summary, year one (LIT 1) is focused on introducing youth to leadership and having them see themselves as leaders; year two (LIT 2) is about having them working in a team while taking on leadership roles; and year three (LIT 3) is about having the youth be involved in the community in a leadership capacity. These three levels of LIT are described in-depth by Bruce, the senior staff in charge of the LIT program.

LIT 1 is seeing yourself as a leader and a lot of what we teach is reflection. Learning how to journal for example. Learning how to self-reflect, the value of that. So then they practice that throughout LIT, being able to look at themselves in retrospect. (Agency B Senior Staff - Bruce)

LIT 2 is about teamwork so we do all kinds of team based activities so they would learn to communicate with each other in small groups. Learn to take on roles that they're good at versus other people in the group... We're looking at also, kind of, skills assessment with LIT 2s, what do I need to be better at. The things I'm good at and the things I'm not so good at and trying to find which ways they can fill in those skills at this stage so they can make a better future and get an idea of what they want to do in the future. (Agency B Senior Staff - Bruce)

And then LIT 3 it's really about giving them the opportunity to lead on their own, giving them the opportunity to get into the community, the value of volunteering so many of our LIT 3s are actually also volunteers at [Agency B] and they do run programs. They're running various programs for the kids so there is a lot of responsibility and they're

learning to follow, kind of, ummm...the expectations of [Agency B] and then also dealing and working with, sometimes, difficult at-risk youths. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

As youth move on through the levels they are tasked with taking on more responsibility, further complex tasks, and greater amounts of leadership.

Sooo...say LIT 1, the volunteers and myself make the games and the kids participate and reflect. By LIT 2 the LITs get to join us in leading the game, kind of in the teamwork side of things, we all work together on what we're going to do, programming, and then by LIT 3 they have a chance to lead some of the programming and kind of steer the ship basically and decide a lot of what they get to do and want to do. The intensity of responsibility gets...the onus gets on them more. (Agency B Senior Staff - Bruce)

As youth move on through the levels of LIT they are more capable of taking on the responsibility, complexity, and leadership requirement of the tasks given to them at higher levels. Youth in LIT 3 should at that point be prepared to work with the younger youth in the organization, adults in the community, and complex collaborative projects (e.g., the solar powered water heater project described earlier) which is why these opportunities and projects are reserved to them.

In addition, senior staff interviewed acknowledge that it is important to **communicate rules and expectations** to the youth so they can be made fully aware of the behavioural conduct expected from them, especially since these are rarely ever written down. However, the staff interviewed also indicated that they make it a priority, in cases where youth break a rule or several rules, to re-iterate them to that individual. Moreover staff must ensure that youth are fully aware of the consequences of breaking these rules and expectations to divert them from future

negative behaviours and remind them that they take bad behaviour seriously.

Let's say I have an issue in a program one week with a certain kid and I'll be like ok if you keep this up and let's say next week, we'll have a discussion about it, like if you're not listening, if you're going to be disrespectful to another kid, like you know, that's not ok in programs and if you're going to continue to do that you're going to have to take time off of programs. So like letting them know that if they keep up these specific negative or bad behaviours that this is the consequence and if that's what you chose to continue doing then like the consequences, you're out of the program for a week.

(Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Lastly, the *use of teachable moments* or informing youth of where the skills and lessons taught can be used in their everyday lives, often comes up during group discussions after the skill was taught in the awareness talk and practiced in the activity. Lorraine discusses how Bruce utilizes teachable moments in the LIT program.

He is very good about introducing a theme and either coming back to it later in the day or the next week and having a conversation about it. What did we learn last week? Let's talk about it this week. Ummm....what did we learn last week that you can take beyond

[Agency B] and then having a conversation about that. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

Indirect strategies. Several strategies utilized by Agency B, aimed at youths' positive development can also be categorized as being indirect in that it does not immediately produce new skills or better behaviours but it is implied that they contribute to that outcome over time. The first of these is *Active Pursuit*, a unique endeavour employed by Agency B which has been shown to be an effective means of ensuring youth participation and attendance. Active Pursuit is the process in which, during the day before a program starts in the afternoon, staff in charge call

the families of the youth enrolled to remind them that it is occurring later on and to ensure that they are going. Again, Agency B is not considered a drop-in program and it is mandatory that the youth enrolled attend every week, unless extenuating circumstances apply. Calling the families directly and reminding them of the program helps to ensure this participation. Moreover, since this call occurs with families on a weekly basis (or even several days of the week for youth involved in multiple programs), staff interviewed mentioned that they often develop close connections and relationships with youths' families and these reminder calls will evolve into deeper conversations.

From week-to-week Natalie is calling [parent] everyday to remind [youth] to come to soccer everyday on Mondays and because [parent] recognizes Natalie's voice and hears from Natalie from week-to-week. Natalie becomes an outlet for her to become somebody that she can ask...just someone who's going to listen to the bad day that she's had. But again, opening that conversation so we know how [youth] is doing that day. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

Topics of these conversations, as mentioned by the staff interview participants, could be: reasons why the youth is not showing up to a program that day (e.g., they are sick); recommendations on where they can access resources for their children (e.g., tutors) which the staff can provide; whether or not the youth is having a bad day or if anything is going on at home that the staff should know about (so they can carefully approach that youth later on in the day); or whether the youth or parents have issues with the program that the staff can address. Active Pursuit is not simply about reminding youth to come into the program but to have an open channel of communication with their parents.

We do work with the family, that if there's a struggle we go that extra mile, we talk to the parents, we make sure that, you know, we're doing whatever we can to help them get into the program and to succeed. So we call that Active Pursuit...it's something that we cherish and it's a big part of our job to make sure we are pursuing our kids and not leaving them hanging. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

Active pursuit is not limited to the phone but also occurs through face-to-face interactions between staff and youths' families in their own communities and through the use of social media. This approach as a whole demonstrates the organization's philosophy that quality is better than quantity and they prefer to have the same kids consistently back in the program year-after-year as opposed to opening up the program to as many youth as possible who may or may not return.

Our model Active Pursuit means we are actively trying to get the same kids back into our program year after year so...as opposed to a model where we're just trying to impact as many kids as possible. We would rather focus on a smaller number of kids that we can bring back each returning year, and build additional skills, one on top of each other.

(Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

Another strategy heavily utilized by Agency B is ***positive reinforcement*** of well performed skills and proper behaviours. Staff interviewed described that, within programs, they employ a positive focus and openly bring attention to youth who demonstrate good behaviours and well performed skills while taking youth who display negative behaviours aside for discussion and not bringing attention to their conduct. Specifically for younger youth it was described as important that staff promote or congratulate them when they demonstrate behaviours that they consider positive and developmentally beneficial.

Positive reinforcement, if like they are doing something really well, and even if they don't know what they're doing and they're still doing it really well we're like "Yeah! You know you were great today"...ummm..."you know you really took charge of the situation...you know you showed initiative you know, thank you for leading the group".

(Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Rewards and incentives are also provided in exchange for youths' good behaviour and demonstration of skills. These are more tangible means of showing youth that their actions are appropriate.

And then at the end of the session a lot of my instructors give little awards out. Like most improved or...ummm...or you know. Somebody who was the best team player or most helpful, most responsible, that kind of stuff. So that also encourages them as well as an incentive to keep working on those skills as well. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

A method that is utilized in several of the community programs, generally with younger youth, is described by Loraine as rewarding particular behaviours that they want the youth to adopt.

They have a Bristol board. They're all represented on there, all the participants in the program. They get a sticker for showing up on time, for being respectful to each other, and for sharing a story at checkout. And even simple stickers, like...they're really attached to it, our younger kids love it because there's going to be an award at the end of it right? Soo...umm...and it's nothing big, it's like a toy from the dollar store or something...They're getting along with one another. Awesome, you get a sticker. The character piece. They're able to show...they're able to self-regulate, they're able to sit down quietly and be quiet and listen. Awesome you get a sticker. (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine)

Different kinds of awards and incentives are provided to some of the older youth, such as those in LIT, as a means to positively reinforce leadership. “We do give out individual awards to them, so one LIT might win the hardest worker award for his group. Ummm...or his or her group. Another LIT might win the strongest LIT award for example” (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine). Meanwhile various badges are awarded to LITs during their training to become camp volunteers and staff for the performance of more practical skills (e.g., canoeing, swimming). Another method of rewarding good behaviour utilized by Natalie in the community programs is allowing youth to choose which activities the group gets to play next (i.e., a part of the organization’s openness to youths’ input). However, this privilege is reserved to the youth who behave during the day (e.g., listen to instructions, participate, and stay positive).

Actions taken by staff at Agency B also fall into the category of ***role modeling*** in which leaders act as positive influences in the youths’ lives and set an example of good conduct. Essentially, staff and volunteers employed by the organization are those who are prepared to be an individual that youth can model their behaviours from. This is especially important in the lives of these particular youth as many are at-risk and are in need of positive adult role models. Moreover, life skills (e.g., social and communication skills) can be demonstrated to youth by having program leaders demonstrate these on a regular basis. It was also mentioned that, for the LITs becoming volunteers at the summer camp in particular, they look towards some of the older and more experienced staff members to see how they handle those roles. “At the same time [we] model how we want our volunteers and summer camp staff to be doing that as well. So you’re modelling for the LITs but you’re also modelling for the volunteers and younger staff members additionally” (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip).

It was also made apparent that leaders in the various Agency B programs prioritize

developing relationships and trust with the youth. This can be useful for the staff while also opening up numerous developmental benefits for the youth.

We're not going to get anywhere with our kids if we're not building trusting relationships with them. If they don't like us and they don't trust us, they're not going to give us the time of day, nor are they even going to come to programs anymore. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

So it's not necessarily. "[a youth] is misbehaving, Katrina can you come and take care of this"? The volunteer actually has the skills and the confidence to have that conversation, because they had some time to build the relationship together. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

So many kids as I build relationships with them, you know, I started with them as they were 10 or so and now they're in their teen years, they'll come to me and talk about serious things, drugs or whatever, and be able to say 'hey today my friend told me come smoke pot and I didn't but I smelt like it because I was with her but I didn't do it'. You know, being able to have those conversations and be honest and real. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Trusting relationships with youth develop over time and involve *regular positive interactions* between the youth and the leaders in programs at Agency B. An example of this is provided in an excerpt from Natalie's interview.

I have one kid in art that does comics, he has about 200 pages worth of comics, he works on his comics every week. So it's like, "what is your story this week", so we'll talk about this comic and like talk about his drawing and like who this guy is. So just like connecting to like their interests. (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

It would not be surprising to assume that such relationships could be difficult to establish with youth in this organization, compared to Agency A, as programs here occur once a week and may not provide enough time for trusting relationships to flourish. However, interview participants mentioned that the program's check-ins and check-outs provide a good venue for leaders to attempt to establish these trusting relationships as these constitute 15 minutes each that the leaders can engage in conversations with the group of youth. Moreover, considering the organization's focus on encouraging the same members to attend consistently for many years, over the course of youths' time in programs they are able to develop those relationships with staff and volunteers (who also tend to be consistent in the program) even when they may only meet with them weekly.

You come into our inner city program it's the same kids every week, it's the same volunteers and staff every week. So you build that relationship, you build that connectivity so you can kind of chat about life and what's going on and struggles and challenges. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Another strategy mentioned in interviews with participants included ***encouraging youth to contribute to the community***. This includes volunteering at the organization itself or within youths' own communities. "As we get later into the program we definitely have that idea of like, volunteering, you can do it with [Agency B]. But also opportunities, like the importance of volunteering in your community and being a community leader" (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce). In the coming session of LIT 3 after the interview took place it was planned to have youth experience community volunteering first-hand.

This coming session...we're hoping you get out to the community at times, go visit a not-for-profit, go help them out for the night, as what we do. As a very practical example of

“let’s go volunteer”. And really put our feet to the ground and give them that experience and that night that they’ll always remember. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

Staff also **encourage youth to join programs and activities**, especially encouraging them to join LIT when they get older. By getting more of their members to go into LIT they are also encouraging the development of more positive role models for the younger youth and potential future volunteers and staff for the program.

Working towards maybe like leadership. Especially if the kids get older, like some of my older kids, like I usually try to always remind them, “you know you’re one of the oldest kids here, like soon you can go into like Leaders in Training (LIT). (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

So I guess that...once at [Agency B] always at [Agency B]. We just...we try to get our kids involved in any way, shape, or form. Ummm...I try to be flexible, get our kids in at least one program per year. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

It was also mentioned that Agency B will, whenever they can, **provide resources to youths’ families** (e.g., the number of a good tutor that the staff know of).

And it [Active Pursuit] offers an opportunity for us to open the door to provide some resources for some families that might not necessarily access these kind of resources. So again, we are supporting our children in programs but it is a more holistic approach where we also try to offer service to our parents and use our resources, we can give them to them as well. (Agency B Senior Staff – Loraine)

A strategy entitled ‘**Word of the Week**’ is also utilized by staff within the community programs. At check-in the word (e.g., respect) is introduced and is then discussed between the instructor and the youth (e.g., “What does respect or being respectful mean to you”). At check-out, after the

activity has taken place the instructor will discuss the word and how it may have come up during the activity of the day (“Were you respectful today? How were you respectful? Do you like to be respectful?”). Similar strategies involving key words have been discussed in previous research (Camiré et al., 2012).

So we do all different gym activities and games where an instructor will bring a word in every week and it will kind of be like the word of the week. So it will be like Courage or Bravery or Respect or Kindness. Like working on different words and bringing those into the program and like talking about how they did that in program and how it can be beneficial and what it means to them...I guess to make, to get the kids to understand how like being kind to one another and being kind and being respectful are all important things. (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Other strategies include *lifting participation barriers* which at Agency B comprises *offering programs for free, offering free transportation* [e.g., providing bus tickets]; and *providing all necessary equipment* needed in programs. *Assisting with youths’ achievements* is another strategy used by Agency B similar to what was described within the Agency A data. In this case this also comprises offering *potential post-secondary scholarships* but for youth who work at the camp as staff. However, part of the LIT program is helping youth towards getting jobs and careers. This includes help with *resume preparation* involving teaching youth how to create a proper resume and helping them make one for themselves, *interview preparation* or teaching youth how to conduct themselves during job interviews, and providing *volunteer and job opportunities*. The latter is made possible through the networking opportunities offered to members as the LIT program connects youth to individuals from the many organizations and entities that partner with Agency B. However, youth who go through the LIT program also have

a great chance of being able to become volunteer counsellors or junior staff members at the Agency B camp.

We actually provided an opportunity that if you're in LIT you get priority status to become a junior staff at camp so that's often their first job. If you're in [Agency B] you go through LIT, your first paid position will be with [Agency B] so it's kind of a unique opportunity. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

Lastly, ***files and information on the youth*** are also kept by the senior staff at Agency B from the moment they enter the program with information being logged from the initial interview. These are extensive sources of information on each youth, consistently updated by their program leaders, which specify their developmental progress (e.g., skills that they possess) in addition to any unique qualities they possess or significant challenges they pose. This allows staff each year and across programs to remain informed on each of the youth they are in charge of and to know how to approach them in the coming session. These files are kept confidential from everyone except staff and are stored in a separate location from venues in which youth programs occur.

We keep quite extensive files on each kid. So the counsellors are able to, at the end of each session, write down what a child's social skills are like and if there's any specific challenges there so that the next counsellor the next year will know a little bit more about the kid but we'll also go to the families and ask them directly about the children, and it's quite an extensive interview so that gives the new counsellor a lot of background information on what that child should essentially be working on or challenges they've had throughout camp. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

Outputs

Interviews with staff and youth at Agency B also highlighted several factors constituting objective measures of program success towards PYD. These factors can be measured quantitatively, though again, actual numbers had not been specifically indicated but would differ from program to program. Within the category of *youth engagement* one metric that Agency B utilizes to determine success is youths' *attendance numbers* or whether the youth are coming to each program every single week. According to Loraine, attendance is a good indicator of whether the youth in the organization are both happy and engaged with their programs since they would simply not attend if they were not. As mentioned earlier, Agency B has never been as concerned with enrolling as many Ottawa youth as possible but has prioritized consistency and keeping the same youth coming back to the program week after week and session after session. Therefore, the number of youth attending programs is not as important of a metric for them as it was for Agency A. However, another more direct way to gauge *how many youth are enjoying the program* is through the use of check-ins (relational time) and check-outs (debrief and reflection) in which leaders will simply ask each youth whether or not they are enjoying the program.

Other objective metrics of program success involve *youth achievements within the program* which can easily quantify the development of better behaviours. Two of these are the *number of youth earning rewards provided by the program* along with the *number of rewards earned by each youth*. As mentioned earlier, rewards provided by Agency B for desirable behaviours included stickers (and a greater number of stickers leading to a bigger prize), badges that demonstrate their mastery of a practical camping skill (e.g., canoeing, swimming, camp craft), and individual awards of recognition (e.g., the hardest worker award for his/her group, strongest LIT award). Also, the *number of youth moving through programs* was highlighted as a

measurable indicator of positive development. In the case of the LIT program at Agency B there are three tiers that require youth to adequately fulfill the requirements of, and graduate through, the previous level before moving on to the more complex and advanced level that follows. On top of that the *number of youth becoming volunteers and staff* is another metric signifying whether or not Agency B is achieving success in PYD. Staff in the interviews explained that youth starting from being at-risk and coming from low-income communities to becoming leaders of the camp, community programs, and LIT programs themselves have undergone not only positive development but have also become interested in giving back and devoting their free time to the organization and the next generation of youth. The following excerpts demonstrate the importance of utilizing this metric as a measure of program success (though the values provided are estimates and not real metrics).

I would say, of the 70ish volunteers I have right now, a good third of them are kids in our LIT program who have grown up through the program and want to give back or kids who have grown up through the program...and that's sort of a good measure of how we're doing so much so that our kids want to get involved when they age out. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

So last year we had one third of our junior staff counselling team who were former campers who had moved through our program through their time, and about 30 out of 80 of our camp staff were former campers. So just under half grew up in poverty and are now fully involved with us in our programs...it's kind of a measure of success when they are able to successfully transition from being a participant to being essentially a supervisor. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

School performance is also indicative of positive development among the youth at Agency B as a measure of *youths' success outside of the program* (the only measure indicated within the Agency B interviews). “We might hear from mom, you know, ‘[Youth] has been coming to homework club, he’s really been struggling with his math, he just came home, and he got an A+ on his math test’” (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine).

Outcomes

Interviews with senior staff and the youth focus group revealed a number of short-term positive developmental benefits occurring from youths’ participation in programs at Agency B. Again, these short-term outcomes (i.e., life skills) are more immediate or close to immediate results of youths’ involvement in the organization’s camp, community programs, and LIT programs.

Life skills. These skills were deduced through thematic analysis and were mentioned in the individual interviews with senior staff and the youth focus group. The life skills described within the focus group and by all the senior staff (n = 5) included ***social and communication skills*** and ***teamwork and cooperation skills***. ***Responsibility*** and youths’ ability to take accountability for their actions were mentioned by the youth focus group and some of the senior staff (n = 4). ***Leadership skills*** (including youths’ ability to work with little kids) was also mentioned by the focus group and some of the senior staff (n = 3). ***Problem solving skills*** were also described by the youth focus group and three of the senior staff including *conflict resolution* (mentioned by three staff). The youth focus group and some of the senior staff (n = 2) mentioned ***academic skills*** (which are further broken down into *school performance* and *devotion to school work and homework*) and ***coping skills*** (further broken down into *flexibility/adaptability to*

change and *ability to handle disappointment*). The youth focus group (none of the senior staff) mentioned **work ethic** as being an outcome of their time at Agency B.

The skills mentioned only by the senior staff included **emotional regulation skills** (n = 5), **self-regulation skills** (n = 3), **emotional literacy** (i.e., the ability for youth to understand and express their feelings; n = 2); **honesty** (n = 2), and **patience** (n = 2). The life skills mentioned by any one of the five senior staff (n = 1) included **goal setting, listening skills** (i.e., understanding and following direction and instruction), **positive attitude**, and **self-reflection/self-assessment**.

Impacts

The long-term positive developmental outcomes identified by the study's youth and staff participants, that is those that are not an immediate result of youths' participation at Agency B, are categorized as impacts. Once again these long-term developmental benefits and behavioural changes can be categorized as the 4Cs.

Competence/Skill transfer. Competence, which also includes skill transference in this study, is one of the impacts mentioned in the Agency B interviews and focus group. A variety of life skills were described as being utilized by youth in circumstances outside of Agency B. These skills included academic skills, social and communication skills, patience, and responsibility.

In case of academic skills, Loraine admits that Agency B on their own probably did not teach math skills to the youth mentioned in her excerpt. However, the organization may have had a hand in encouraging the individual to get more engaged with school and thus enhance their own school performance in the process.

But we might hear from mom, you know, "[Youth] has been coming to homework club, he's really been struggling with his math, he just came home, and he got an A+ on his math test"... can't say...I made sure that [Youth] got an A+ like, we...I can't claim that,

I think [Youth] did a lot of the work. But we supported [Youth] in such a way that might have given him more confidence in his math skills that made him more confident in writing tests. (Agency B Senior Staff – Lorraine)

Social and communication skills were described as being used by youth in their homes for getting along with their parents and siblings which Lorraine would find out through her Active Pursuit calls. Also, social and communication skills were useful for one youth (who was a part of the focus group interview) who used them to his advantage in making it onto his schools' student council.

In grade nine I ran for the student council and I actually did make it and I had to beat five other people which is nice. And I wouldn't have been able to do that if I wasn't able to talk to other people, kind of communicate, and go "hey I'm running for this position" and demonstrate how I can be a leader. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Patience was also described as being particularly useful at school as described by a youth participant from the focus group. "Yeah...cause usually like at school, I get mad really easy. Like really easy, so when I take, like patience, it helps me like calm down and like not like start screaming at anyone, just like get more focused" (Agency B Youth Focus Group).

Lastly, responsibility is being used by youth within their own homes, as described by Katrina from what she gathered in her Active Pursuit calls. "We see lots of kids being more responsible in the home...ummm...parents saying you know 'it made such a difference in their behaviour at home or being more responsible at home, helping out'" (Agency B Senior Staff - Katrina).

Caring/Character. The second C coded from this study's interviews encompasses a variety of positive behavioural changes. It was mentioned by all five senior staff participants and the youth focus group that youth coming out of Agency B become more *helpful towards others*

and willing to volunteer. An example of this is provided by Natalie.

And then even in hockey and skating I've had kids like kind of like step up and offer to help the younger kids who don't know how to skate or like really just learning to kind of like be there to help them or like mentor them as like they're just learning. (Agency B Senior Staff - Natalie)

In addition, four of the five senior staff and the focus group mentioned that youth in Agency B become more willing to volunteer during their free time. "They get involved in volunteering, like even before they're required to, even before we really ask them too. So we have several LIT 2s who are already jumping onto volunteering programs" (Agency B Senior Staff - Bruce).

Four of the senior staff mentioned that youth demonstrate a ***reduction in trouble and problem behaviours*** as an outcome of their participation in the Agency B programs. This includes, in many cases, youth abandoning problem and trouble behaviours and even criminal activities. Some of these shifts to positive behaviours include becoming less disruptive to the group, reductions or an absence of emotional outbursts (especially in some youth participants with mental exceptionalities), and a reduction of conflictive behaviours (i.e., physical aggression and negative language). One youth in particular, described by Philip as being very at-risk, completely transformed as a result of LIT and its volunteering opportunities.

The one LIT who, is a good example of all this. Ummm...involved with, involved with drugs in his community, definitely had certainly that worry that he may kind of fall off our radar. Umm...not showing up to leadership programs, and essentially I think... seemed like one of those kids who would be at risk of falling off our radar completely but came up last summer as an LIT and ended up winning the best LIT award. And his skills were just really on, were just really evident from his time at camp and he'll be coming up

as a junior counsellor this summer. So he's one good example of someone who's able to be successful and kind of go through that program. (Agency B Senior Staff - Philip)

Also described was that the older youth become better *role models for younger youth* in the organization. Youth in the focus group interview explained that they eventually recognized how important it was for them to be that role model for the kids, especially when they were put into the role of volunteers, whether that is in the community programs or at the summer camp. "You really have to be a role model, you have to know how to be one especially because at camp kids are always watching you, you have to lead by example" (Agency B Youth Focus Group).

You have to kind of, transform from being that childish, not childish but, less than mature person to being that mature person that has to, that's responsible for these kids...So you have to do things the right way so they follow your steps and follow the right steps, not the wrong ones. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Other positive behaviours mentioned within senior staff interviews and the youth focus group were *respect*, and *kindness/empathy/selflessness*. Lastly, one excerpt from a youth participant in the focus group interview seemed very pertinent to the theme of Character and is perhaps best described as *strength*.

Umm...[Agency B] has really helped me turn into the person I am today, because, without this program, like...I joined a couple of years back...but without this program, like my life would be completely different. Ummm...like...I came from like a pretty bad past and [Agency B] has helped me overcome situations like that. (Agency B Focus Group)

Confidence. The third C to be discussed can be broken down into various types of increased confidence experienced by the youth attending Agency B programs. These include,

similarly to Agency A: coming out of their shell, sure of self, positive view of self, and positive view of their future/aspirations. ***Coming out of shell*** involves youth who may start off shy, introverted, and unable to express themselves or communicate to other youth and staff in the program to becoming outgoing, consistently conversing with peers and leaders, and at times being able to speak in front of a group.

Before I was here, when it came to like group work, or like, cooperation, I would be the one to sit in the back and like, just like do what people told me to do. But now I find more, when like, for example we had a civics project (inaudible) where like I was able to like actually get up there and, I was, basically leading a lot of it. Like, I don't do everything but I'm able to like choose when is an appropriate time to speak and lead stuff. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

In this excerpt from Natalie, she points out how engaging in one-on-one conversations with the youth may be an effective strategy for getting them to become less shy.

In programs yeah, you can see some people coming out of their shells a little bit more. So maybe if a kid comes in and they're a little bit more shy to begin with, or I'll talk to them and they wouldn't really be saying anything to me. Seeing that kind of change. Mainly they are a little shy and quiet but like you can start, with some of my kids, I can kind of get more conversational with them or maybe they're a bit more confident with the kids in programs. (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Sure of self was categorized as the type of confidence in which youth feel they are capable of taking on significant tasks. This can involve things such as leading, volunteering, looking for jobs, and getting involved in school. For Bruce, ensuring youth are confident and sure of themselves is seen as a vital aspect of Agency B, especially in the LIT program he runs.

LIT is all about building confidence, like, I said the ability to get up and talk in front of people, the ability to know that you have the skills to lead a game or to lead a program...ummm...that you have the skills to go out and volunteer. Ummm...to be ready for job interviews and getting your resume out there...umm...to be ready to be up at camp in a leadership role I think is huge. So like I think it's all about, we regularly invest, and then confidence is just one of those things that kind of blossoms out of all of these activities and all this work. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

One of the youth participants in the focus group mentioned that their ability to give presentations has improved, despite having always been nervous to speak publically. He attributes this outcome to his time in LIT.

I probably would never be able to give a speech before I came to LIT, I wouldn't be able to give a speech but right now on Monday I have to give a speech to sort of the end of the campaign and we find out who wins. But, umm, I probably would never be able to do that. But still right now, even though I have been through LIT, whenever I say the word speech my stomach curls up and I'm like "Oh my God, a speech". (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Positive view of self comes down to youth thinking of themselves as capable and important individuals. Youth seeing themselves as important in the Agency B programs is prioritized by Natalie who tries to achieve this by being warm and welcoming to them.

If they need a little bit more attention or maybe they're ongoing like having difficulties or issues like...even just when they walk in and be like "Oh my God, hey, how are you doing, how is your week? So good to see you. Just showing them that obviously we care that they're there, and that we're happy that they're there so they feel a little bit more

like...I don't know...confident in themselves and maybe a little bit like, happy, like

“Yeah they're excited to see me”. (Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

Meanwhile, youth seeing themselves as competent and skilled is another result of being a part of Agency B. As described by a focus group participant and member of LIT, this can be witnessed in how youth view themselves as a capable leader.

Well you get to like, you get to take all of those skills and apply it to life right?...The skills in particular that we learn here, ummm...like they stick with you, like they might not...you might not use them every day, but it's something that you have at hand and like if you really need to use them, and like you know how to be a leader and you know how to like, you know how to be the person one wants to follow, you know how to be a person that knows how to lead things. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Positive view of future refers to youth knowing what they want to do when they reach adulthood and having positive feelings about that potential future.

And I think they have a greater, one of the biggest things is they have a greater sense of what their long-term goals are. So for many of them it's just to be a counsellor at [Agency B]...and what they want to do in life as a job or what they want to go to school for. But...they have those plans and they have something that they care about doing in the future and they have a plan that they can work towards. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

Staff at Agency B prioritize developing in youth a positive view of their future within all the programs offered in the organization and try to recognize and positively reinforce youth who appear to have talents.

So you can see them start to realize what they're good at...ummm...and we work on that too obviously. Like...we recognize, you're really good at art, or you're really good at this and we work with them at that with them as well to build that up and I think they start to realize "I'm worth something" or "I'm good at something" so their confidence increases.

(Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

It was also explained that this sense of direction youth pick up may be a direct result of some of the program activities that occur, especially in LIT workshops, in which youth are tasked with learning how to plan for the future and to have an idea of where they would like to be a few years down the road.

Ability to plan for the future, whether it's, ummm...planning...you know. What your budget would be when they lived on their own, or just planning for what they want to do, do they want to go to school, do they want to get a job in the trades... apprenticeship... what they want to do in the future so I think they're picking up those. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

Connection. The fourth C coded from participant responses concerns youth developing relationships and networks with important individuals in their lives. *Internal to the organization* youth can develop connections and deep relationships with camp *staff*, *volunteers*, and *peers*. Agency B is particularly conducive of such connections since opportunities are provided for youth to develop these within a positive and safe environment.

It's very much a community. And the areas that we work in and the kids that we serve, it's like a greater community so I think...with their participation in the program they know that there's going to be that support. They know that like as a staff we're always going to be there for them if they need anything. Ummm...so I think just yeah that

network of people and that community support that goes beyond like living in their communities or at home, like having that wider network I think is really helpful for them.

(Agency B Senior Staff – Natalie)

So, [Agency B] also, ummm...like, a lot of people mentioned here, get people to meet other people right, so like, if you were just like going to school, like, you meet people at school, but, [Agency B], it really makes people like, kind of like, connect with one another right? So, not just do we learn from each other but like we respect each other and we have fun with each other and like, like I said it gets people to meet like outside of your own comfort zones. (Agency B Youth Focus Group)

Connections are also made between youth and individuals *external to the organization*, (i.e., *members of the community*) most especially within the LIT program's workshops, which involves external organizations, and guest speakers. This not only allows youth to see what opportunities there are out there but also to connect them with individuals from various fields such as engineering, business, marketing, entrepreneurship, wildlife conservation, recreation, and the police force who may be able to offer them something (e.g., career training, life advice, aspirations) beyond that of individuals within Agency B.

Contribution. Interview participants explained that youth at Agency B became willing contributors to the organization itself but also to their own communities. Many youth who go through programs at Agency B often want to *volunteer at the organization*. Youth who join LIT are doing so with the knowledge that they will be volunteering in the camp and community programs at Agency B and developing the skills needed to eventually become junior staff. However, there are also youth, typically in LIT, who willingly volunteer at Agency B by representing them at various special events.

So I mentioned the gala which is one of our major events. They also help with...our summer signature event. So they come and help run the event and not just volunteer.

Ummm...they also...ummm...we had one of them come speak at the golf tournament that we host. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

However, various other youth have also been a ***volunteer outside of the organization*** whether that involves contributing to their schools (e.g., joining the student council) or to their neighbourhoods (i.e., getting involved in volunteer community projects).

Also lots of them, they're not only volunteering with us, they go volunteer their time in the community. Lots of them end up doing coop placements in school and you see them doing all those kind of skills that they've learned in their programs. (Agency B Senior Staff – Katrina)

Also worth mentioning is that, at Agency B, many ***former members become volunteers and junior staff***.

We do have a number of youth who become volunteers in training. So they will go through a few years of our LIT program and then they will become volunteers in our other inner city programs. So they may help to run a game like dodge ball or something like that. Or they'll come to camp and they'll volunteer as a junior staff or junior counsellor. Or even go on to be a summer camp counsellor or even one of our senior staff members too. (Agency B Senior Staff – Philip)

For many of these youth, this has been their goal since they were young.

The goal is to, by LIT 3, to be ready to be a junior staff and a lot of them that is their goal, they kind of have a long-term goal set and that's one of their motivating factors to do well in LIT, and along that way they want to gain all the skills and character they can

to be ready to be a junior staff at camp because they also go to camp in the summer when they were kids and when they were young teenagers looking up to these junior staffs, seeing what it takes to be in that place and in that role. (Agency B Senior Staff – Bruce)

Table 3

Themes for Agency B

Inputs	Activities
Context	Direct Strategies
• Opportunities to Contribute in Organization • Skill Building Opportunities • Skill Application Opportunities • Networking Opportunities • Interaction Opportunities • Comfortable, Positive Welcoming Atmosphere ◦ Inclusive ◦ Positive Focus ◦ Safe Space ▪ Judgement Free • Rules and Expectations • Inclusivity • Time and Consistency in the Program ◦ Youth Spend Many Years in Program ◦ Consistent Volunteers and Staff • Staff and Volunteers Prepared • Fun and Engaging Activities • Low Ratios (staff/youth) • Structure	• Communicating Rules and Expectations • Disciplinary Approach – Youth Centred ◦ Separate from Rest of the Group, ◦ Discuss What They are Doing Wrong, • Discuss What They Can Do Right • Mentorship/Offering Guidance • Progression of Programs ◦ 1. Check-Ins (Relational time) ◦ 2. Teaching Time (Awareness Talks) ◦ 3. Activity ◦ 4. Check-out (Debrief & Reflection) ▪ On Performance ▪ On Lesson • Teachable Moments • Logical Progression
External Assets	Indirect Strategies
• Community Assistance ◦ Provide Venues for Programs ◦ Volunteers ◦ Donations/Funding Received ◦ Partnerships - Collaborations ▪ Workshops & Collaborative Efforts ◦ Motivational/Educational Speakers • Alumni ◦ Volunteer/Contribute to organization • Family Collaboration ◦ Family and Staff Converse Often ◦ Opportunities for Families to Contribute ▪ Families can Provide Input ▪ Families can Donate to Organization • Peers ◦ Older Youth As Role Models • Staff ◦ Developmentally Supportive Qualities ▪ Approachable ▪ Attentive ▪ Caring	• Active Pursuit • Developing Relationships and Trust ◦ Conversing Often With Youth • Encourage Youth to Contribute to the Community • Encourage Youth to Join Programs and Activities • Files and Information Kept on Youth • Positive Reinforcement • Provide Resources to Youths' Families • Role Modeling • Word of the Week (use of keywords) • Assisting with Youth Achievements ◦ Post-secondary Scholarships ◦ Resume Preparation ◦ Interview Preparation ◦ Providing Volunteer and Job Opportunities • Lifting Participation Barriers ◦ Providing Transportation ◦ Free for Youth

Table 4

Themes for Agency B (continued)

▪ Enthusiastic ▪ Experienced ▪ Helpful ▪ Inclusive ▪ Patient ▪ Proactive ▪ Respectful			○ Providing all Necessary Equipment
Outputs	Outcomes	Impact	
• Youth Engagement ○ Attendance Numbers ○ How Many Youth are Engaged/Enjoying Program • Youth Achievements (in program) ○ Number of Youth Earning Rewards ○ Number of Rewards Earned by Each Youth ○ Number of Youth Moving Through Sequential Programs ○ Number of Youth Becoming Volunteers and Staff • Youth Achievements (out of program) ○ School Performance	• Life Skills ○ Leadership Skills ○ Social and Communication Skills ○ Teamwork and Cooperation Skills ○ Academic Skills ▪ Devoted to School Work/Homework ▪ School Performance ○ Responsibility ○ Positive Attitude ○ Problem Solving ▪ Conflict Resolution ○ Self-Reflection/Assessment ○ Coping Skills ▪ Flexibility/Adaptable to Change ▪ Handling Disappointment ○ Emotional Regulation ○ Self-Regulation ○ Emotional Literacy ○ Goal Setting ○ Work Ethic ○ Honesty ○ Listening Skills ○ Patience	• Competence/Skill Transfer ○ At School ○ At Home/With Family • Compassion/Caring/Character ○ Helpful /Willingness to Volunteer ○ Reduction in Trouble and Problem Behaviour ○ Respect ○ Role Model for Others ○ Kindness/Empathy/Selflessness ○ Strength • Confidence ○ Coming out of Shell ○ Sure of Self ○ Positive View of Self ○ Positive View of Future • Connection ○ Internal to the Organization ▪ Peers ▪ Staff ▪ Volunteers ○ External to the Organization • Contribution ○ Former Member Turned Volunteer/Staff ○ Volunteering to Organization ○ Volunteering out of the Organization	

Case Three – Agency C

Sixteen of the participants in this research were youth members (n = 7) and staff (n = 9) of Agency C. All participants from this organization were interviewed individually at the location in which their programs take place. The staff who participated in interviews had worked at the organization for a few years. The staff member who worked at Agency C the least amount of time was employed for three years (yet was a youth member for most of her life) while a staff member who had been employed for two years had worked at the organization for three years prior (total of five) through a partner organization. Six of the nine staff participants indicated that they use to be youth members. This is typical as most staff at Agency C are from the community, have been in their programs since childhood, and had gone through the organization's two year Leaders in Training (LIT) program and two year volunteer opportunity that followed before being hired. The rest of the staff were not previously youth members or affiliated beforehand, though interviews did suggest that Agency C sometimes hires individuals who they believe are 'community leaders' and highly qualified to work with the youth. Each of the youth interviewed from this organization had, at one point, gone through the two levels of the LIT program and were either volunteering regularly at the organization or had just begun their employment at Agency C having completed two years of volunteering beforehand. The youth interviewed ranged between the ages of 15 to 18.

The youth interviewed at Agency C are considered to have undergone positive development as they had experienced the two levels of the LIT program (i.e., the original and step-up programs respectively) which is focused on teaching life skills and encouraging the onset of various positive outcomes and qualities (e.g., character, confidence) as is highlighted by the program's leadership manual. Moreover, these youth were currently engaging in volunteer work

at the program of which two years' worth is recommended for those who want to be hired on as staff. Volunteering can be considered both a positive developmental context in which beneficial qualities are being developed and life skills further tested but also a demonstration of positive development in that youth are willingly contributing back to their community. Though some of the staff interviewed may have had a hand in leading LIT this program is almost completely organized, overseen, and lead by Roy. Furthermore, some of the youth and staff interviewed had also been involved in or led the youth volunteer community outreach (action) program offered by Agency C or its counterpart focused on cooking meals for the needy, the kitchen community action program.

Distinguishing the youth at Agency C from the youth in the previous two case studies is that they cannot be considered at-risk. Agency C is operated out of a community center that, though open to all, mostly caters to residents and youth from its situated community which is a predominantly middle class inner city neighbourhood. Therefore, though it is clear that youth who enter programs at Agency C were perhaps never at-risk, it is still the case that they can come out of the program with useful life skills and constructive qualities that will positively affect their developmental trajectory into adulthood. Consequently, Agency C can offer an interesting case study into PYD programs aimed at a youth population which is not at-risk but experiencing developmental benefits nonetheless. Moreover, Agency C offers a unique case of an organization that is also centred on establishing in youth a sense of importance towards contribution and community outreach (a focus of its LIT, community action program, and kitchen community action program), which is rare in PYD programs (Coakley, 2011). See Tables 5 and 6 for a complete list of themes derived from interviews at Agency C.

Inputs

Conforming to the logic model format, several themes arose from thematic analysis of interviews with youth and senior staff at Agency C. Once again inputs or resources are separated into ‘contextual factors’ (properties of the organizations themselves) and ‘external assets’ (the individuals involved in supporting youths’ positive development).

Contextual factors. *Opportunities for skill building* at Agency C within the context of PYD were determined to be their afterschool program where youth from kindergarten to grade six are supervised afterschool, the LIT program, the organization’s volunteering opportunity open to LIT graduates, and the community action program along with its affiliated kitchen community action program. However, it was apparent that the afterschool program itself, even if youth emerged with developmental benefits, was not necessarily designed to teach life skills and more focus was directed to the other programs. As was described above, LIT is geared towards building various life skills and positive qualities in its youth participants. The organization’s volunteering opportunity, the community action program, and kitchen community action program were also contexts in which youth could learn and practice skills (e.g., leadership) and develop positive qualities (e.g., willingness to volunteer). These latter programs also fell into a theme that was unique to Agency C called ***opportunities for community outreach***. The community action program and kitchen community action program are completely directed towards having youth participate in volunteer activities in the city. However, even LIT, a program geared towards the development of young leaders, had the intention of helping youth appreciate the importance of contribution to one’s community by offering such opportunities including food drives, fundraisers, and volunteering at special needs and retirement homes. ***Opportunities for skill application*** are also made available for youth to figure out how to use the

skills taught to them in programs. In interviews with participants at Agency C it was made clear that volunteer activities were well suited for this. For instance, in the initial LIT program, youth are given the opportunity to put their skills to the test.

Yeah. We also give them lots of concrete opportunity to practice the skills that we've talked about and...so for example...obviously it's an LIT program, a leadership in training program so we're talking about all these skills to be a great counsellor and whatever, but then we will give them lots of opportunity to volunteer with the kids. So...maybe they'll have to run some big sports Olympic day for 200 kids or maybe they'll go and be reading buddies with pre-schoolers or they'll go and they'll help, you know, the art camp with a craft...so they are getting to see the practical value of the skills that we talk about. Because I think for kids it can be like, well boring first of all, if it's all theoretical. You know, and...so that's why it's partially important to incorporate a practical [volunteer] element. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Step-up LIT, in which youth were expected to spend the second of the three weeks taking on the role of a counsellor, provided another context for skill application.

Well it's a completely different world because like when you're, like just during your LIT activities and things you know your focus on your self grows and yourself as a person. How you are a leader. But when you work in a program now you've got to take those skills and use them to contribute. And to be part of a team and that's not saying you don't do teamwork and obviously other things as a leadership group but now you're working on a team to reach a common goal. Which is to create a positive summer camp experience for some kids. So now it's about those kids and their lives and their

experiences and how you're going to use your skills to help them. And to help your team and your coordinator and the other staff succeed. (Agency C Senior Staff – Lisa)

In this way the learning that youth are engaging in is not only theoretical but hands-on as well as they are able to utilize and test the skills that are discussed and explained during LIT. However, another context in which youth can test their skills is through volunteering opportunities at the organization itself offered after LIT. After youth complete both stages of the LIT program they are encouraged to be a volunteer for up to two years at Agency C because (1) usually they are not working age for another two years and (2) before they are hired on as staff Agency C wants them to be experienced in leading a group of children. This two-year volunteering opportunity typically involves helping out with the after-school program from 2:30 pm– 6:00 pm a few times a week and is a good place for youth coming out of LIT to put their various new skills into practice.

Yeah like I've gained just as much in my five or six months volunteering here at the LIT program because hands on learning is just...teaches you things even more quickly than you could learn from a manual... Like...you need to put those skills into action and you kind of learn as you go in your volunteering here. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

The community action program or kitchen community action program may also offer youth a volunteer context to practice their skills from LIT. However, there was no description from interviews to support this notion.

The theme ***opportunities to contribute within the organization*** describes the chances youth have to help out within their programs. The opportunities mentioned in the previous theme of youth taking on counselling responsibilities during step-up LIT, and the volunteer opportunities offered to youth after they complete LIT are two such ways in which older youth

can contribute to Agency C while being able to put their life skills into practice. However, there are other more subtle ways in which kids and youth can contribute to the everyday implementation of the Agency C programs. Kids in the afterschool program are allowed, and encouraged, to assist counsellors through means such as being a staff's cooking assistant in the cooking classes, helping staff set up activities, and cleaning up after activities. It was also explained that allowing kids and youth to take on 'special roles' (e.g., leading a particular game or activity) could work as a positive reinforcement tactic in which the role is bestowed onto those who had demonstrated good behaviour that day. Lastly, children and youth are given the opportunity to provide input into the programs. For children in the afterschool program this may be as simple as choosing which game or activity the staff will lead for the group. However, in LIT effort is made on the part of the staff to ensure that it is interactive and that the youth are engaged in as much conversation as the staff leading.

I like to ask them if they have any experience or anything to add after almost every paragraph, just like, "do you guys have anything to say about that? How do you feel about that? Do you think there could be something different? Do you have any stories like that?" So we let them contribute that way...with the interactive environment that we try and create we want everyone to be able to speak and for everyone to have a voice.

(Agency C Staff – Roger)

Moreover, at the end of the LIT program, participants are expected to fill out a questionnaire. Through this youth have an opportunity to express their opinions on what they thought about the program and indicate which areas, if any, they believe they would like to see improved. Interviews with staff had revealed that those points of feedback are taken seriously and many improvements to LIT had been made over the years based on the youths' feedback.

The theme *opportunities for interaction* also came up numerous times in participant's interviews at Agency C. Again, this is inherent in afterschool program with the kids, many of whom attend different schools, congregating daily in one place with free time allowing interactions between kids of all grades (and younger kids interacting with older kids instructed to be good role models). Staff interviews mentioned placing an emphasis on ensuring kids, when separated into teams for activities, are not grouped with their friends but are given opportunities to interact with a new set of teammates. Moreover, the kids in the afterschool program generally have some autonomy over which activity they participate in depending on what is being made available (e.g., can choose to engage in sports, or arts, or reading) which, according to one staff, means the youth are often congregating with others of similar interests making it easier for the individual to pursue that interaction. However, LIT offers participants a unique setting and opportunity to interact with others and the staff leading as this is an expectation.

We kind of force their hand in leadership and a lot of people talk about their experiences and make sure that people kind of get, like a fair share, like everyone gets to speak, everyone gets to have an opinion, everyone gets to tell us a story, everyone gets to do everything equally in leadership and it kind of gives everyone a chance to hear what they might not know about someone just because they may have judged them by their surface which I feel is like a great thing to have. (Agency C Staff – Scott)

Agency C Senior Staff member Roy will often intervene if he feels that youth in LIT are not interacting equally with every other member. "In the leadership program, if I see a clique is already formed and developed, like on the first day of camp, I'm going to split them up".

A former member of LIT and current youth participant, Tony, mentioned that when group discussions took place in the program everyone was encouraged to be a part of it and it was a

comfortable place for the youth involved to make these interactions. Moreover, the volunteer work that occurs after LIT provides another context in which youth must interact with others, whether it is with their friends or other youth volunteers, as their daily tasks cannot be accomplished without that interaction as indicated by Jack.

Definitely forces you to interact with people that you don't always gravitate towards, because in school you tend to gravitate towards your friends and all that. But here you have to work through the programs and through the uhhh...volunteering here. You have to, ummm...interact with people who are outside of your comfort zone that you normally wouldn't interact with...you can't choose your coworkers or what age group you work with. So when you're put with other staff working with an age group then you're forced to work with them. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Jack)

Within the various Agency C programs a *comfortable, positive, and welcoming atmosphere* is promoted by the staff involved. Throughout interviews participants described youth programs at Agency C as being 'like a family', 'like a community', and 'feeling at home'. The LIT program itself was also described as one where an encouraging atmosphere is promoted over a competitive one.

So I just find that, it's an encouraging program because everyone wants everyone to succeed. There's no competition at all in the program we all want everyone to succeed. We all want everyone to be happy and like better people. And you can see that in the kids too, like everyone wants people to excel. Everyone in the group, everyone is cheering everyone on. There's just nobody being really like...there's just no negativity which is nice. (Agency C Staff – Roger)

The atmosphere is extremely accepting. Right from the first day you feel at home, and you feel like a community because a lot of the other kids who are doing it are really like nice to you. They want to be leaders and they are leaders and they're really friendly... really social. (Agency C Youth Volunteer - John)

Several excerpts also reveal that the way that staff act around the youth, in which they are 'friendly' and 'fun', allows Agency C to be a *safe space* without judgement where youth participants are free to act, within reason, however they want. "It's definitely like a safe feeling here...and it's a big thing here to be non-judgemental" (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Steve).

It's because we act so differently with them it gives them more of an opportunity to be more open with us and act the way that they need to...I think we're allowed to be a lot more, friends with them and we're allowed to act also more like their family...when teachers they have to be a lot more strict...even if they trust their teachers they don't necessarily feel as close to their teachers so it's a bit harder for them to be fully open and kind of fully show their personality around them, you know... Whereas, at school, you know, it's about the education and it's about so many other things going on that like, it's not always just about the happier, being open, or showing your personality. You know? When here it's a lot more just like, be who you are and we'll accept you as you are.

(Agency C Staff – Ruby)

And so...we're really fostering an environment of respect so I think people...hopefully thereforth their children feel that they can be themselves which will naturally lead to them coming out of their shell...we're inclusive and non-judgemental...every single staff of ours is like that. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Inclusivity is also a part of this positive organization atmosphere in which youth are made to feel that they belong. “So everyone is welcome and everyone should be welcoming, and that’s kind of what we teach in every session and almost in every program I run at least” (Agency C Staff – Roger).

This is giving somebody that might not have another opportunity to find their place, like, a clear idea of a sense of belonging and a sense of community and that you don’t necessarily get in high school or middle school in places, you know, where bullying is prevalent and there’s constantly social pressures to fit in and all those things...those...those I really feel like get left at the door when you walk through this building. (Agency C Senior Staff – Lisa)

A *positive focus* is also inherent in Agency C as it was described that staff will rarely dwell on youths’ mistakes or indiscretions but instead give more attention to youths’ positive actions and attempts to do good things. It may also be worth mentioning a program that was started by staff members at Agency C that really encompasses the comfortable, positive, and welcoming atmosphere being described here but being geared towards LGBT youth in the community.

Just this year...myself and a colleague started a program called the tea room which is a safe space for LGBT youth from grade nine to grade 12 and on the last Friday of every month they can come and hang out and there’s like free coffee and tea and baked goods and we just hang out and have fun and not in a judgmental way. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Agency C was also described as being ***fun and engaging*** which is an important quality for any program aimed at PYD in order for them to retain the interests of their youth participants. In the afterschool program for instance Lisa mentions that they make sure that the programing

they plan for the children is interesting and is composed of activities that they want to do. Also important, as mentioned by Kevin, is the wide range of activities being made available in the afterschool program.

There's also a program that will connect with each type of kid. So if they love sports well there is basically every type of sport. If they love doing arts we've got a whole huge variety from pottery to like finger painting to music and totally arts things. And, uhhh...if they want to, just to...crazy games that we come up with there's the afterschool program for that. We kind of mix it all together and they get to choose what it is they want to do.

(Agency C Staff – Kevin)

By having many unique program varieties there is a greater chance of reaching out to as many youth as possible as they have different tastes and find different things enjoyable. The importance of keeping the program engaging is especially important in LIT where a lot of the program is educational and based on teaching the youth a variety of life skills.

So I think they did that really well. It was a program and you had...you were expected to pass at the end of it and you had to pass to get the certificate. But they made it in a fun way where you were doing all these activities that were like fun...goofing off with your friends, but they always had a message at the end and a lesson to be learned at the end.

(Agency C Youth Volunteer – Erin)

Well...they kind of, they teach you a lot of things in the LIT program, but in such a fun way, more than school. Like these skills that you're learning are just as important as anything you would learn in school. How to be a leader, how to communicate, how to express yourself. But it's a super enjoyable [program] that just makes you want to come back. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Another youth participant, Jack, mentioned how LIT required youth to participate with the group in conversation throughout the program which also made it more engaging.

It was also found that all staff leading any of the programs (e.g., the afterschool program, LIT, the community action program) are typically well prepared (i.e., **staff prepared**) and it would be unusual for Agency C to hire someone outside of the organization with very little demonstrated ability of working with youth or being a community leader. Typically, staff hired by Agency C to lead programs are former youth members who had completed both levels of LIT, volunteered at the organization for two years, and have demonstrated a proven ability to work with youth and children. However, due to limited finances, youth who complete LIT are not guaranteed to be given a job (since LIT produces a lot of graduates but staff space is limited) in addition to perhaps not being taken on as a volunteer (which also has limited space). This being the case, hiring staff at Agency C tends to be very prudent when picking from a typically large pool of applicants, many of whom possess the LIT certificates given at Agency C. Therefore, Roy encourages youth to put in effort while in LIT and demonstrate within the program that they are the most appropriate choices for a job in which they would be in charge of children and youth. In this way LIT almost works as a long job interview. The other option is that they hire individuals who did not go through their program and volunteering but have demonstrated that they are very skilled at working with youth and are positive leaders. Many of these latter individuals were representatives of partnered organizations who had demonstrated competence working directly with youth at Agency C.

The youth in Agency C must abide by a set of unwritten **rules and expectations**. Among the rules of the LIT program, as voiced by the interview participants, are: mandatory attendance, punctuality, being positive and encouraging to one's peers, 'leave it at the door' (any personal

problems or bad days should not affect your conduct or behaviour during programs), listening and paying attention to counsellors/staff and peers when they are speaking, being a role model to younger members, respecting others, and participating and being engaged with the program. The latter item in this list of rules was identified as being particularly important as, when asked what it took to complete the LIT program, most participants agreed that their participation and engagement from beginning to end was the key factor that decided whether they passed or failed.

There's a graduation at the end and if you don't like, show...any taking or grasping of this information you won't graduate cause it is like a leadership program and they're not going to just give a leadership certificate to anyone if they're not putting in the effort. So, if you do the program you...they definitely need to put in their own...you know...want to be there. Ummm...and they can't just, you know, just show up and do nothing, they actually have to try and grasp these concepts and show that they're acquiring these skills.

(Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Additional rules specifically for the youth volunteers included: being a role model both inside and outside of the organization (as children will often see you outside the walls of the community centre), punctuality (being on time for your shift), being polite to parents and speaking with them when they pick up their children, keeping the children safe, not being alone in a room with kids (staff must be around at all times), listen to staff, keep things clean and orderly, and adapting to the needs and limitations of the children (especially the ones with exceptionalities). Some general rules of conduct also voiced by participants were also: no alcohol or drugs, no bullying, no negative language, and no physical contact.

External assets. Many of the individuals interviewed in this study, both staff and youth, explained that youths' positive development was highly contingent on the supportive staff

employed at Agency C. The *staff* involved in program delivery demonstrate these supportive qualities: approachable, attentive, caring, charismatic, enthusiastic, friendly, helpful, inclusive, nice, passionate, proactive, relatable, and respectful.

Approachable: They let us know that we could talk to them about anything we were thinking so...right away just created an extremely open environment. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Attentive: you know we don't tolerate bullying...we don't tolerate name calling. Ummm...we deal with those types of infractions like head on and immediately. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Caring: They really understand that we care, and it's personal, like they know us by name, I know every single kid in this community centre by name. And they understand that like it's like we're here for them and we try and build that as much as possible. (Agency C Staff – Aaron)

Charismatic: [The staff are] super charismatic. People you really want to get to know. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Enthusiastic: Umm...a lot of it is enthusiasm for what they're doing and that they care about their job but also they care about the kids. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Watching Roy when he's teaching leadership, ummm...I like, I've never seen him as happy so it's nice to know that there's that much, ummm...enthusiasm coming from us and I think that's beneficial for the [youth] cause they really latch on to that. (Agency C Staff – Roger)

[Counsellors] were always so nice and so fun and so like engaging. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Erin)

Friendly: They first of all...were very friendly, made us feel right at home at the camp.

(Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Helpful: They really helped me learn super quickly the ropes of the afterschool program.

So I really felt that I fit right in here. The counsellors were always helping me out...And I think the same is true for the LIT program. It's also a community with people like Roy who mentors you along the way and teaches you so much about how to be a good counsellor so that when all of us actually come into the after school program we're totally ready to be counsellors. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Inclusive: I think...a big part of it is the staff, because they...they're...all the staff for the most part have a very high energy and they are very sort of inclusive so they might have a bunch of kids where they're like "come on, like...do something altogether" and then even though it was the staff who brought the kids into it the kids themselves might form friendships doing that so I think that might be a big part of it, it's the staff...it's very very inclusive so everybody is always encouraged to participate in activities and everybody's always included in any activity. (Agency C Youth Volunteer - Tony)

Nice: There was also Anne who was in charge of the kitchen part of it. Ummm...also such a great person, so nice... she really puts on a positive Vibe so you see that you can be nice to someone even if you don't have to and you can see that she does it by choice and even if she wasn't getting something in return she'd still be nice to you. (Agency C Youth Volunteer - Christine)

Passionate: I think our staff really take their job seriously and they really love what they do...Their work ethic is second to none, they love what they do, they're very passionate

about working with kids so I think that the kids and youth in our many many programs are really in good hands. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Ummm...[Roy] just puts such a great passion into the programs, it's like hard not to learn from it...Yeah, you can tell that he's not just there to get paid. He's there because he's also learning from like being with kids and younger people and youth and you can tell he really likes what he does... I had a younger counsellor named [staff name] as well and she brought the same great energy that Roy did. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Christine)

Proactive (focus on improving program): We have training like every two months so...we're always looking for places that we can improve on and because new staff is coming every year there's always that ummm...you know...older staff is always teaching younger staff and we're improving that way. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

I remember that there was one time at the very very beginning that there was one skill...like...we just couldn't get...but then what they did was they realized that we weren't getting it. So they stopped the program and we just played like fun games for the rest. And they...at the end of the program they like re-wrote...they had a different workshop on the same sort of concept. And then at that point people were actually like...people were able to get it more. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Jack)

Relatable: They're very...sort of...relatable. Like they didn't feel like teachers they felt sort of like friends who were teaching us as opposed to like just sort of somebody who was in control of us...they try to come across to us as somebody who we can talk to, who we can have fun with as opposed to somebody who you sort of are scared of and somebody who's more authoritative sort of. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Tony)

Respectful: The staff at least around here are willing to listen to whatever the kids have got to say. (Agency C Staff – Kevin)

We were treated like, our age, and we were treated like just as much as they were with the same respect that we gave them. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Erin)

Youths' families are also an important factor involved in the functioning of Agency C. First it was indicated by four staff participants that *families and staff cooperate* often in the functioning of Agency C and that staff and families tend to know each other very well and have developed deep relationships (similar to Agency B). This occurs with staff and families cooperating on behavioural management (first excerpt) and how to deal with children/youth with exceptionalities (second and third excerpt).

So if there's a confrontation we say that "so-and-so is acting this way today or they're being super aggressive", you say "this is how we're dealing with it, we're just trying to remind him whenever he's aggressive to calm down" and that's...they'll be like "ok great" and continue that at home and "that's something that we can work on at home". (Agency C Staff – Scott)

We have a lot of parents who have running dialogues with the staff here about, ummm, certain issues, whatever it is with their kid, specific to that child because they know that we're actively involved in...in addressing those issues as much as they are, so they, they trust us to be a part of that process. (Agency C Staff – Scott)

Same thing like on the first day of camp, a parent comes in and says to us, "my child has ADHD, here are some strategies that I think you should use in order to help my son". (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Families and staff converse often as well. For instance, families provide feedback regarding things that they feel are positive or negative about the organization.

A lot of the parents are pretty good about talking to us about kind of, what they see either that's great or not so great in their opinion...when they pick up [the youth] is usually when we have our best time to talk back and forth. Sometimes parents will send in e-mails or letters with just, to put out there how great they think our program is and how great they think the counsellors are doing with their kids or things that they see, but most of the time tell you more directly when you see them. (Agency C Staff – Ruby)

Also, parents are invited to attend youths' LIT graduation (where their certificates are received). This is where the staff in charge of the program will converse with parents in order to interest them into having their children either (1) take the step-up LIT program afterwards or, (2) in the case that it is graduation from step-up LIT, volunteer at Agency C afterwards.

So we invite all the parents to come for graduation so we talk to them about what we did in the weeks, what leadership is all about and then kind of tell them what the next steps are, so we talk about step up...and also how at [the afterschool program] we have, ummm...they're basically leaders and so they do...basically all the volunteer work with the staff so like go on walkovers, they'll run programs...ummm...and it's just kind of a foot in the door into being a counsellor. (Agency C Staff – Roger)

Lastly, some *families reinforce the lessons and skills* taught to their kids at Agency C at home as well. This helps further strengthen youths' acquisition of life skills and adoption of positive behaviours.

A lot of the time they'll also take that home with them and sort of help enforce what we're trying to teach them here at home. Which is really great because then what we're doing doesn't necessarily stop at the doors. (Agency C Staff – Scott)

Let's say you have to have a chat with mom because their son was acting out or not listening or whatever, parents are normally really helpful in re-affirming those messages back at home and that kind of thing so certainly we feel that parents are a big partner for us. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

The community is also an important asset involved in Agency C activities aimed at PYD. The community's most dominant role appears to be *providing venues for particular programs or voluntary activities* to be carried out. The community centre itself is one venue, provided by the City of Ottawa free of charge, in which Agency C operates out of as a central location. However, Agency C also has a variety of satellite locations such as various high schools (one of which houses the afterschool program for children in grades five and six) and churches within the organization's surrounding neighbourhood (one of which is where Wednesday night LIT occurs) as these provide additional spaces for programs run by Agency C that do not fit within the community centre. Also, in partnership with various other organizations within the city, venues are provided for youth from Agency C for volunteer opportunities. Some of these include: a seniors home and a special needs home for adults with exceptionalities (mental and physical), homeless shelters and youth shelters, and Carleton sport camps (i.e., an alternative volunteer placement for youth in step-up LIT).

Partnerships are another way that the community gets involved with Agency C in its efforts to provide positive programs for its youth. For instance, some programs run within the community centre are carried out by external partnered organizations (e.g., science and

educational programs). Various other collaborations with external organizations include: Ottawa's Blues Fest which allows youth in the band program at Agency C to perform at its festival, the Youth Services Bureau which works with Agency C youth and staff to hold fundraisers to raise awareness of homeless youth in Ottawa, and Habitat for Humanity which the community action program at Agency C has worked with to help build affordable housing.

Agency C also receives *donations, sponsorships, and funding* by various entities within Ottawa.

In this neighbourhood we're lucky to have local businesses whom we have been partnered for many years, [names local grocery stores] they sponsor like, so many of our community events. They give us, like, you know, lots and lots of like, complimentary fruit and cheese and different things like that, you know, for community parties and umm...yeah. We're lucky. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

They're a lot of organizations that donate a lot of stuff to us which is very helpful like...old toys, games, food, you know like, resources ...it is very expensive to run programs so all the resources available are super helpful and a lot of events that we put on, like we put on, umm...a Halloween party and we have like, a turkey dinner and we do like, they're all very specific things that we...so that wouldn't be possible without donations and help from outside organizations. (Agency C Staff – Ruby)

The neighbourhood *schools* also work very closely with Agency C as the afterschool program takes place right after the school day. The onus of care of the children is transferred between the two at that time daily as Agency C volunteers and employees pick up children registered for the afterschool program directly from the schools. Passing on any information on why a child is not present for pick-up (e.g., a child was at home sick, a child was picked up early

by their parents) is a vital task for the schools. This is important as a child who is not present for pick-up by Agency C and not reported with a reason for why would be considered missing.

One last human resource that aids in the PYD process are the youth themselves or **peers**. The youth volunteers (aged 12-16) and the older kids within the afterschool program are expected to be role models to the younger children. Staff in charge are aware that the younger kids (kindergarten to grade 2) will model their behaviours off of the older kids (grades three and four) and youth volunteers. Therefore these individuals will be told to conduct themselves in an appropriate fashion as a means to contribute to the behavioural development of the younger kids. The youth volunteers are ideally well prepared (through participation in LIT and step-up LIT) to take on the charge of being role models to the younger youth in Agency C.

Activities

Interviews with senior staff and youth at Agency C revealed a set of direct and indirect strategies utilized by the staff that also appear to contribute towards the positive development of its youth members.

Direct strategies. With regards to the LIT program (the main vehicle of life skill development within Agency C) the ***progression of the program*** also parallels the TPSR where each day follows the stages of (1) relational time, (2) awareness talks (utilizing the provided LIT manual), (3) the activity or game, and (4) debriefs and reflection. *Relational time* helps to ease youth into the learning environment by engaging them in open conversation to make the context comfortable for them to open up to the staff leaders and their peers. This can include having youth take turns answering a leading question or ‘question of the day’.

When we come in at the start of the day there is...like we’ll play a game, then there will be a question of the day, that we all have to answer like, you know...this is what I can

think of but like...“where would you go on vacation if you go anywhere”? And through these we kind of get to know each other, especially on the first day, there’s a lot of introductory things, you get to know the other kids doing it, then we’ll probably talk to Roy [the staff leading the program] for a bit about what we’re going to be doing for the whole day and then we’ll get into the main part. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

The *awareness talk* follows in which the lesson or theme of the day is taught to the youth before it is worked on later in the activity or game. Unique to the LIT program at Agency C is that a manual is utilized, and provided to each youth participant, which outlines the skills and lessons being addressed that day. This manual was written years ago when the LIT program was started by Roy and another colleague. Within the manual a particular skill or theme, that becomes the focus or lesson for each day, is described in-depth. As a group the staff leading LIT (often Roy) and the youth participants will read through and discuss the section of the manual that is the theme for the day. Consistent with the organization’s focus on improvement Roger explained that they review this manual every year to decide what is still relevant (what might need to be removed) and what is needed (and should be added to the content of the manual). The idea behind the use of the awareness talks and this booklet is to help the youth learn about these skills and concepts in-depth before they engage in activities where they are put to use.

Umm...well the lessons were like...our manual that we got in the beginning was like divided up into like different sections and in each section we did like, we would do an activity on it and we’d do like team building exercises and like activities surrounding that concept, like, there was like trust, behaviour management, like, all of that stuff like responsibility, leadership, and we would have little activities and we would always debrief. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Erin)

Following the awareness talks the *activity or game* is implemented to help youth experience the utility of the skills and put them to the test. “And then we’ll run an activity based on what we just learned. So that activity is supposed to show why it’s important to have...leadership...or why it’s important to have teamwork” (Agency C Staff – Roger).

I think that a big part of what makes all the ideas that I learned in leadership stick with me is the fact that they, as opposed to just teaching a lesson on leadership and behaviour management or whatever they were talking about in that moment they would pair it with an activity or a challenge that we had to do relating to whatever they just taught us about. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Tony)

The way these activities are designed is interesting as certain ones directly required skills to be utilized, such as teamwork, to overcome a difficult but achievable task. Others were based more around clever analogies to simply help drive home a lesson. Described below is one such activity in which there was no end objective but simply a lesson to be learned (i.e., the importance of trustworthiness) which was particularly impactful for the participant Tony.

I know one specific idea that really stuck with me is about, we were talking about trust, there was a tube of toothpaste and Roy was telling a story, and each time that his friend broke his trust he would squeeze a little bit of it out and he would go on until the tube of toothpaste was empty. And then at the end we had to try to put the toothpaste back into the tube. And they were showing how easily trust could be broken but how hard it is to rebuild it. And so I think it’s sort of little things like those that stick with me and help me better remember a lesson than if we had just sort of been reading page after page about it.

I would have forgotten that one hundred percent. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Tony)

The activity is then followed by the *Debrief and Reflection* in which the staff in charge and youth

will discuss their performance in the activity in addition to relating it to the lesson or skill being taught that day. On performance, the staff in charge of the program discuss with youth how well they believe they executed the activity and how well they applied the skills that were the focus for that day. Sometimes the activities were paused for the purpose of providing important pointers for the youth participants.

And then afterwards they tell us, “we saw this in the game, we didn’t see this” and so on and so on. And like “it’s good that we didn’t see this, it’s good that we saw that”. But like “here’s something you could do in the future”... And sometimes they would stop us in the middle of the game to tell us stuff like that if we’re doing something wrong or if we’re doing something really well. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Jack)

During this time staff also discuss the lessons that youth are supposed to be taking away from the activity and clarify how the activity relates to what was learned from the awareness talk.

We would all debrief afterwards, and assess how we used what we learned from [the] manual and what we learned from the presentations, and how we use that in the activity, and how we were able to use that exact skill and how it helped us and how maybe if we hadn’t known it then things wouldn’t have gone so well. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

After the activity usually we’ll talk, um...about how the activity relates to whatever we learned. That’s usually what we’ll do after the activity and we’ll have sort of a little discussion so that everybody can sort of say their ideas about the activity. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Tony)

Moreover, it was explained by one of the youth that debriefs also function as an effective means of self-assessment and discovery.

Afterwards during the debrief, you'll kind of discuss the different roles that people took and what people in your group did that you really appreciate and for everyone it's different right. Some people would have taken a leadership role, some people would have been willing to do hands on work, some people will kind of be the peacemaker and so you discover these different roles and you learn that everyone is important. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Teachable moments are also utilized in the LIT program at Agency C. As explained earlier these are the means to which youth are informed on how the skills they learn can be utilized within their everyday lives. This can occur through conversations with youth during debriefs in which the staff teaching relate skills learned to everyday life and suggest ways in which such skills can be used.

And then during the debrief we will always relate that to the practical world... So how do the things that we just experienced and talked about relate to your life at home. How might it relate to your life at school. How do you think it could relate to like future employment at the community centre or somewhere else. And we always try to couple the practical with the theoretical. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Well they, when we were, when we did the debrief after stuff, they would always give their personal experiences about it and I think that really helped because there were a lot of fun and exciting experiences where we could see that it was being used in the outside world and it was useful lessons. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Erin)

However, the LIT program at Agency C also utilizes intuitive strategies for imparting teachable moments. One of these is through *role playing* (i.e., acted out skits) where the staff leading, often with the help of other staff or youth participants, act out a scenario in which an important skill

(the one being focused on for that day) must be brought into practice. This would be done by either having staff and youth act out proper or improper ways of utilizing skills and handling situations or with staff acting out circumstances in which the youth would have to figure out the solutions. “So Roy would pretend to be a kid and he would be crying and me or [two other youth participants] would kind of show how to handle this situation” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John).

They do a lot of, ummm...acting out scenarios...umm...you know...just what role playing is. Or they’ll get other staff to come in and kind of role play with them.

Ummm...so for example, when they teach you how to like apply for a job or a job interview, they don’t just say “this is what you do, here’s a list of things to check off”.

They’ll actually have you practice for an imaginary job and have you come in and they’ll act like a panel of people and they’ll be totally serious about it. It’s a pretend job but they’ll be serious about it so you’ll get the real experience, but at such a young age.

(Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

According to Jack, the youth were sometimes expected to create and act out the skits themselves (i.e., devising their own circumstances and how to deal with them using the day’s skills) with the staff providing feedback at the end. Dorothy praises the effectiveness of the role playing utilized in LIT and says that it gives youth confidence to engage in the exact same situations in real life. Another method in which staff facilitate teachable moments is through the use of *anecdotes* or stories from their own experiences of when particular skills had come in useful for them. “So they tell us about situations they were in and how they solved them and stuff that I could use to do the same” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Jack).

Like, for most of the sections of the manual we'd do, they'd always be filling it with...real examples from their experiences as counsellors on how they would use the skill or how in a situation it might not have worked. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Other direct strategies utilized at Agency C include ***communicating rules and expectations*** to the youth so that they are fully aware of the behavioural conduct required.

They know what's expected of them. We make sure there's clear expectations of them at the beginning of a program. You know, when we ask you to do something we expect you, you know, to do it for the most part. If you're curious as to why we'll tell you why, obviously. (Agency C Staff – Scott)

In the case of LIT these rules and expectations are written down in the program manual.

Moreover, the first day is devoted to going over each of these rules and expectations so that participants know what they need to do, how to conduct themselves, and how to ultimately pass the program. The LIT program and subsequent volunteering opportunity is also built around a ***logical progression*** as there are two levels of LIT (the original and step-up) with the step-up program building upon the lessons taught in the initial stage. Step-up also offers youth their first opportunity to take on serious leadership roles during the second of the three weeks once all the necessary skills had been taught to them. Once youth graduate both stages of LIT they are encouraged to volunteer at Agency C (usually at the afterschool program). This volunteering opportunity is presented knowing that they are prepared for such a role since the necessary skills were taught to them and tested during their time in both levels of LIT.

Mentorship (offering guidance) is a present feature within Agency C as well. In explaining her mentorship role to kids in the afterschool program Ruby mentioned that she and

the other counsellors will often offer advice to youth that they believe will help them in their lives.

We also like to teach them some more practical things like speaking to each other properly and especially with our younger kids in our programs we have a really big focus on how you're supposed to communicate with others and how, umm, to deal with things and stuff to when, you know, either someone does something that you don't like or something happens that you don't know how to deal with. (Agency C Staff – Ruby)

This advice will also resonate with some of the children as they grow older as was explained in an excerpt from Ruby.

And it's crazy to see the fact that it actually impacts them that much, like four, five, even more years later they can sometimes look back and still remember something that you either taught them or an activity you did with them when they were like five years old you know? But it stays with them because the community centre is like a part of their family and like...ummm...what you've obviously said or did or whatever, it was really... it like really stuck with them even after that many years. (Agency C Staff – Ruby)

Several aspects of the ***approach to discipline*** at Agency C were revealed during interviews. First, similar to the previous two organizations, the approach is youth-centred and bad behaviour is typically dealt with in three stages. At Agency C youth indiscretions are dealt with in private, with the individual being *separated from the group*, as staff are not interested in broadcasting one's bad behaviour and embarrassing the youth in the process. Also, through discussions with the staff, the *youth are made to understand why their behaviour was inappropriate* and are told *how their behaviour can improve* in the future in similar situations.

When they're training us, so when they talk about behaviour management and stuff it's always about discipline instead of punishing a kid for doing something wrong. You use it as a teaching opportunity. Yeah so anytime something happens like that we try to let them know, this is how you can improve on that for next time. (Agency C Staff – Scott)

According to Roy, discipline at Agency C is also *reflexive* and it is acknowledged when some youth or children may need to be approached differently.

We really believe that all children should be treated fairly but not necessarily equally. So, if someone needs a couple of more chances to get it right they're going to get those chances with us, you know, or if someone has, you know, ummm, a learning exceptionality of some sort then, ummm, you know, then their circumstances are different and so we treat everyone as individuals and we try to be as fair as we can and that's a top priority for us. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Additionally, it was described that chosen disciplinary measures should match the indiscretion or youths' obstruction of the rules.

Something I learned in training in my first year when I was here was we encourage related consequences so...what he [a child] did was that he put green paint all over the vending machine and made it dirty so I had to clean it up. And so I said..."ok so the consequence for that...it's got to be related, he's got to help me clean the next day or something else that I needed to clean." And...I think that hits home a bit harder for them. (Agency C Staff – Kevin)

Further interviews with staff revealed that a 'blank slate' approach was taken with youth who misbehave. What this means is, when a youth behaves badly or breaks the rules and the discipline is handed out and relevant discussions had, this indiscretion is forgotten and not

mentioned the next day (i.e., the staff do not dwell on it). Thus the youth has a chance to put themselves in the staff's good graces the following day (i.e., the *slate is whipped clean*). "We find that it's really important to make sure that the children know that...you know...tomorrow when you come back you're not going to still be in trouble for doing something silly the day before" (Agency C Staff – Ruby).

And then also...we're pretty good at whipping the slate clean too. So just because someone does something that a counsellor doesn't necessarily appreciate one day the next day it's like it's a whole new day, like they're welcome back into the fold and we trust them again and you know our love for them doesn't stop because they made a mistake one day. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Also described were situations in which the youth volunteers may be misbehaving as well. In this case staff will, in a quiet and secluded space, inform them that the behaviour is inappropriate and describe how they can improve throughout the duration of their time there. However, youth volunteers who continue to act negatively will be brought in for discussions to determine whether they are fit to volunteer. While it is expected that children and youth members of programs at Agency C will occasionally behave badly this type of behaviour is not tolerated as much at the youth volunteer level and they will face potential suspension of their duties.

Indirect strategies. Agency C also utilizes a set of actions that, though aimed at youths' positive development, are indirect as they do not immediately produce new skills or instil positive behaviours but contribute to their development over time. For instance, **role modeling** is heavily utilized at Agency C. Essentially, the staff set a good example of conduct by acting as positive influences in the youths' lives. Effort is also put into ensuring staff hired by Agency C are positive individuals who are well trained towards taking care of youth (i.e., completed both

LIT programs and were youth volunteers or have demonstrated being a strong community leader). Also, in acknowledgement that children and youth at the organization often grow very fond of the leaders in charge and see them as someone that they aspire to be like, it is expected that staff take full advantage of this and act as positive role models to the youth.

We encourage our staff to share their lives with the kids and to bond in that way and so...I think that...what that means is that the kids see like “ok, this is a nice person who grew up with the community centre and who is excelling in whatever areas and I can be like that to”. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Roy also explains how being an adult within youths’ lives, who is not a parent or a teacher, puts them in a unique position that makes them particularly influential and further substantiates why they need to take on the part of a positive role model.

You know I think...camp counsellors and recreational instructors can really have an opportunity to play a vital role because they...you know you’re not a teacher, right, we’re not just some boring teacher. Ummm...and yet we’re not their parents, you know. So we sort of fall into this nebulous territory of big brother and big sister and I think that’s a really important role to play. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

It was also indicated that positive role modeling is not bound to the community centre itself but that staff and volunteers need to be positive role models outside of the organization as well. This is especially critical since youth and staff encounter each other often within the surrounding neighbourhood.

When you’re out in the community and you’re not here and you see a child, you’re already exhibiting positive behaviours and being a good community member. And so you know, you’re not like on the corner...smoking a cigarette and swearing with your friends

because that's not appropriate in children and parents don't want to see our youth doing things like that. (Agency C Senior Staff – Lisa)

It was also made apparent through interviews with some of the youth participants that their decision to eventually become staff or even avid contributors to their own communities was, in part, due to the positive influences that staff at Agency C had on them growing up. “Like I learned a lot of my skills through them and like watching them to engage them and seeing them interact with kids” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Steve).

Significant effort is also made on the part of the staff to ***develop relationships and trust*** among their youth participants. Staff are not treating youth as clients who attend programs and will eventually move on. Instead they make an effort to develop a friendship between themselves and as many youth as possible including knowing all their names, engaging in casual conversations with them often, and showing youth that they are a trustworthy person in their lives. Staff at Agency C make it apparent that, though they are the authority, they are also relatable and want to be friends with the children and youth at these programs. “They can be friends with us and we can still have that relationship with like... ‘I’m in charge but we can still hang out and have a lot of fun together’” (Agency C Staff – Scott).

Roy, he's the one who was my leader [in LIT] when I first started here. Ummm...he's really, all the youth he kind of brings in to the LIT program. He specifically knows about their lives and he just, it's not just like, “ok here's someone who's taking part in my camp”. For them it's like he almost treats them as friends and it's someone he cares about and he just wants to see them succeed. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Part of developing these deep relationships is through staff *frequently conversing and interacting with the youth.*

For the staff here, we love the kids, and...you make it personal and you talk about your weekends. Like you say “what did you get up too”, and all like “have you guys seen that movie and blah blah blah”...They’re here, they’re talking constantly with them, we’re seeing what’s going on, we’re talking about the vacation that they went on, making sure that everything is good and they’re just like feeling happy and I think that’s just like a huge thing that we do, it’s like the personal thing where they really feel like they’re a part of it and that we’re like looking out for them. (Agency C Staff – Aaron)

According to some staff, there is significant utility in developing these close friendships with the youth in that youth feel more of a desire to live up to staff’s expectations when they also have those meaningful relationships.

When you can’t show a child that you know them and you know their interests they’ll be a lot less interested in you and a lot less interested in what you have to say...for kids I think that’s a really big thing, showing that you’re interested in them and that you care about them. Has a lot to do with how they act with you. (Agency C Staff – Ruby)

And you start to build relationships with all of them and they feel really comfortable around you because you’ve built up like a personal. It’s not just, they just walk in and you tell them what to do and then they leave... it’s like the personal thing where they really feel like they’re a part of it and that we’re like looking out for them. (Agency C Staff – Aaron)

The utility in developing these close relationships is also voiced by the youth participants. “They built a relationship with us and we kind of, at that point kind of gave back to them by being so involved” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John).

They make it feel like you're their friend but you're also at that level with them where you want to impress them which makes you work harder to ummm...build on your leadership skills and you know...you can tell when they're happy with what you did.

(Agency C Youth Volunteer – Christine)

Positive reinforcement is also utilized by staff at Agency C. This includes showing appreciation to children and youth who demonstrate positive behaviours. “We will make a point of going and telling the kid hey that was really cool what you did. Thank you for doing that. And you know we try to do that” (Agency C Staff – Scott). In contrast to discipline, positive reinforcement for good behaviours is something that is done in front of a group of people. This serves the purpose of making the youth or child look good in front of their cohort while showing others what behaviours are praised by the staff.

But with positive behaviour I will say loudly in front of a group “thank you so-and-so for being so helpful today”. Because that's not only good for them to hear but all of their friends will be like “hey, he got props today for doing a cool thing”. So they want to be involved in that or they want to be a part of that and for the kid that I'm addressing, he's just gotten, ummm...you know...public approval, you know, in front of all his friends.

They're all about to see him have a thumbs up moment. It's good for him that way, and it sticks a little more I think. (Agency C Staff – Scott)

Also explained was that positive reinforcement coming from individuals who are role models and had developed deep relationships with the youth or are just well respected by them, can be particularly influential.

When we tell them, “hey what you did was super great”, or that kind of thing, when we praise them for good achievements or good behaviour. Ummm...it means a lot to them because we’re their friends as well as their counsellors. (Agency C Staff – Scott)

Another means of positive reinforcement through the use of rewards, incentives and opportunities are the certificates offered to youth at the end of LIT and step-up LIT in addition to confirmation from the program leader, Roy, of being a reference for any future jobs in which the graduates apply. Moreover, the chance to work as a volunteer and staff thereafter (both desirable opportunities for youth in the neighbourhood) is made available to step-up LIT graduates.

A major component of Agency C is that youth are *encouraged to contribute to the community*. The organization itself is very involved in community outreach.

We just do all kinds of give backs like theatre, like [the community action program’s] outreach programming. Like if there’s a community event, we’ll go and we’ll support it. And in doing that we’ll bring our volunteers, our young youth that need those experiences. (Agency C Senior Staff – Lisa)

Moreover, the staff that work at Agency C encourage the youth involved in the organization to contribute to the surrounding community as well.

They always have a bulletin board with like volunteer situations open. And then the ones in the office, they’re always asking, especially high school kids, if they want to volunteer. Like they do need hours but there is also just lots of opportunities for kids to take part in the community. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

We do give lots of opportunities to volunteer because we want to develop great staff...we do try and guide the kids into doing that kind of thing because it is good to give back to the community and it is a feel good experience. (Agency C Staff – Roger)

The importance of instilling this value of community stewardship in the organization's youth participants is that it is a key quality that Agency C is looking for in potential volunteers and staff. Moreover, the sole purpose of the community action program and kitchen community action program is to have youth involved in community outreach activities.

There's this third program that I started 4 years ago called the [community action program] and that's for high school students only and that's a program that takes place during the school year where basically the goal is to expose teenagers interested in giving back to their community, to expose them to like all the different ways in which they can do that. So we do volunteering with the homeless, we do volunteering with individuals with special needs, we volunteer with the elderly, we do fundraising campaigns, we volunteer with kids, we do a bunch of different things. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

However, even the LIT program itself is a context in which the staff will try to instil in youth a sense of community stewardship.

Yeah well in the LIT program... There were, part of the program was, learning about how to volunteer. And in the program we went to a retirement home, we went around the [community] picking up recycling. So they kind of implement volunteering into the program. So you kind of learn the benefits of that through the program as well. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Youth at Agency C are also *encouraged to get out of their comfort zones* and to engage in activities that they perhaps would not willingly engage in on their own. This can include encouraging youth to participate in a wide variety of activities that they might perceive as uncomfortable at first but through which they can develop their confidence and derive benefits (e.g., band and DJ programs have youth put on performances; groups of friends or cliques are

often separated and put onto separate teams during games in order for them to interact with others; games played with children involve youth volunteers and staff wearing silly costumes). “Our staff are excellent at helping to build confidence and to encourage people to try new things” (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy). This was described as a key component of the LIT program by some of the youth interviewed.

Well it’s not like you have the choice to speak up in front of them, it’s kind of, not like you’re being forced to but you’re being pushed to it...we would sort of do, uhhh, you know drama games [role playing] like...that would force you and push you to like do things that you wouldn’t do in normal life. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Christine)

In the beginning they kind of, like if you’re hesitant about taking a leadership role in the program, ummm...they don’t force you exactly but they put you in situations where you do have to take charge and speak up and...when you realize that you’re totally capable of thriving in situations then you become more self-confident, right, by doing things that you would never have done outside of the LIT program. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

John also described how being in an unfamiliar situation, during the volunteering week of his step-up LIT program, helped give him an important experience in which he could utilize his problem solving and conflict resolution skills.

And then the step-up leadership, I was one of the only people to go outside of [Agency C]...that was the first time I actually worked with people so it was the first time that the stakes were actually kind of high because I’m actually watching out for kids’ safety and actually I had coworkers and maybe they were doing things that were bugging me and I actually had to use conflict resolution in a real situation...they weren’t all that

organized with it, they didn't know where to put me so I had to deal with that and that wasn't a bad thing necessarily, it just gave me experience in dealing with problems and figuring them out. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Another theme coming out of analysis was ***assisting with youth achievements***. At Agency C this involves *resume preparation* and *interview preparation* (both of which are components of LIT). Another helpful reward for passing LIT is that Roy *will act as a reference* for any jobs for which youth program participants apply (Roy is well known in his community and is an influential reference for local businesses). Also, *volunteer opportunities* are provided to youth who pass step-up LIT with *opportunities to become staff* being made available to youth who had volunteered and have reached working age. Another strategy being used at Agency C is ***reinforcing positive values*** (especially with regards to the young children at the afterschool program) which is well described by Dorothy.

We're teaching them...well from when they're little, cause I work with the four year olds and five year olds, teaching them like basic manners and how to be fair...and no punching and basic things like that. Up onto...umm...you know when they're older they need to deal with their peers, ummm...and teaching them about the world, teaching them about their own personal skills and talents, and promoting those in a positive way.

(Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Lastly, youth in LIT also undergo various ***self-assessment measures*** during and after the program. During LIT youth will take a personality test which helps them discover which leadership style may be best suited to them in future leadership activities. "You learn, uhhh...you do personality tests...and you learn more about what type of person you are, what type of leader, whether they're authoritarian, [democratic] or laissez faire, these are the leadership styles you

learned about in these classes” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John). Youth also take self-evaluation measures at the end of both levels of LIT for the purpose of determining where they are strong, where they need work, and how they can improve in the future.

Outputs

Interviews with youth and staff at Agency C also highlighted several factors constituting objective measures and quantitative indicators of PYD. One metric that demonstrates LIT’s success is its attendance rate or popularity among youth in the community, categorized here as ***number of youth enrolled in the program***. According to staff interviews, the program is very popular and fills up to capacity every year. Other metrics that are indicative of youths’ positive development constitute ***achievements within the program***. One of these is *how many youth receive rewards* which, in the case of Agency C, are the certificates earned from LIT and step-up LIT in each session or year. A second related method of measuring program success is determining the *number of youth moving through sequential programs* as there are two levels of LIT that require youth to adequately fulfill the requirements of, and graduate through, the previous level before moving on to the more complex and advanced level that follows. A third theme, under achievements within the organization, is *how many youth understood the concepts taught each day*. Measuring this is as simple as inquiring youth on the content of the day’s lessons during the debrief portion of the daily (or weekly) activities. Specifically, youth are asked to reiterate what it was that they learned that day just to ensure the staff that they understood whatever it was that they were supposed to take away from the day’s lessons (e.g., a certain life skill or positive behaviour that is the focus for the day). A fourth benchmark that demonstrates youth achieving positive development is *number of youth becoming volunteers or*

staff in the organization as this demonstrates that they passed both stages of LIT and have gained the skills and qualities needed to adequately fulfill these roles.

With regards to objective measures of organization success concerning *youths' achievements outside of the program*, *time youth spend volunteering* and/or *number of volunteer opportunities youth take on* are two other indicators of positive development which is also tracked by staff at Agency C. The fact that youth would engage in these opportunities demonstrates that they have developed the various skills needed to take on volunteer roles outside of Agency C while also having developed positive characteristics in addition to learning the importance of community contribution. Thus, youth voluntarily taking on community contribution is a sign of their positive development.

Outcomes

In response to questions regarding short-term positive developmental benefits resulting from youths' involvement in programs at Agency C, participants identified a series of life skills as the more immediate outcomes. This includes the afterschool program but mostly encompasses LIT, community action program, kitchen community action program, and the volunteering opportunity available to youth who pass LIT as these are where most of the emphasis and focus on PYD is placed within Agency C.

Life skills. In LIT life skills were directly taught within the daily lessons, tested through activities that occurred immediately after, and were discussed in debriefs where youth were asked whether or not they understood the tenets of the skill being taught that day. Therefore, life skills can be considered more short-term or immediate outcomes as opposed to other positive characteristics and qualities (i.e., the 4Cs) that take much more time to develop within the youth involved in these programs. However, to be categorized as life skills they had to be considered

abilities that can be transferred and useful towards various other aspects of youths' lives outside of just the youth programs in Agency C where they were taught.

The only life skill mentioned by every single interview at Agency C (n = 16) were **social and communication skills**. Other skills that were stated by most participants included **teamwork and cooperation skills** (n = 14), **leadership skills** (n = 13), and **responsibility** (n = 10; including reliability and trustworthiness). Life skills mentioned by at least seven of the 16 participants included **initiative** and **problem solving skills**, the latter of which also includes *youths' conflict resolutions skills* (n = 5). **Behavioural management skills** (n = 6) were also described and can be understood as understanding and managing one's own behaviour as well as the behaviour of others. **Self-regulation skills** (n = 5) are another outcome of programs at Agency C and included improvements in *organization skills* (n = 3), and *time management skills* (n = 3). **Coping skills** (specifically *flexibility/adaptability* or situational awareness (n = 5) were also reported and can be understood as one's ability to adapt to or react appropriately to situations or problems that suddenly arise.

Life skills, resulting from youths' participation in programs at Agency C, that were mentioned by at least three of the 16 participants included **decision making** (i.e., making proper choices and exercising good judgement), **trust** (i.e., ability to rely on one's peers or team) and **work ethic** (i.e., the understanding that the more work and effort one puts into something the more one gets out of it). At least two of the study participants also stated the following life skills: **ingenuity** (i.e., coming up with original and inventive ideas), **listening skills** (i.e., understanding and following direction and instruction), **networking skills** (i.e., developing connections with others who may be important future resources), and **patience**. Lastly, there was mention of **emotional regulation** skills by one participant. For the most part, the life skills described in the

LIT program manual as the intended life skills being taught to participants were also stated in interviews with the exceptions of *commitment*, *professionalism*, and *self-evaluation and assessment*.

Impacts

The positive developmental outcomes identified in this study by participants from Agency C categorized as impacts are considered long-term changes that are not immediate results of youths' engagement in the organization but occur over a prolonged amount of time. These will be conceptualized thematically as the 4Cs of Competence, Confidence, Caring/Character, and Connected in addition to Contribution.

Competence/skill transfer. A variety of the life skills listed as outcomes for the youth participants in programs at Agency C were described in interviews as being used by them outside of the program as well in their everyday lives. It should also be noted that, since many of the staff participants use to be members of the LIT program (with one even being involved in the community action program at one point when younger) they were particularly relevant sources of information on where many of the skills taught in these Agency C programs can be used within their everyday lives.

Most of the things I learned there above leadership and how to carry myself I took to all the jobs I've applied for, I used it in university, throughout high school. So they taught us a lot of skills that, you know, you can use not just for our LIT program or being a leader but just for life in general. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

The skills mentioned in interviews by participants as being utilized outside of Agency C included work ethic, ingenuity, initiative, leadership, networking, self-regulation, social and communication skills, and teamwork and cooperation skills.

Leadership skills were described as being useful by three staff participants (once members of LIT) at their current job as counsellors at Agency C in which they typically have to lead groups of children and youth. These leadership skills have also been brought into sports. Jack (an Agency C Youth Volunteer) indicated leadership is particularly useful in his role as a co-captain on his hockey team. Youth participants also reported taking on the role of leaders in their schools and in their communities as volunteers after having taken part in the LIT program at Agency C. This excerpt by John demonstrates that he takes on leadership roles in both domains.

I have never really been in charge of anything, of organizing people before I was in the program and so that was a new experience for me and since then not only have I become involved in [Agency C] but I've become involved in my school and on my block...just in leadership positions...at school I'm the grade 10 representative, so for my whole grade I'm the elected official that is a member of student council so I'll basically bring all my ideas to student council and help organize events and initiatives for the school...On my block. I organize the [annual] block party. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Dorothy, a staff member and former LIT participant, also explained that she takes a leadership role within the surrounding community, as a volunteer, outside of her work hours.

Well, there's a church down the street...I also ran summer camps there as well. So learning, like all that stuff based off stuff I learned here. So I ran a whole summer camp and I was able to do that because I kind of took what they did at the community centre as a model. And the leadership skills I learned there I was able to pass on to other youth who were volunteering for me...I run Christmas pageants at the church, where we have about 50 kids who come and...uhh...so I use leadership there as well cause I have

to coordinate that, coordinate a team of volunteers, coordinate parents as well. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Social and communication skills were described by a couple of participants as being useful within their respective jobs (i.e., when interacting and communicating with one's employer, co-workers, and clients or customers), schools (i.e., learning to interact appropriately with adults and peers helped youth learn to interact properly with other students and teachers), and sports (i.e., effectively connecting with and communicating with members of one's team). Youth interviewed also mentioned that they were able to use the enhanced social and communication skills taught in LIT (further practiced in their current volunteering at the organization) in simple interactions with people they meet in their everyday lives. "I'm able to like communicate better and sort of be less shy, like as opposed to sort of backing away from a social situations I would put myself into one" (Agency C Youth Volunteer - Tony). "Like...when I was younger I was always a little shy but it's gotten me to be more comfortable and just easier to like talk to people and...communicate" (Agency C Youth Volunteer - John). "Oh yeah for sure. Making friends, ummm...getting a great relationship is what people, just like that you meet on the streets, it's easier to socialize with them because that's basically what you do every day here" (Agency C Youth Volunteer - Christine). Teamwork and cooperation skills were reported as being useful within sports for cooperating with teammates, at jobs when working with other employees and managers, and at school when working with other students on school projects or other members of an extra-curricular activity. An example of the latter comes from John who indicates how he cooperates with members of his student council at school similarly to how he had to work with his peers in LIT and as a volunteer at Agency C.

As an acting grade rep I have to talk to a lot of people and just like at [Agency C] or in the LIT program we're taking input from other counsellors you're working with, you're taking input from kids maybe, I have to take input from other people in my grade. What they like about events, what they want to see changed in the school. And...I have to take that to student counsel just like here I have to maybe take it to my supervisors. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Self-regulation skills, particularly time management, was explained as being useful during employment (at Agency C). “I need to program activities and submit them in to my coordinator... And if I don't do it on time she is not happy. So I need to do that on time. So she buys supplies for me” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Amanda). School is also a venue in which self-regulation comes in handy for youth, particularly time management (i.e., handing in assignments on time, showing up for classes on time) and organization skills. Work ethic was also described as being useful at school.

You know in school you have to work hard to maintain like good notes and everything. And I think from, with the, ummm...leadership camp that they really taught you that hard work will give you a good outcome and a good result and I think that's helped me at school as well. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Erin)

One participant (the grade 10 representative on his student council) described how he is able to utilize the ingenuity, which was directly taught in LIT and heavily utilized as a volunteer at Agency C, within the school environment. “Definitely ingenuity, like thinking of new ideas, that's one I forgot but that I've really developed through [Agency C] and through school. It's like, thinking of new ideas for events, to give solutions to problems maybe that are unconventional” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John). Dorothy, a staff member who also runs

community programs out of her church, describes how she consistently sees the most initiative coming out of her volunteers who were also members of the LIT program at Agency C.

For the Christmas pageants I run, the ones who do the LIT program, they were always the ones who kind of took initiative. I never had to guide them to what to do, they kind of, I guess in their training, they kind of know how things work, or they'll see an area where they need to jump in. I won't have to lead them by the hand and tell them what to do. Or you know, if we have kids who need help they'll go and take the initiative whereas some people who haven't done the program they won't know, sort of, the basics of how that works...they have a lot of their own ideas...I don't have to always tell them what to do. They bring a lot to the table, just from what they've learned here. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Lastly, one youth described how networking skills came in useful for him in his babysitting work in which he often reaches out to parents in the community marketing himself as a candidate. “Because you have...you make connections in your neighbourhood and then just...trying to get jobs every once in a while with that”. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Caring/Character. The second C to be discussed encompasses a variety of positive characteristics reported by interview participants. *Helpfulness towards others or willingness to volunteer* was mentioned by a majority of the participants from Agency C (n = 13) which is unsurprising considering how central of a tenet this is towards their youth programming. In part, this is demonstrated by the fact that many of the youth who attend the afterschool program and LIT eventually become volunteers at the organization (this includes all the youth interviewed from Agency C).

A lot of kids who have also been a part of our program now are volunteers which I think shows a lot about how positively impacted they were that, you know, years and years later when it became like time that they were old enough to volunteer they chose to come back and actually be a part of it because they wanted to give the experiences that they had to other kids. (Agency C Staff – Ruby)

Again, not all graduates of LIT are hired on for volunteer opportunities at Agency C due to a lack of available space and the popularity of the position. However, this does not stop the youth coming out of LIT from focusing their volunteer efforts elsewhere.

Not all volunteers are accepted, you have to apply, and only some are accepted. A lot of them, some of them know that this is what they want to do and they want specifically to volunteer here. But some of them take what they learn here and they will volunteer at other community centres and other places in the city as well...some have gone to the auto school of art downtown to volunteer there. Ummm...yeah. And anywhere there's children's programs they kind of volunteer into it. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Even a staff participant, Dorothy, did more than just volunteer at Agency C and also contributes to her community by running activities through her church such as summer camps and Christmas pageants. She also mentioned that the volunteers she encounters at her church activities, who happened to be alumni of the LIT program at Agency C as well, are enthusiastic about taking on volunteer tasks.

It's funny cause when I was working at the church, there's a bunch of kids who were in the LIT program and a bunch of kids who weren't and you could see the difference between them, like how they acted. So whenever I would propose a volunteer position for

them, the ones who I knew did the LIT program here were always like very keen on volunteering. They're always first to jump in. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Several excerpts written above also showed that youth volunteer participant John has found various volunteer opportunities for himself including being a member of his school council and regularly organizing his annual block parties. “Since I began in the LIT program...I wanted to become more involved” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John). It is very likely that the reason for this outcome is the effort that Agency C puts into encouraging its youth participants to volunteer including providing such opportunities in LIT to devoting particular programs like the community action program and kitchen community action program towards community contribution. By having youth engage in community contribution experiences they can gain an appreciation for it and thus develop a willingness to volunteer. “Because you see that volunteering can be something really enjoyable right? It's not just about getting the 40 hours you need to graduate, it's to give back” (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John). In response to her experiences being a part of the community action program, Christine reveals the lesson that resonated most strongly with her.

How good it feels to give back to the community. Really, I think that's something that I keep with me for the rest of my life. And volunteering your time to get nothing back in return other than satisfaction... I understand that giving back something that's, not just something you can do by choice, it's something that's necessary for a functioning community... [volunteering] teaches you about giving back, ummm...even if you aren't getting anything returned, doing nice things for people is just so satisfying that it's worth it. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Christine)

Another aspect of caring and character, described in interviews, is youth coming out of programs at Agency C with increased *kindness, empathy and selflessness* (n = 11).

You know, and I feel like they're expanding their world view and they see like, "oh right, not every 16 year old lives in a nice home in the [neighbourhood] with a family that loves them and has a beautiful warm bed at night". You know. They're learning that there are other teenagers, maybe even peers who go to their own high school who are in a very different situation. And I think those are important things to learn and so, obviously we're like supplying the food to the homeless shelter but the homeless shelter is providing us with a valuable learning lesson and opportunity. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

I think that they learn that people's experiences are, are extremely varied and vast and so, where it's probably a generalization but I think it's probably...you know your world as a young person is sort of very small and very closely linked to your own self and your own experiences and so I think they're...that they're learning that there's a bigger picture out there, a bigger world, and that they probably have a pretty important place when they know that they can actually contribute positively to the benefit of the other people.

(Agency C Staff – Anne)

This can also be a product of the many community outreach or charity activities that they have youth involved with at Agency C exposing them to individuals in need.

What I think for them, the bigger messages of empathy and compassion come from actually getting out there and seeing the world and participating and so in the...Youth Sleep Out for example and listening to a youth who has been through the system and you know at their age was living on the street at the same time, like you know, while still

trying to go to high school and live their lives I think they're understanding that they just want to be able to do what they can to help. (Agency C Staff – Anne)

The one that I remember the most was getting to see the women's shelter of Ottawa. That one was really cool. Sad and scary but really cool. Ummm...cause it was often, like it was teenage girls who were not living at home with their parents, they were here in the shelter. Ummm...that definitely gave me a different perspective for sure. Like, for sure for sure. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Amanda)

However, even within the programs themselves, rules in place which discourage negative attitudes towards each other are also geared towards instilling in youth a sense of kindness and empathy. For instance, by implementing a special negative language rule in the kitchen community action program - where if one breaks the rules they have to pay a compliment to everyone in the room - helped encourage the youth to take on more empathy and kindness in their everyday conduct. Moreover, the volunteering experience offered to youth after LIT may also provide them an opportunity to practice empathy and understand its importance.

Empathy, ummm... thinking about what other kids are thinking kind of and, like when you're programming a game like, you got to think like what the kids are in to and what can go wrong kind of too from the thing...you try your best to like think about how the kids are going to react to your game, like the good parts about it, the bad parts about it. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Steve)

Another aspect of this C includes **respect**. According to Roger this may be a direct result of youth being a part of the LIT program.

So a lot of kids will come out of grade 6 in [the afterschool program]...like being like super loud and rambunctious and, ummm, they'll interrupt all the time. Until they come

to leadership and they're very respectful...a lot of like bullying and stuff goes on in all of youth...And I think that after leadership a lot of kids that you wouldn't see interacting really start to interact and become friends through leadership and you just kind of see less judgement on surface things and more judgement on character which I think is a great change in behaviour...Kids come in and like, "oh yeah I play in the soccer team, I play on this other team", and then there's a guy in the corner who doesn't really like communicate, doesn't really want to talk to anyone but at the end of the week they're all having fun together. Everyone is kind of inclusive. (Agency C Staff – Roger)

One last theme coming out of this category includes youth being a ***role model for others***. This is both directly encouraged by staff at Agency C and an outcome of youths' prolonged participation in the programs. "That's, you know, the kind of thing that we try to hit home with them, be a positive influence on the people around you" (Agency C Staff – Scott).

I think its [referring to LIT and volunteering afterwards] definitely taught me to appreciate little kids more, to hang out with younger age groups. Because before I was here I would sort of like..."oh those younger kids" I would sort of like, give them their space. Now I can be like more confident with them and interact with them on more of a personal level...I guess I can associate more with the younger kids and interact with them better. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Jack)

Confidence. The third C categorized out of interviews with youth and staff at Agency C is increased confidence. Some youth may start off shy, introverted, and unable to express themselves or communicate to peers and staff but then become outgoing, consistently conversing, and at times being able to speak in front of a group. These individuals are considered to have ***come out of their shell***. In these excerpts from Tony and Dorothy they explain that this

type of confidence can occur easily from being a part of LIT as they were expected to, not only participate, but contribute to activities and discussions.

Yeah I think it encouraged me in all aspects of my life to participate and not just...not just sort of an activity but any...any sort of social situation like a conversation, I sort of...it gave me the confidence to go and participate in whatever people were doing to sort of place myself in groups that I may not have like...been comfortable in being a part of before like, with working in a group at school or people who I don't know that well. Sort of...it gave me the confidence to go sort of be an active member of a group as opposed to sort of listening to everybody. It also encouraged me to participate and sort of give my ideas to the group. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Tony)

The youth who do the LIT program, they're way more confident...in the LIT program they give them opportunities to express their own opinions. And they're very encouraging about, you know, kind of like when they say there's no right or wrong answer, and they'll integrate that to express their opinions about stuff that they're learning. And then through the volunteer work as well. The LIT is in an environment where they can start to grow their own opinions and start to realize the benefits of volunteering. Ummm...so that kind of helps them later on to do the same elsewhere. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Youth coming out of these programs also demonstrate a type of confidence labeled here as ***sure of self***. Two staff members, Dorothy and Roger, who used to be members of the LIT program and its subsequent volunteer opportunity recalled how coming out of the experience led them to become sure of themselves at an age where self-insecurity can be very commonplace. “Just learning to like be myself and be comfortable with who I am and not care about what

people think” (Agency C Staff – Roger).

Yeah. It definitely gave me more confidence than before. Ummm...especially cause at that age you doubt yourself a lot. But I know that after the program I was able to, I did it before I went to high school, before I went to grade nine. And right after I did that program I could go into high school with more confidence. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

A youth participant in this study also made mention of this type of confidence explaining that being put into situations outside of his comfort zone, a key aspect of LIT and the subsequent volunteer opportunity, and realizing he could be successful in such situations led to this outcome.

In the beginning they kind of, like if you’re hesitant about taking a leadership role in the program, um...they don’t force you exactly but they put you in situations where you do have to take charge and speak up and...when you realize that you’re totally capable of thriving in situations then you become more self-confident, right, by doing things that you would never have done outside of the LIT program. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – John)

Positive view of self is another aspect of confidence coming out of interviews with participants at Agency C. Lisa, a senior staff member at Agency C, believes that this type of confidence is directly related to youth developing a set of skills and becoming competent at using them.

They get a sense of “I have all these skills and not only can I learn all these skills, I’m good at these things”. And I think that’s something that our leadership and youth pretty much focuses on and the idea that they’re learning them but at the same time they’re learning about themselves and I think in the end that’s probably what they gain. (Agency C Senior Staff – Lisa)

However, even when it comes to youth that attend a program like the afterschool program with less of an emphasis on developing life skills, the presence of caring counsellors who are always willing to mentor youth when such guidance is needed also helps them view themselves more positively. The excerpt below shows how mentorship from this staff member helped maintain one's positive view of herself many years later.

I've had kids come back years later and tell me like one little girl that I had in one of my camps, she had a lot of body issues even as like a younger child and one day she was like bawling, in tears and super upset because a little boy called her fat and so we had this huge talk about how she was beautiful in her own way and not to care about what other people say and all of this. And years later, about like three years later or so I bumped into her when she was out with her family at the mall and she remembered that conversation we had and it was such a big thing to her and she told me that even like later on when she was having times when she felt bad about herself she thought about it, you know? And how like I was just, yeah I'm just a camp counsellor but I still I cared enough to tell her that and it actually stuck with her, what I said, like it actually mattered to her and years later she kept that with her. (Agency C Staff – Ruby)

It may be worth mentioning that a positive view of the future did not manifest into a theme through analysis of interviews with Agency C participants. This is not very surprising however since the youth in this organization are generally middle class and not at-risk and thus are often expected to do well in life regardless of their engagement in PYD programs. Lacking a positive outlook on what one will do when they are an adult is generally a quality of at-risk youth.

Connection. The fourth C can be understood as the capacity of youth to create and be

involved in a network of relationships with important individuals in their lives who can, in turn, benefit the youth as well.

I know that if I'm ever in need I can always rely on the community centre and people in my community because I had given my time to them when they needed it and in return I get the same thing...I've been coming here my entire life and I'm pretty familiar with some of my coworkers and my bosses because they've always been my counsellors and stuff like that. And also my friends come here too. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Christine)

You know just really gaining from, certainly friendships, with others and yeah a solid network with people...Yeah I think connections for sure. Umm...they have, you know the, yeah they know that they have that support system behind them too so they're gaining the sort of confidence to launch themselves into the workforce potentially. (Agency C Staff – Anne)

This includes individuals *internal to the organization* including their *peers* at Agency C, many of whom may be friends from their own schools or from other schools.

So these kids that would never even see each other otherwise, they'll go to a program together and they'll be introduced to each other and they'll start being goofy right off the bat. And it's really cool to see that. Seeing like friendships starting just because you have a game and they were put together and they get along really well otherwise they would have never really spoken to each other. (Agency C Staff – Aaron)

For instance when I started coming to [Agency C] I was sort of very...not well lonely but alone...like I didn't really have friends but then I was like, went through the years and [the afterschool program] and summer camps where it's sort of...I was sort of

encouraged to branch out and so I gained lots of friends quickly like that. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Tony)

Volunteers and *adult staff*, acting as mentors and a support system to the youth, are another important facet of youths' social network. "Well they have mentors like...Roy and myself and other senior team members" (Agency C Senior Staff – Lisa). "Through that program I was able to meet the counsellors here who work in the office and who do all of the programs. So when I did apply years later I kind of...they knew me and I knew them" (Agency C Staff – Dorothy). Also, through the connections Agency C has with individuals ***external to the organization***, specifically the *nearby or Ottawa community* at large, youth are provided with a variety of resources (outside of Agency C) who can provide something valuable to their lives. These connections were often made available through the organization's volunteering activities.

We got to work with many community partners in the neighbourhood [when she was in LIT] ...think it makes them feel, like, comfortable in their own neighbourhood. It kind of creates like a bigger world to them, cause now they're not just this young person going to this community centre but now they kind of know people throughout the whole community. (Agency C Staff – Dorothy)

Other ***benefits of being connected*** can occur from youths' enhanced social networks. As Roy explains, youth can gain a *sense of community* from the connections they gain through Agency C.

I think the youth gain a sense of community. I think they feel a sense of attachment to this place that's an extension of their living room and certainly that's something that we take very seriously and we really work hard to promote that, you know...everyone should feel safe here and, you know, we're all family. And I think that's very comforting to

people because they know that their circle of support is more than just, you know their nuclear family at home. It's the counsellors and it's our executive director and it's everyone who works in this building. So I think they gain that. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Meanwhile, Anne explains that by developing connections within the community, typically through volunteering, youth are able to gain a sense of *community awareness* or knowledge of their neighbourhood and city.

They're sort of selflessly giving of their time [in both the community action program and kitchen community action program] and, to...to different sort of community programs or events that take place and I think...they learn a lot about the community at large, interacting with people. (Agency C Staff – Anne)

Contribution. Youth involved in Agency C are also avid contributors to the organization and the surrounding community. For instance, the youth involved in Agency C ***contribute to the organization*** through the volunteer opportunities made available after one graduates step-up LIT.

As our kids in our leadership program start to become 14-15 years old a lot of them start making the transition into volunteering. So we have about 20 grade nine and 10 youth volunteers right now who help us run our programs. (Agency C Senior Staff – Roy)

Many of the youth who had graduated LIT (such as the ones interviewed in this study) are willingly engaged in this volunteer opportunity for a prolonged amount of time such as Steve who had volunteered for 900 hours in two years and Tony who had been volunteering since September 2015 at the time that he was interviewed in March of 2016. It is worth mentioning however that it is also desirable that anyone who gets hired on the team at Agency C as staff had

volunteered in the organization in this capacity, so the opportunity does become necessary if this is someone's end goal when coming out of LIT.

Many of the youth who had once attended Agency C end up becoming volunteers and may also become staff members after that (i.e., ***members turned youth volunteers turned staff***). By having youth progress through both levels of LIT and the subsequent volunteering that occurs afterwards, Agency C developed an effective means of hiring qualified individuals as they have essentially been training for the position for years.

Growing up here I had volunteers as counsellors as well and I see them giving their time and I knew that eventually it would be my time to give back to the community centre as well. That's what we do...Yeah it's like a cycle, you do the programs as a kid, you do the leadership and [the community action program] and eventually you're most likely going to come back and work there for the same programs you did as a kid...my plan is to work here after. (Agency C Youth Volunteer – Christine)

Lastly, there was also mention within the participant interviews of youth from Agency C also ***contributing outside of the organization*** as well. Specifically it was reported that these youth get involved within their schools and their communities. For instance, John volunteers in his school and community while Dorothy, at the time of the interviews, continued to organize activities at her local church.

They're not just involved in volunteering here. They're volunteering here and then they're on three bands at school. They're volunteering here and then they're babysitting on their weekends and interacting with members of the community. They're volunteering here and they're also in the [local extracurricular school program], they're on rowing team, they're in sports clubs. (Agency C Senior Staff – Lisa)

It is worth noting that this study's finding that youth, especially those from Agency C, are avid contributors to their organizations and communities could be questioned as volunteering in many cases can be seen as a requirement. First, in Ontario, it is compulsory that high school students complete 40 hours of community service in order to graduate. However, many youth who were volunteering had gone passed this time frame (e.g., 250 hours; steadily for 2 years). Second, it was described in interviews at Agency A and Agency B that former youth members can be hired on as staff once they are old enough to work, but that youth who had volunteered at these organizations beforehand are looked upon more favorably for positions compared to those who did not. Moreover, for Agency C it is often a requirement that former youth members who want to become staff at the organization engage in volunteer work between their time in LIT and employment. Thus, it is completely possible that the outcome reported in this study that youth willingly take on volunteer opportunities internal and external to their organizations is a product of them feeling required to do so. However, some youth in interviews had described their volunteering in a way that seems to demonstrate an inherent interest to do so as opposed to a requirement. Described below are two examples of individuals who looked up to and wanted to be like former adult leaders they had, wanted to give back, enjoy their volunteer experiences, and simply wanted to contribute in some way or form.

I wanted to volunteer here because when I was younger, attending all the programs, I was very, sort of, inspired by the staff, I felt I had close connections with a lot of them, and so I just sort of felt like I wanted to be that sort of person that I looked up to when I came here as a kid. (Agency C Youth Volunteer - Tony)

Well a lot of people here are volunteers so...while most of us are aspiring to get a job here we're also doing it because we enjoy spending time with these kids and giving back

to the community and not only doing work for the afterschool program but we will work at other events like the Halloween event or the umm...youth nights...at different programs that we don't necessarily have to do but that we want to do. (Agency C Youth Volunteer - John)

Table 5

Themes for Agency C

Inputs	Activities
Context	Direct Strategies
• Opportunities for Skill Building • Opportunities for Community Outreach • Opportunities for Skill Application • Opportunities to Contribute in Organization • Opportunities for Interaction • Comfortable, Positive and Welcoming Atmosphere ○ Safe Space ▪ Judgement Free ○ Inclusivity ○ Positive Focus • Fun and Engaging • Staff Prepared • Rules and Expectations	• Communicating Rules and Expectations • Disciplinary Approach – Youth Centred ○ Separate from Rest of the Group ○ Discuss what They are Doing Wrong ○ Discuss what They Can Do Right ○ Reflexivity ○ Punishment Matches Indiscretion ○ Wiping the Slate Clean • Mentorship/Offering Guidance • Progression of Programs ○ 1. Relational Time ○ 2. Awareness Talk ○ 3. Activity or Game ○ 4. Debrief & Reflection ▪ On Performance ▪ On Lesson • Teachable Moments ○ Role Playing ○ Anecdotes • Logical Progression
External Assets	Indirect Strategies
• Community Assistance ○ Partnerships – Collaborations ○ Provide Venue for Programs/Volunteering ○ Schools Cooperate ○ Sponsorships, Donations & Funding • Family Collaboration ○ Family and Staff Converse Often ○ Family and Staff Cooperate ○ Family Reinforces Development at Home • Staff ○ Developmentally Supportive Qualities ▪ Approachable ▪ Attentive ▪ Caring ▪ Charismatic ▪ Enthusiastic ▪ Friendly ▪ Helpful ▪ Inclusive ▪ Nice	• Developing Relationships and Trust ○ Conversing Often With Youth • Encouraged to Contribute to Community • Encouraged to Get out of Comfort Zones • Positive Reinforcement • Reinforcing Positive Values • Role Modeling • Self-Assessment Measures • Assisting with Youth Achievements ○ Resume Preparation ○ Interview Preparation ○ Staff Act as References (when passed LIT) ○ Providing Volunteer and Job Opportunities

Table 6

Themes for Agency C (continued)

▪ Passionate ▪ Proactive ▪ Relatable ▪ Respectful • Peers ◦ Older Youth as Role Models		
Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
• Number of Youth Enrolled in Program • Youth Achievements (in program) ◦ Number of Youth Earning Rewards (i.e., Certificates) ◦ Number of Youth Moving through Sequential Program (e.g., LIT & Step-Up LIT) ◦ How Many Youth Understood the Concepts Taught Each Day ◦ Number of Youth Becoming Volunteers/Staff at Program • Youth Achievements (Out of Program) ◦ Time Youth Spend Volunteering ◦ Number of Volunteer Opportunities Youth Take	• Life Skills ◦ Leadership Skills ◦ Social and Communication Skills ◦ Teamwork and Cooperation Skills ◦ Responsibility ◦ Coping Skills ▪ Flexibility/Adaptability ◦ Problem Solving ▪ Conflict Resolution ◦ Behavioural Management ◦ Decision Making ◦ Trust ◦ Self-Regulation ▪ Organization ▪ Time Management ◦ Emotional Regulation ◦ Work Ethic ◦ Ingenuity ◦ Listening ◦ Networking	• Competence/Skill Transfer ◦ At School ◦ In Sports ◦ At Job/Employment ◦ In Community ◦ With Other People • Caring/ Character ◦ Helpfulness/Willing to Volunteer ◦ Kindness/Empathy/Selflessness ◦ Respect ◦ Role Model for Others • Confidence ◦ Coming Out of Shell ◦ Sure of Self ◦ Positive View of Self • Connection ◦ Internal to Organization ▪ Peers ▪ Volunteers ▪ Staff ◦ External to Organization ▪ Community ◦ Benefits of Being Connected ▪ Sense of Community ▪ Community Awareness • Contribution ◦ Former Member Turned Volunteer/Staff ◦ Contribute to the Organization ◦ Contribute Outside of the Organization

Chapter 5: Discussions

The Final Logic Model

A comprehensive list of themes, composed of all the themes disseminated from the interviews from the previous three cases, is presented in this section (see Tables 7-10). The final logic model intended for use for recreation organizations is presented as well (see Figure 1). The intention of these results is to follow the typical logic model format of planned work that goes into program delivery (inputs & activities) that lead to the intended results (outputs, outcomes, impacts). First, some of the themes listed under these headings were consistent throughout all three organizations and were mentioned in some form by youth or staff participants at Agency A, Agency B, and Agency C. Second, some of the themes listed in the model had been mentioned by participants from at least two of the three organizations examined. Also, some of the themes listed here were mentioned by only one of the three organizations examined but were deemed to be pertinent contributions to the model and adequate mechanisms or results of a successful PYD organization. Thus the themes making up this model demonstrate a close representation of what can be considered best practices for recreational organizations focused on the positive development of their youth participants.

Both the comprehensive list and the final logic model are composed of a large amount of themes and can be perceived as very complex. However, at this point in its life cycle, it may be beneficial for the model to contain numerous themes. First, future research (especially intervention research) may determine that some of these themes may not be applicable to recreational PYD programs. In light of the potential removal of model components in the future it would be important for it to initially possess enough themes to remain comprehensive later on. Second, the numerous themes will also help ensure that practitioners who seek to create

recreational programs aimed at PYD have enough information to go about the process. The model is only intended to be used as a guide to program design with practitioners utilizing components that work best for their particular organizations. It would be unrealistic to expect a program to adopt all the facilitating factors and achieve all the intended goals outlined in the comprehensive list and final logic model.

Table 7

Comprehensive List of Themes

Inputs	
<u>Context</u>	
• Skill Building and Learning Opportunities • Community Outreach Opportunities • Skill Application Opportunities • Opportunities to Contribute within the Organization • <i>Interaction Opportunities</i> • Networking Opportunities • Comfortable, Positive and Welcoming Atmosphere ○ Safe Place ▪ Physical Safety and Security ▪ Judgement Free ○ <i>Inclusivity</i> ○ <i>Positive Focus</i>	• Fun and Engaging Activities • Variety of Activities • <i>Staff and Volunteers are Prepared</i> • Rules and Expectations • Adequate Funding • Low Ratios (staff/youth) • Structure • Time and Consistency in the Program ○ Youth Spend Many Years in Program ○ Consistent Volunteers and Staff Year-After-Year
<u>External Assets</u>	
• Community Assistance ○ <i>Partnerships – Collaborations</i> ○ <i>Provide Venues for Programs and Volunteer Activities</i> ○ <i>Schools Cooperate</i> ○ <i>Sponsorships, Donations & Funding</i> ○ <i>Motivational/Educational Speakers</i> ○ <i>Volunteers/Community Members Contribute</i> • Family Collaboration ○ Family and Staff Converse Often ○ Family and Staff Cooperate ○ <i>Reinforce Development at Home</i> ○ Opportunities for Families to Contribute ▪ Families can Provide Input ▪ Families can Donate to Organization • Peers ○ Older Youth as Role Models • Alumni ○ Volunteer/Contribute to organization	• Staff ○ Developmentally Supportive Qualities ▪ Approachable ▪ Attentive ▪ Caring ▪ Charismatic ▪ Enthusiastic ▪ Experienced ▪ Friendly ▪ Helpful ▪ Inclusive ▪ Nice ▪ Passionate ▪ Patient ▪ Proactive ▪ Relatable ▪ Respectful

Table 8

Comprehensive List of Themes (continued)

Activities	
<u>Direct Strategies</u>	
• Communicate Rules and Expectations • Disciplinary Approach – Youth Centred ◦ Separate from Rest of the Group (Discipline Happens Privately) ◦ Discuss What They are Doing Wrong, ◦ Discuss What They can Do Right Next Time ◦ Reflexivity ◦ Punishment Matches Indiscretion ◦ Wiping the Slate Clean • Mentorship/Offering Guidance • <i>Logical Progression</i>	• Progression of Programs ◦ 1. Relational Time ◦ 2. Awareness Talk ◦ 3. Activity or Game ◦ 4. Debrief & Reflection ▪ On Performance ▪ On Lesson • Teachable Moments ◦ Role Playing ◦ Anecdotes
<u>Indirect Strategies</u>	
• Developing Relationships and Trust ◦ Conversing Often With Youth ◦ Playing Games with Youth • Encourage Youth to Contribute to the Community • <i>Encourage Youth to Join Programs and Activities</i> • Encourage Youth to Get Out of Comfort Zones • Assisting with Youths' Achievements ◦ Resume Preparation ◦ Interview Preparation ◦ Providing Volunteer and Job Opportunities ◦ Staff Act as References ◦ Help with University Applications ◦ <i>Post-Secondary Scholarships</i> ◦ Special Events	• Positive Reinforcement • Provide Resources to Youths' Families • Reinforcing Positive Values • Role Modeling • Use of Keywords (Word of the Week) • Offering the Youth Motivation & Encouragement • Files and Information Kept on Youth • Self-Assessment Measures • Active Pursuit • <i>Lifting Participation Barriers</i> ◦ <i>Free for Youth</i> ◦ <i>Providing Transportation</i> ◦ <i>Providing all Necessary Equipment</i>

Table 9

<i>Comprehensive List of Themes (continued)</i>	
Outputs	
• <i>Number of Registered/ Enrolled Members</i> • <i>Youth Engagement</i> ○ <i>Attendance Numbers</i> ○ <i>How many Youth are Enjoying Program</i> ○ <i>Number of Youth Participating in at Least one Structured Program</i> • Youth Achievements In program ○ <i>How Many Youth Understood the Concepts Taught Each Day</i> ○ Number of Youth Becoming Volunteers and/or Staff at Program ○ Number of Youth Earning Rewards ○ <i>Number of Rewards Earned by Each Youth</i> ○ <i>Number of Youth Moving Through Sequential Programs</i>	• <i>Number of youth moving from ‘problem child’ status to ‘well behaved’ status</i> • Youth Achievements Out of Program ○ <i>Report Card Grades/School Performance</i> ○ <i>How Often Do Youth Complete Their Homework</i> ○ <i>Number of Youth Employed in Part-Time Jobs,</i> ○ <i>Number of Youth Graduating Secondary School</i> ○ <i>Number of Youth Intent on Post-Secondary Education</i> ○ <i>Time Youth Spend Volunteering External to Organization</i> ○ <i>Number of Volunteer Opportunities Youth Take on External to Organization</i>
Outcomes	
• Life Skills ○ Leadership Skills ○ Social and Communication Skills ○ Teamwork and Cooperation Skills ○ <i>Academic Skills</i> ▪ <i>Devoted to School Work/Homework</i> ▪ <i>School Performance</i> ○ Responsibility ○ <i>Positive Attitude</i> ○ <i>Initiative</i> ○ Emotional regulation ○ Work Ethic ○ <i>Ingenuity</i> ○ Listening Skills ○ Problem Solving ▪ Conflict Resolution	○ <i>Behavioural Management</i> ○ Coping Skills ▪ <i>Flexibility/Adaptable to Change</i> ▪ <i>Handling Disappointment</i> ○ <i>Decision Making</i> ○ <i>Trust</i> ○ Self-Regulation ▪ <i>Organization</i> ▪ <i>Time management</i> ▪ <i>Focus</i> ○ Patience ○ <i>Self-Reflection/Assessment</i> ○ <i>Emotional Literacy</i> ○ <i>Goal Setting Skills</i> ○ <i>Honesty</i> ○ <i>Networking</i>

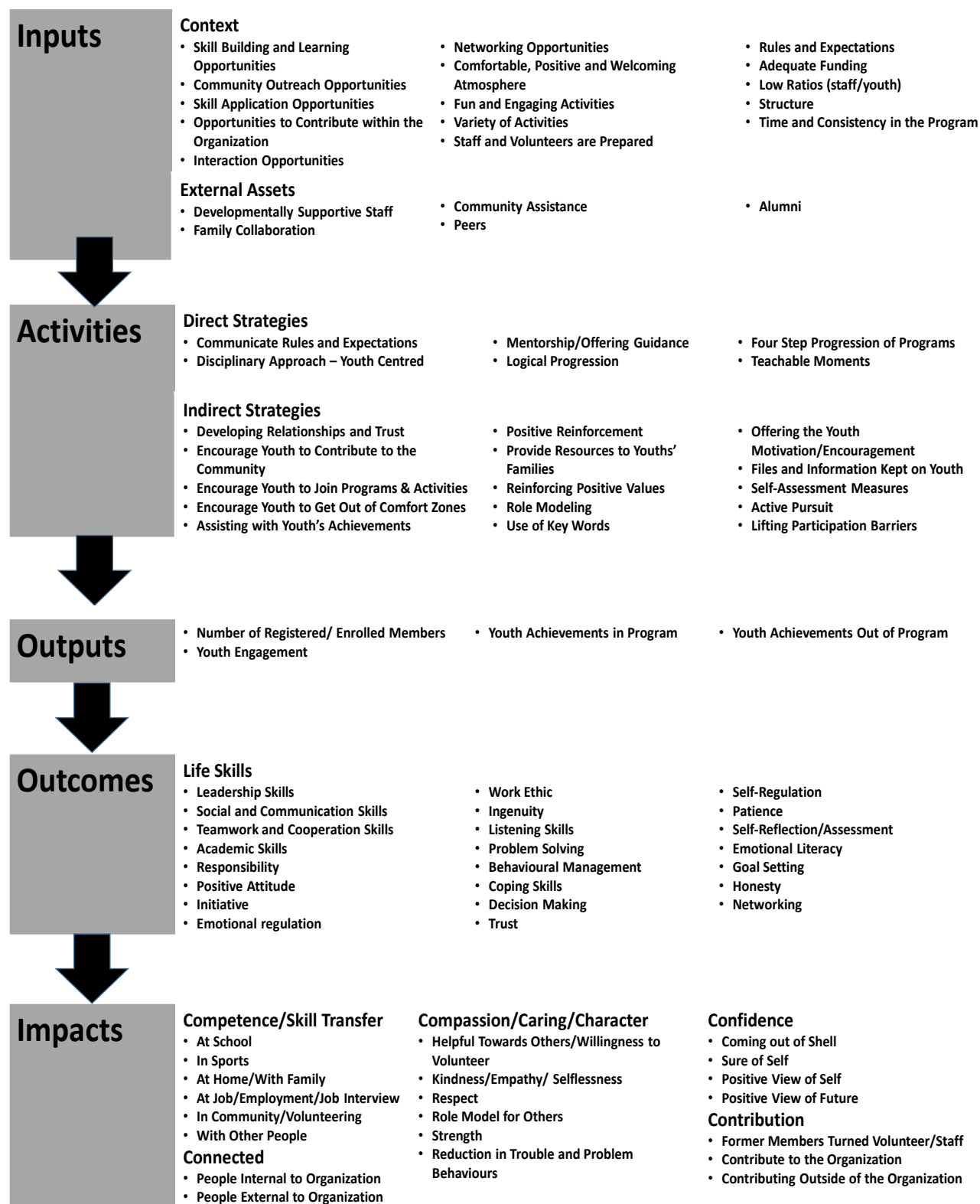
Table 10

Comprehensive List of Themes (continued)

Impacts	
• Competence/Skill Transfer ○ At School ○ <i>In Sports</i> ○ <i>At Home/With Family</i> ○ <i>At Job/Employment/Job Interview</i> ○ <i>In Community/Volunteering</i> ○ <i>With Other People</i> • Caring/Character ○ Helpful Towards Others/Willingness to Volunteer ○ <i>Kindness/Empathy/Selflessness</i> ○ Respect ○ Role Model for Others ○ <i>Strength</i> ○ <i>Reduction in Trouble and Problem Behaviours</i> • Confidence ○ Coming out of Shell ○ Sure of Self ○ Positive View of Self ○ <i>Positive View of Future</i>	• Connected ○ Internal to the Organization ▪ Peers ▪ Staff ▪ Volunteers ○ External to the Organization ▪ Community Members ▪ <i>Youths' Families</i> ▪ <i>School Peers</i> ▪ <i>Teachers</i> ○ <i>Benefits of Being Connected</i> ▪ <i>Sense of Community</i> ▪ <i>Community Awareness</i> • Contribution ○ Former Member Turned Volunteer/Staff ○ Contribute to the Organization ○ Contributing Outside of the Organization

Note. Regular – 1 case supports theme; *Italics* – 2 cases support theme; **Bold** – 3 cases support theme

Figure 1 – Logic Model of Positive Youth Development



Themes Consistent Across the Three Cases

Themes that were descriptive of the practices and intended results of all three organizations are considered particularly important for recreational organizations to be successful with PYD. These were themes highlighted by all three organizations in this study who represent completely different entities with no particular link or shared policies. Within the inputs section under context the themes ***skill building and learning opportunities; skill application opportunities; opportunities to contribute within the organization; comfortable, positive and welcoming atmosphere*** (including a *safe place* that is *judgement free*); ***fun and engaging activities; and rules and expectations*** were mentioned as mechanisms for setting features that were conducive of PYD. The prevalence of these themes is not surprising as (1) PYD and life skill development would not happen without the learning and testing opportunities being present in the first place (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Hellison; 2011), (2) youth would not enjoy and return to a program if it did not possess a positive ambiance where they are free to express themselves, interesting activities, and provide them an opportunity to take an active (rather than passive) role in the program (Mainieri & Anderson, 2015b), and (3) all youth programming must have a structure in place to guide proper behavioural conduct (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Also within inputs under external assets the ***community, family, staff, and youths' peers*** were all indicated as people and entities responsible for assisting with the organization's ability to promote the positive development of its youth participants. None of the community's forms of involvement were consistent across all three organizations. However, families were involved with all the organizations examined through the means of *conversing with staff*, often on topics regarding their children. Youths' peers (i.e., older members of these organizations) were *utilized as role models* at all three locations as they were

instructed to demonstrate good behaviour in front of younger members. Lastly, staff at all three organizations were described as possessing the developmentally supportive qualities of being *attentive, approachable, caring, enthusiastic, helpful, inclusive, proactive, and respectful*.

Themes in the activities section under direct strategies included ***communicating rules and expectations to the youth, youth-centered disciplinary approaches, mentorship and offering guidance, progression of programs*** (in that they all followed the process of *relational time, awareness talks, an activity or game, followed by a debrief and reflection* on youths' performance and the lesson itself), and ***teachable moments***. Themes categorized as direct strategies were those that were explicit and promoted skill development out of clear and consistent instruction (Gould & Carson, 2008). The consistency across the three organizations of youth centred discipline, staff acting as mentors and guides, the four step progression of specific skill building programs (especially leadership programs), and the use of teachable moments is interesting as these are specific strategies occurring across these multiple unrelated organizations that have also been highlighted in previous research on PYD. These findings demonstrate that these are highly pertinent direct strategies but also that these organizations may have kept themselves informed, in some capacity, on what constitutes best practices within PYD programming. Also, under ***youth centred disciplinary approaches***, all three organizations revealed through interviews that, when discipline was needed with youth who behaved badly, it followed a similar set of three steps of (1) *separating the youth from the rest of the group*; (2) *discussing what the individual did wrong*; and then (3) *discussing how the individual can behave in the future* when confronted with a similar situation. Under indirect strategies the themes ***developing relationships and trust*** (specifically by *conversing with youth participants often*), ***encourage youth to contribute to the community, positive reinforcement, role modeling, and***

assisting with youth achievements (i.e., *resume preparation, interview preparation, and offering volunteer and job opportunities*) were mentioned at all three organizations. Themes categorized under indirect strategies were more implicit and occurred from the nature of the activity itself, the actions of the adults, and the social norms in place including things that adults encouraged youth to do.

Themes in the outputs section that were consistent across all three organizations included having measures that examined ***youth achievements within the program*** (specifically measuring the *number of youth becoming volunteers and/or staff at the program* and *number of youth earning rewards*) and ***youth achievements outside of the program*** (though none of these were consistent across all three organizations).

The resulting short-term outcomes were the life skills that participants mentioned as being the direct results of youth participating in the PYD organizations. All three organizations concurred that youth were coming out of programs with ***leadership skills, social and communication skills, teamwork and cooperation skills, responsibility, problem solving skills*** (including *conflict resolution skills*), ***self-regulation skills*** (though none of the specific one's were mentioned by all three cases), ***emotional regulation skills, work ethic, listening skills, coping skills, and patience***. The prevalence of these particular life skills implies that they are highly desirable results of PYD organizations. However, considering the leadership focus of the case studies involved in this research it is not surprising that life skills most associated with leadership were the most common results of these organizations.

Lastly, several themes constituting long-term impacts were consistent across the three organizations. Using the 4Cs as the framework to deductively code for impacts, ***competence*** (also considered skill transfer), ***caring/character, confidence, and connected*** were consistent

across the three organizations. Thus it would be worth mentioning the specific themes categorized under the 4Cs, mentioned in interviews, constituting ways in which youth were impacted across all three PYD organizations studied. First, participants at all three organizations discussed life skills being transferred to the *school* environment. Consistent signs of caring or character across the three cases were increased *helpfulness towards others or willingness to volunteer*, increased *respect*, and becoming a *role model for others*. Three of the subthemes of confidence were described as results of youths' participation in the organizations over time and included *coming out of shell*, *sure of self*, and *positive view of self*. Also, participants at all three organizations indicated that youth developed enhanced social connections with individuals who could provide beneficial resources in youths' lives *within the organizations* themselves (i.e., their peers, the staff, and the volunteers) along with individuals *external to the organization*, specifically members of the community (who the organizations themselves help youth connect with). Lastly, consistent across the three organizations is the outcome that youth become individuals who **contribute** (another aspect of the Cs model) whether that is *to the organization* itself that they are members of or towards venues and entities outside of the organization (e.g., their communities). Contribution is further demonstrated by the fact that, at all three organizations, volunteers and staff were often former youth members.

Themes Consistent Across At Least Two Cases

Several themes were highlighted by two of the three organizations examined in this study. These are still considered particularly important for recreational organizations intentionally designed around PYD as these are operational procedures and intended results of two unaffiliated and unlinked youth development organizations. Reasons for why one organization deviates from these themes may come down to differences in operating procedures

and end goals but it is also possible that interviews with participants neglected to mention whether or not these themes are pertinent to their organization (it is assumed that not one participant is able to explain every single facet of their PYD organizations).

Within the inputs section under context, the themes ***interaction opportunities, staff and volunteers are prepared, lifting participation barriers*** (specifically making the organization *free for youth, providing transportation, providing all necessary equipment*) were highlighted by at least two of the organizations in addition to some subthemes of ***comfortable, positive and welcoming atmosphere*** (i.e., *inclusivity* and *positive focus*). The reason why these themes are highlighted by only two organizations may, again, come down to operating procedures (e.g., Agency C charges fees for its programs and is located in a middle class neighbourhood; Agency B has limited programming time and thus focuses on carrying out its activities rather than setting up opportunities for its youth to interact with each other) or simply participants neglecting to mention this facet in interviews (Agency A is also likely an inclusive organization but this quality was not highlighted by participants). Under external assets the ways in which the ***community assists*** in the organization's PYD endeavours (i.e., *partnerships/ collaborations; providing venues for programs and volunteer activities; cooperating with schools; sponsorships, donations and funding; motivational and educational speakers, and community members contributing through volunteering*) were mentioned by at least two organizations. This can, again, be attributed to differences in operating procedures (e.g., Agency A locations own and operate their own locations and do not need any provided; Agency C solely recruits LIT graduates as volunteers; Agency B works more strongly with youths' families than their schools). Moreover, ***families*** were involved in PYD at two of the organizations by means of *reinforcing youth development at home*, outside of program hours.

Within the activities section under direct strategies the theme ***logical progression*** was mentioned by Agency B and Agency C as both those organizations had a system in place where youth would progress through consistently advancing PYD programs once having passed the previous iteration of the program. Agency B had three levels of LIT while Agency C had two with each level at both locations steadily increasing the complexity of the skills being taught in addition to the responsibility and difficulty of the tasks being required of youth participants. This then led to opportunities for the youth to take on volunteer roles at each organization as they were perceived as ready to adopt those responsibilities. Under indirect strategies the theme ***encourage youth to join programs and activities*** was reported by Agency A and Agency B. It is suspected that this is emphasized by these two organizations because their youth participants are considered at-risk and likely perceived to require opportunities for life skill building and encouragement to join these activities. At Agency C the main program aimed at life skill development, LIT, is already immensely popular and generally fills up during every session while it was described by youth participants that many had intentions of joining ever since they were very young members of the after school program at Agency C. Also ***assisting with youths' achievements*** (i.e., *offering potential post-secondary scholarships*) was mentioned by Agency A and Agency B.

Under outputs, two of the three organizations highlighted collecting metrics related to the ***number of registered or enrolled youth members*** as this was seen as a measure of program success. Agency B is less focused on recruiting as many youth as possible and more concerned with maintaining the attendance of current members. ***Youth engagement*** metrics, specifically *attendance numbers* were reported in interviews with Agency A and Agency B. Attendance numbers can help determine youths' engagement as this gauges their interest in the organization

by showing whether they choose to go back. Though in some cases parents may instruct them to attend, it was mostly the youth themselves (especially those aged 12-17 which were the focus of this research) who choose to attend Agency A and Agency B, as well as the LIT, community action program, and kitchen community action program at Agency C outside of school. **Youth achievements within programs**, as also indicated by both Agency A and Agency B were measured as *number of rewards earned by each youth* (at Agency C no tangible rewards were identified outside of certificates for passing LIT of which youth can only receive a maximum of one for each level). Meanwhile under the same overarching theme *number of youth moving through sequential programs* was an aspect highlighted within interviews at Agency B and Agency C. Agency A and Agency B also identified *report card grades and school performance* as an objective indicator of **youth achievements outside of the program** (as Agency C does not have many at-risk youth, school disengagement is likely not perceived as a pertinent issue for their members).

Under outcomes, life skills that participants mentioned as being the direct results of youth participating in the PYD organizations, as indicated by at least two of the three organizations, included **positive attitude, initiative, decision making, trust, goal setting, and honesty**. Several sub themes of life skills including *devotion to school work and homework, school performance*, (under **academic skills**), *time management* (under **self-regulation skills**), and *handling disappointment and flexibility and adaptability to change or sudden situations* (under **coping skills**) were also highlighted by participants in two of the three cases.

In impacts under **competence** it was indicated by participants in two of the organizations approached that youth had transferred their life skills to *sports and athletic environments* (outside of the organizations themselves), *at home* with youths' families, their *jobs and*

employment (including actual job interview themselves), *towards the community* (as volunteers), and towards *other people in their lives* (e.g., the utilization of social and communication skills to build connections). Under ***caring/character*** it was reported by two of the three organizations that youth develop a sense of *kindness/empathy/selflessness*, and show a *reduction in trouble making and problem behaviours*. Lastly, under ***confidence***, participants at Agency A and Agency B reported *a positive view of the future* as being an outcome of youths' engagement in programs while this was not a pertinent concern with youth at Agency C.

Themes Mentioned by One Case

The following themes included in the logic model were mentioned by participants of one of the three cases examined in this research. Regardless of a lack of consistency between the organizations for these themes it was still deemed important to include them as they were highlighted as important factors towards implementing programs aimed at PYD and recognizing the intended results of such endeavours. These themes are also consistent with what has been reported in the literature and are similar utilized practices and outcomes sought out by existing recreational PYD organizations. Themes that were unique to this study were also supported by evidence (i.e., participants' interviews) that made apparent that these addressed the purposes of this research and were important to include in the logic model. It is completely possible that these particular themes may be relevant and useful for other PYD organizations with similar operational structures to one of the three studied or can provide unique new ideas (e.g., Active Pursuit) that recreational organizations aimed at the positive development of youth may find useful.

Within the inputs section under context the themes ***community outreach opportunities*** (from Agency C participants), ***adequate funding*** (from Agency A participants), ***networking***

opportunities, low ratios (staff/youth), structure, and time and consistency in the program

including *youth spending many years in the program* and *consistent volunteers and staff year-after-year* (from Agency B participants) were mentioned by one of the three organizations.

Meanwhile the subthemes *physical safety and security* (under **comfortable, positive and welcoming atmosphere** and *safe place*) were unique to Agency A. Under external assets, with regards to **families**, interviews at Agency C indicated that *families take a cooperative role with staff* when it comes to the wellbeing of youth participants while Agency B interviews stated that *families have the opportunity to contribute to the program* through providing input or donating to the organization if possible. The positive developmental qualities of **staff** that were mentioned by only one of the three organizations studied were *charismatic, friendly, nice, passionate, relatable* (from Agency C participants), *experienced*, and *patient* (from Agency B participants). Lastly, Agency B was unique in that it seeks out its **former members or alumni** when looking for individuals to *volunteer or contribute to the organization*.

Within the activities section under direct strategies, participants at Agency C offered some unique insight. This includes their **approach to discipline** which was described as *reflexive* (taking the youths' mental state into account), where the *discipline matches the indiscretion*, and adopting a *wiping the slate clean* principle that goes into effect the day after a child's misbehaviour. Though all the organizations appear to utilize **teachable moments** (linking life skills to contexts in which they can be useful) in some way or form it was Agency C who provided a thorough description of their approach. This involved the use of *role playing* where participants in LIT act out the skills in theoretical situations that simulate real life and *anecdotes* where leaders tell stories of where the skills had come in useful for them. Under indirect strategies several of the themes listed were unique to one of the three organizations. For Agency

At it was mentioned that staff *offer the youth motivation/encouragement* to pursue their interests and aspirations. Also, it was explained that *developing relationships and trust* with youth involves *playing games with them* during free time. Moreover, at this organization *help with university applications* and *attending special events* (under *assisting with youths' achievements*) were unique aspects. At Agency B interviews stated that they *kept files and information on each of their youth participants, provided resources to help out youths' families*, and had a 'Word of the Week' activity which utilized *key words* to aid with the lessons and behaviours they wanted youth to take away from the community programs. At Agency C participants mentioned that part of their PYD efforts included *encouraging youth to get out of their comfort zones*, and *reinforcing positive values*. Agency C also employed the use of *self-assessment measures* for youth who had just completed LIT and step-up LIT as a means to help them reflect on where they have improved and where they can continue to improve in the future.

In the outputs category several objective measures of youths' positive development were unique to each of the organizations approached in this study. At Agency A they consider the following measures of success: *the number of youth participating in at least one program*, *number of youth moving from 'problem child' status to 'well behaved status* (within the *youth achievements in program* category), *how often do youth complete their homework*, *number of youth employed in part-time jobs*, *number of youth graduating secondary school*, and *number of youth intent on post-secondary education* (from *youth achievements out of program*). At Agency B one unique measure of success was indicated: *how many youth are enjoying the program* (from *youth engagement*). At Agency C three measures specific to them were highlighted: *how many youth understood the concepts taught each day* (from *youth achievements in program*), *time youth spend volunteering external to the organization*, and

*number of volunteer opportunities youth take on external to the organization (from **youth achievements out of program**).*

Under outcomes, several of the life skills described by participants from one of the three organizations included: **emotional literacy**, **self-reflection/assessment** (from Agency B participants), **behavioural management**, **ingenuity**, and **networking** (from Agency C participants). Meanwhile some of the subthemes of life skills mentioned earlier indicated by participants of only one of the three organizations included *organization skills* (Agency C) and *focus* (Agency A) from **self-regulation skills**.

Lastly, under impacts, some subthemes of the 4Cs were reported by participants from one of the three locations researched. For instance, the focus group at Agency B discussed an example of a youth demonstrating *strength* (especially in the face of tough life circumstances) which was categorized under **caring/character**. With regards to the theme **connected**, Agency A participants discussed how their participation in programs helped them learn to develop better relationships with their *family members*, their *peers at school*, and *their teachers*. However, participants at Agency C discussed how having enhanced relationships with community members also provided youth with a couple of benefits including developing an *enhanced sense of community* and *greater community awareness*.

Relations to Previous Research

Deductive coding was utilized in this study for its higher order themes and was based on knowledge and theoretical frameworks from years of PYD research. On the other hand, the lower order themes organized under higher order categories are a product of inductive coding and are completely grounded within participants' data. Regardless, many of the lower order themes discovered through inductive analysis are consistent with findings of previous research.

Inputs. Coding for the inputs was based on the knowledge that successful PYD programs require appropriate contexts (Eccles & Gootman, 2002) and external assets (Benson et al., 1998). Thus, this study collected empirical evidence from staff and youth, long involved in PYD programs within recreational based organizations, on what features specifically make up these contexts and what external assets are utilized in their efforts along with roles they played in the process.

Context. The theme, constant across all three organizations in this study, ***skill building and learning opportunities*** is consistent with the findings in Riley and Anderson-Butcher's (2012) study that part of the success of the LiFE Sports Summer Camp was the presence of opportunities for learning life skills through lessons and sports. This theme was also consistent with findings by Fuller et al. (2013) who, through interviews with youth and parents, found that the means to which participants were able to experience benefits in the afterschool program examined included providing opportunities to teach life skills in addition to offering opportunities for the youth to apply these life skills (consistent with this study's theme ***skill application opportunities***). Furthermore, coaches in research by Camiré et al., (2012), Flett et al., (2013), and Trottier and Robitaille (2014) categorized as successful at PYD were described as implementing opportunities for youth in the sport to learn the life skills in addition to learning from their mistakes while making intentionally transferring life skills into non-sports contexts an objective. Camiré et al. (2012) explained that coaches intent on teaching youth life skills provided them with opportunities to exhibit their skills (e.g., developing responsibility by making them prioritize academic obligations; developing leadership by compelling them to be positive influences on younger athletes).

Also in Riley and Anderson-Butcher's (2012) study it was determined that another mechanism used by the camp examined was 'fun and challenging activities' which is consistent with this study's ***fun and engaging activities*** theme. In Mainieri and Anderson's (2015b) study youth participants also perceived their PYD context, a camp aimed at teaching civic engagement, as a fun and engaging environment that allowed for experiential learning. A wide variety of evolving and fun activities was also a finding in research by Flouris et al. (2016) of PYD programs in remote indigenous central Australian communities.

The theme ***comfortable, positive and welcoming atmosphere*** is consistent with the finding 'positive team climate' from Flett et al. (2013) and positive environments (fun, full of positive role models, educational) from Flouris et al. (2016). Meanwhile its subtheme *judgement free under safe place*, is similar to findings from Neely and Holt (2014). Specifically, these authors found that parents perceived safe environments in which youth can explore and seek out new experiences and comfortably test out their new skills and abilities as a fundamental feature of sport programs aimed at PYD. A safe place was also a finding of Mainieri and Anderson's (2015a) study where the PYD context was described as developmentally supportive, non-judgemental, and in a secluded space (thus allowing youth a safe space to learn and test their skills). Under the same overarching theme *inclusivity* is a similar finding to the study by McDonough et al. (2013) in which a program aimed at inducing social responsibility had a focus on ensuring youth felt a sense of belonging.

The theme ***interaction opportunities*** is consistent with a finding from Bean and Forneris' (2016) examination of multiple PYD programs that more successful programs included opportunities for youth to interact. Also, in Mainieri and Anderson (2015b) youth developing bonds with each other, made easier due to them working towards a common goal, were also

described as a helpful feature of the program under exploration in that it facilitated their inclination to motivate and learn from each other. Also, the theme ***opportunities to contribute within the organization***, in which youth have a part to play in the implementation and delivery of their programs is also consistent with Flouris et al. (2016), in which it was found that youth were provided opportunities for program planning in order to keep engaged and take ownership. Another finding in Flouris et al. (2016) was the community's role in providing opportunities for youth in the PYD programs to network with some of the community's most influential members. This finding shows similarities to the ***networking opportunities*** offered through Agency B. Specifically, representatives from partnered organizations became potential links to future opportunities when youth interacted with them during workshops that they held in their LIT program. Lastly, the theme ***staff and volunteers are prepared*** (implying that they were well trained to take on the responsibility of a leader at a PYD organization) shows similarities to a finding by Mainieri and Anderson (2015a). In particular, these authors highlighted that part of the success of the camp studied was the presence of the trained facilitator who was already knowledgeable on educational and instructional theory while also having previous success with teen programs (i.e., knowing how to deal with teens).

External assets. As was discovered through participant interviews and indicated in the logic model, the external assets that can be useful towards PYD endeavours include program staff, youths' families, communities, youths' peers, and former members or alumni of these organizations. With the exception of peers and alumni, the importance of these individuals has been alluded to by previous research (Bean & Forneris, 2016) and theoretical frameworks (Benson et al., 1998; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). However, interview participants were asked to provide the reasons for their importance and the role that each plays in

their PYD endeavours for the purpose of informing this study's logic model. Many of these findings are also consistent with previous research. For instance, in Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012) the conclusion that encouraging, caring and personable program staff were instrumental to the success of the LiFE Sports Summer Camp was consistent with some of the developmentally supportive qualities uncovered through the study's thematic analysis including the **staff** at the locations examined being *caring* and *relatable*. Also, this study's finding that staff are *attentive* is consistent with the work of Mainieri and Anderson (2015), in which it was found that program success was also a product of the facilitator being attentive to the youths' needs and making adaptations to the curriculum when campers needed it. Research by Fuller et al. (2013) also explained the importance of exposing adolescents to a large selection of adult and peer role-models within programs. In particular, youth who had been in the organization for some time and who reflect the characteristic encouraged by the organization were tasked with being role models to younger youth who had spent less time in the organization. This latter finding is consistent with this study's theme of **peers** being an external asset by taking on a role modeling function in the organization for other youth.

Two of the three organizations in this study had participants explain how **families** will *reinforce the skills and values taught in programs at home* which was also a finding of research by Neely and Holt (2014). Also, in Flouris et al. (2016) the PYD programs occurring in the indigenous communities examined followed a bottom-up approach in which both the youths' families and members of their communities were highly involved in its planning and implementation. Specifically, these individuals took on the role of the staff delivering it, the administrators determining program operations and rules, or simply providing feedback for what they want to see in the youth programs. This is consistent with this study's finding that

community members were involved in the organizations as *volunteers* whether it was on the frontline with youth or in the background in an administrative and governing role (i.e., a board of directors). Also, in Mainieri and Anderson's (2015b) study, the camp (aimed at instilling civic engagement) provided youth a variety of volunteer opportunities within their own communities which was made possible due to the camp's partners and collaborators providing these opportunities. A similar process was in place at Agency C, with a comparable emphasis on civic engagement, in which there was no shortage of volunteer opportunities as *venues for programs and volunteer activities were provided* by the community through their *partnerships and collaborations*.

Activities. The activities or implementation section of the logic model concerns what needs to be done in the organization in order to achieve the desired results. Based on what is described in the PYD literature, it made sense to categorize themes in this section into what Gould and Carson (2008) called direct and indirect teaching strategies used by coaches (or program staff and leaders in the case of this study) to teach life skills and instil positive developmental qualities in youth participants.

Direct strategies. Every organization in this research had at least one program intentionally designed around teaching skills and positive development in some capacity following the process outlined in Hellison's (2011) TPSR. The process goes as follows: (1) relational time, (2) awareness talks, (3) the physical activity/lesson, (4) the group meeting, and (5) reflection time. The intentionally designed programs in this study (e.g., the leadership training program, the girls positive development program [both at Agency A], and LIT [at Agency B and Agency C]) were described as having these daily stages, though participants tended to describe the group meeting (debrief) and reflection time as a single step that ended

each day. None of the participants interviewed were directly aware of TPSR, though some of these programs were originally designed by individuals who were out of the scope of these interviews (the positive development program for girls was designed right after TPSR by researchers at a nearby University). Research by Bean et al. (2016) found that activities and debriefs were particularly useful in the PYD program investigated.

The theme *teachable moments*, which describes how staff in charge of programs contextualize the lessons and skills they teach youth to help them understand how they can be used in their everyday lives, was also a finding in Bean et al. (2016) and Camiré et al. (2012). Also, the theme *mentorship and offering guidance* is consistent with research by Morgan, Sibthorp, and Tsethlikai (2016) who make a strong case for the mentoring function of leaders or facilitators in programs aimed at life skill development (i.e., self-regulation skills). Specifically, it was found that scores gauging youths' self-regulation skills were much higher during and after an eight week summer camp with a mentoring intervention with individuals helping and advising youth one-on-one throughout the process than a similar program (comparison group) without one. This further points towards the importance of program leaders' mentoring function within PYD endeavours. Lastly, the theme *logical progression*, which describes how youth move through progressively advancing PYD programming until they are ready to take on greater responsibilities at the organization (i.e., volunteering or employment) is similar to a finding by Mainieri and Anderson (2015b). In their study, programs followed a logical structure which started with skills sessions (content lessons followed by activities to apply the content), followed by community interactions (to introduce youth to key community members) and then service activities (youths' volunteering within their community). By following this process youths' skill building at the beginning allowed for their civic engagement experiences to be successful later.

Indirect strategies. The theme *developing relationships and trust* shows consistency with findings from a variety of existing PYD research. For instance McDonough et al. (2013) highlight the importance of high quality social relationships between youth and program leaders (with the added variables of leader autonomy support and leader emotional support) as this predicted social responsibility in youth participants in the PYD program they examined. Research by Flett et al. (2013) also explains how coaches effective at PYD strive to engage in positive relationships between themselves and their athletes which is further marked by mutual trust and high standards of the youth on the part of the coach. The use of **role modeling** was also a prevalent theme among all three organizations examined in this dissertation but has also shown up multiple times in previous research as an indirect strategy towards PYD. For instance, in the program examined by Bean et al. (2016), in order to influence youth towards being more respectful, leaders would implicitly demonstrate or model respectful behaviour in front of the them during program implementation whether that was directly towards them or towards the staff themselves. Also, Camiré et al. (2012), Flett et al. (2013), and Trottier and Robitaille (2014) found that coaches who were effective at promoting PYD in their athletes would actively model life skills that they wanted them to develop as one of their more covert strategies.

In this study the theme **lifting participation barriers** (i.e., *free for youth, providing transportation, providing all necessary equipment*) describes how the organizations did whatever they could to alleviate the burdens experienced by youth towards accessing their services. This theme was mostly relevant to Agency A and Agency B which were the two organizations specifically aimed towards socio-economically disadvantaged youth. This theme is also consistent with previous research findings. In Riley and Anderson-Butcher's (2012) study the LiFE Sports Summer Camp provided the valuable resources needed to ensure that few barriers

kept its youth participants from attending the program (e.g., free camp, meals provided, transportation). Access to transport to increase youths' ability to access programs was also reported as an instrumental component of PYD organizations for indigenous youth in Flouris et al. (2016).

The indirect strategy of ***positive reinforcement*** is consistent with the findings of Trottier and Robitaille (2014) who found that coaches who placed a specific emphasis on teaching life skills provided youth feedback on their performances and progress. The ***use of key words***, a strategy utilized at Agency B, was also reported as a strategy used by coaches in Camiré et al. (2012). In their study a coach would consistently use certain words in conversations with their athletes that were meant to resonate with them and encourage positive behaviours and development. Also described in Camiré et al. (2012) are the use of peer evaluations where each athlete anonymously identified both a strength and a weakness for each team member for the purpose of increasing their self-awareness of where they have progressed and where they need to put in more effort. While this was not a theme in this dissertation, it does share a similarity with the use of ***self-assessment measures*** described as a process occurring within the LIT program at Agency C. This was also aimed at increasing youths' self-awareness of progress made and where more work is needed with the key difference being that the individuals themselves, not their peers, are responsible for this. Either way, both this study and Camiré et al. (2012) highlight the importance of assessment during PYD endeavours and the need for youth be self-aware of their progress.

Outcomes. Outputs, operationalized in this research as objective and often numerical indicators of an organization's success (specifically with regards to achieving PYD) is a more unique aspect of this dissertation that has not been explored in previous research to date.

However, the short-term outcomes section of this study's logic model which encompass the acquired life skills (Danish, 2002), and internal assets (Benson et al., 1998) that Gould and Carson (2008), Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005), and Petitpas et al. (2005) highlight as integral to youths' PYD share many similarities to outcomes found in previous empirical PYD research.

Among the outcomes identified by Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012) resulting from youths' participation in the LiFE Sports Camp included enhanced social skills which is consistent with this study's finding of ***social and communication skills*** but also ***teamwork and cooperation skills*** (in their study teamwork was a component of 'social skills' while in this dissertation it is treated as a separate life skill). Also found in their research are youths' enhanced 'personal skills' which encompasses a variety of sub-themes that include 'taking more responsibility for self and own actions' (consistent with this study's ***responsibility***), increased initiative (consistent with this study's ***initiative***), and learned to take direction (consistent with this study's ***listening skills***). In the First Tee life skills through golf program Weiss et al. (2013), found that youth participants successfully developed interpersonal skills (i.e., starting and maintaining a conversation and respecting self and others) consistent with this study's ***social and communication skills***. Moreover, their finding of youth developing self-management skills (i.e., maintaining a positive attitude, counteracting negative thoughts and converting frustration to constructive actions) appear to be similar in meaning to this study's ***positive attitude*** skill. Research by Bean et al. (2016) found that youth developed various life skills categorized as intrapersonal skills and interpersonal skills. Intrapersonal skills including emotional regulation, focus, and goal setting were all also findings in this study. Interpersonal skills including respect, responsibility, and social skills are also listed in the logic model (though respect was classified as an impact under caring/character rather than a life skill).

In interviews with coaches intent on teaching their athletes life skills Vella et al. (2011) found that they placed much importance on the development of life skills that fell into the general themes of goal-setting, leadership skills (both also found in this dissertation study), communication skills, and interpersonal skills (both represented in this dissertation study as ***social and communication skills***). Goal setting and personal and social skills were also a finding in research by MacDonald, Côté, Eys, and Deakin (2011), utilizing the Youth Experience Survey for Sport (YES-S). These authors also identified initiative as a positive developmental outcome which is consistent with the findings of this study and the work of Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012). Research by Camiré et al. (2009) reported the life skills of time-management, the ability to work with others (i.e., teamwork and cooperation), and leadership which are all also consistent with the similar life skills listed within the logic model. In interviews with 22 parents of children involved in a range of organized sport-based PYD programs, research by Neely and Holt (2014) found a series of personal benefits that are also consistent with the life skills derived from the results of this study. This includes personal responsibility (listed as ***responsibility*** in this study), social benefits, teamwork and cooperation, learning to respect authority (a component of ***listening skills*** in this study) and also engagement in school (consistent with *devoted to school work/homework* under ***academic skills***).

In Mainieri and Anderson (2015b) a variety of civic engagement-based skills were developed by youth within the camp program examined. One of these were identified as increased collaboration skills characterized as an improved attitude towards teamwork and working with others, listening to others, and patience and trusting others more which has consistencies with the item ***teamwork and cooperation skills*** listed within the logic model. These authors also determined that increased leadership skills (as is also listed in this study's logic

model) resulted from youths' participation in the camp with various identified leadership traits including ability to give explanations, listening to and gathering people's opinions, and learning how to be a follower and stepping back in a group when necessary. Lastly, research by Morgan et al. (2016), described earlier as examining a PYD program with a mentoring component, explained that youth guided by the mentoring intervention showed gains in self-regulation skills including 'ability to plan' (i.e., capacity to set goals and identify necessary steps to accomplish a task) and 'ability to organize' (i.e., keep track of items and maintain orderliness in work and play spaces). This dissertation similarly determined that youth came out of all three organizations examined with various **self-regulation skills** including *organization skills*. Though 'ability to plan' is consistent with this study's **goal setting skills**, this was treated in this dissertation as a separate theme from self-regulation due to its dissemination in previous research as its own separate skill (Bean et al., 2016; MacDonald et al., 2011; Vella et al., 2011).

Impacts. Lastly, impacts are understood as the long-term outcomes of youths' engagement in PYD organizations that are not immediate results but occur over time. This can include youth figuring out how to transfer the life skills or internal assets that they develop into their everyday lives (Gould & Carson, 2008; Petitpas et al., 2005) along with the enhancement of the 5Cs (plus the sixth C of contribution; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Lerner et al., 2000) which are personality traits that develop over prolonged amounts of time. The 4Cs model served as an adequate guide towards analyzing and coding for themes that constituted positive developmental outcomes that youth developed over time and through prolonged engagement in their respective organizations. The broad categories of the Cs model were able to contain the wide range of long-term outcomes (impacts) of youths' participation in all three cases. However, the Cs can also be a bit ambiguous by nature (compared to life skills which are very specific terms) and sometimes

it can be difficult to determine which codes or lower order themes fit into particular Cs. This is unsurprising considering previous quantitative research has found the Cs to have marginal statistical intercorrelations (Jelicic et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2011) which could make separating lower order concepts between them rather difficult. Caring and character have been shown to be particularly difficult to maintain as separate concepts (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). This was demonstrated during analysis with the difficulty deciphering which themes fit under either of the two Cs. The 4Cs model which combines the two into one concept helped ease this process and thus was used as the guiding framework for analyzing impacts.

In this research **competence**, meaning youths' ability to carry themselves and function in a variety of capacities (e.g., academic, social) within their everyday lives was synonymous with life skill transfer or how they are able to utilize their life skills outside of their respective PYD organizations. Few articles to date have examined youths' ability to transfer their life skills. However, Weiss et al. (2016) have found that youth in the First Tee program reported significantly higher scores on transferring their life skills (e.g., meeting and greeting, managing emotions, resolving conflicts, appreciating diversity, getting help from others) than their comparison group of youth outside of the program. Moreover, through interviews with youth, research by Bean et al. (2016) uncovered a variety of scenarios in which participants were able to transfer life skills (i.e., emotional regulation, focus, goal setting, respect, responsibility, and social skills) into their everyday lives (i.e., school, home, sports, and social situations).

The findings in this study listed under impacts, **caring/character** (i.e., *kindness/empathy/selflessness*) and **connected**, are consistent with the results of work by Holt et al. (2012) involving observational field work and individual interviews with youth participating in an inner city school's sports programs. Specifically, these authors reported outcomes that

included ‘understanding and caring for others’ (empathy) and ‘enhanced social connections’ (connected). Research by Neely and Holt (2014) also found that participants of organized youth sport programs aimed at PYD came out with positive self-perceptions (consistent with this study’s *positive view of self* under **confidence**) and friendships (consistent with this study’s **connected** to peers *internal to the organization*). In an integrative review by Jones et al. (2017) it was found that, competence (i.e., academic, social), confidence, and positive identity were commonly measured outcomes in general within the sport-based PYD literature. This is consistent with the **competence** and **confidence** themes in this dissertation in addition to positive identity having similarities to the theme of *positive view of self* (though this is also classified under confidence in this study). Confidence was also found in research by Weiss et al. (2016) in so far as it pertained to the academic environment (a central focus for the First Tee program).

Additional articles have also been able to support the Cs framework through intentionally designed PYD programs. For instance, Fuller et al. (2013), coding through the original 5Cs framework, found that minority males participating in a sport-based afterschool program in an urban environment demonstrated growth across the domains of competence (i.e., social, physical, nutritional, cognitive), confidence (i.e., self-concept, self-worth, self-efficacy), connection, character, and caring. Moreover, Vella et al. (2011), coding in accordance with the 4Cs framework (combining character and caring; Côte & Gilbert, 2009), found that coaches intentionally promoting PYD felt it was their role to develop various positive qualities in their youth athletes that fit into the themes of character, competence, confidence and connection.

Research by Mainieri and Anderson (2015b) is also able to substantiate the role of PYD programs with regards to bringing about outcomes related to greater civic engagement in home communities consistent with this study’s **contribution** theme. First, they reported that youth

experienced increased motivation to contribute to their communities in addition to feeling more confident in their ability to do so. Second, they also reported that youth developed the notion that service to others could be fun, intrinsically rewarding, and that adults wanted youth to help serve the community (changing their notions that communities lacked respect for youth). Lastly, youth developed an increased knowledge and awareness of their community (*community awareness* is another finding of this study though it is listed under **connected**) such as where their communities were in need and how the youth could help out.

Comparison to previous models. It is worth mentioning the similarities and differences between this study's logic model and previous models of PYD program delivery. Similar to the applied sport-programming model by Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005), it is suggested that youth programs involve appropriate setting features (i.e., context in this study's logic model), external assets, a proper implementation process (not described in the applied sport-programming model but elaborated in this study's logic model), and outcomes categorized as the enhancement of the 5Cs (competence, confidence, connection, caring, and character) or 4Cs in the case of this study's logic model. However, both models differ in terms of where internal assets fit into the program as they are a design feature in the model by Fraser-Thomas and colleagues but an outcome in this study's logic model (in-so-far as they are considered synonymous with life skills). Moreover, the applied sport-programming model utilizes a 5Cs framework as opposed to 4Cs as it came out before the shift to a 4Cs framework utilized in research today. Lastly, the logic model does not include the role of policy makers or concepts from the Developmental Model of Sport Participation (Côté, 1999) as no data alluding to any of these concepts came up in interviews.

Similar to the model by Gould and Carson (2008), the logic model makes reference to the use of external assets (e.g., parents, program leaders, peers), the characteristics of the individuals leading the PYD endeavours (coaches in Gould and Carson's article), and the direct and indirect teaching strategies utilized to teach life skills. Moreover, both models acknowledge youths' attainment of life skills and the transfer of those skills into other contexts outside of the program. However, though similar in structure, the two models differ in scope. The Coaching Life Skills Through Sport model, in particular, is a theoretical tool meant for coaches in sport contexts. Meanwhile the logic model is meant to be applied to recreational organizations and outlines the practical steps needed towards designing and implementing successful PYD programs which include both inputs and activities. Also, while the model by Gould and Carson (2008) mentions negative outcomes, the logic model does not include these as this study did not gather data regarding potentially negative program outcomes (none were mentioned in interviews). Lastly, internal assets were a process factor in the coaching life skills through sport model but were included in the logic model (as life skills) as outcome facets.

The logic model presented also has ideological similarities to Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological model, which gave rise to the developmental systems theory that guides this research as its theoretical framework. The two are similar in terms of their understanding of human development as not inherent within the individual themselves but also a product of the many physical and social environments in which they live their lives. Specifically, seeing as the logic model identifies properties and processes that affect the behaviour and development of human beings (i.e., the youth) it can be seen itself an ecological based model. Revealed is the relationship between youths' development and their environment through the microsystem level (i.e., relationship between a developing person and the immediate environment) with its focus on

the recreation organization but also a slight inclusion of the mesosystem (i.e., linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person) when describing how youths' families and communities affect the PYD process occurring in recreational organizations. The logic model also possess structural similarities to the World Health Organization's (2002) International Classification of Functioning, Disabilities, and Health (ICF). Despite differing in scope, the models are comparable in terms of highlighting a set of resources/inputs (which include environmental factors) and activities required for services to achieve their intended goals (i.e., health related outcomes in the case of the ICF), along with pinpointing outcomes to be identified in the program evaluation process.

Implications

The results of this research and creation of the logic model grounded within the qualitative data has the potential to contribute substantially to the theoretical underpinnings of the study and theory of PYD. In addition, the results have much to offer recreation and leisure services practitioners who deliver programs to youth.

Theoretical implications. Though the main intention of this research was to inform practice, there are various components of these findings that contribute new knowledge to the PYD literature and further our understanding of current theory in the field. Many of the higher order themes highlighted in this study's results and logic model (e.g., importance of context, importance of staff, families, and communities in PYD endeavours, life skills, 4Cs) are not new and mostly provide empirical evidence to support the presence of these findings in PYD settings. However, the concepts that are not new are now presented in a way that is valuable for recreation organizations working with youth to implement programming and enhance developmental outcomes. As a unique contribution of this study these facilitating factors and intended outcomes

are now depicted in a format that is translatable to program design and evaluation as logic models are typically utilized for those purposes. Many of the lower order themes also help add new dimensions to these previously existing PYD concepts. For instance, components of the logic model help describe exactly how families and communities (including schools) can be of assistance to PYD organizations. This adds further to the notion of the importance of families, schools, and communities in PYD endeavours (Eccles & Gootman, 2002) and the role of family and communities as external assets (Benson, 1998). This research also elaborates more deeply on the NRCIM's positive developmental setting features outlined in Eccles and Gootman (2002) including what types of skill building opportunities can be made available through PYD programs (i.e., adding to provision of skill building opportunities) and qualities of staff involved in the program (i.e., adding to supportive adult relationships).

There are various unique additions to the logic model that have not yet been addressed in previous research but may have theoretical significance and should be acknowledged in future work. For instance, ***low/ratios between staff and youth, networking and community outreach opportunities*** (under context), the ***volunteering or contribution of former alumni*** (under external assets), specific methods of implementing ***teachable moments*** (i.e., *role playing* and *anecdotes* under direct strategies), ***Active Pursuit, keeping files and information on youth members, providing resources to youths' families, assisting with youths' achievements, and encouraging youth to get out of comfort zones*** (under indirect strategies) are unique findings in terms of process variables in this research that help these organizations under investigation achieve positive developmental outcomes. Active Pursuit in particular has not been studied or presented in research before but appears to be an effective strategy for Agency B in terms of maintaining attendance levels by keeping consistent contact with youth and their families. Thus,

Active Pursuit could be a good solution to the common issue of fluctuations in youth attendance at PYD programs (Forneris, Whitley, & Barker, 2013; Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro, 2011).

The addition of outputs, or objective indicators of program success, also appears to not have been addressed in previous research. However, it is an effective means for recreational practitioners to quantify PYD during program evaluation by logging measures of youths' enrollment, engagement, and achievements. Due to the more tangible nature of these outcomes they could be particularly useful for communicating program success to stakeholders and funding bodies. In addition, *ingenuity* and *emotional literacy* appear to have never been identified in previous research as life skills that youth can obtain from PYD endeavours. These skills can, however, be useful in a variety of life situations outside of the PYD organizations themselves. Lastly, this research was able to further elaborate on the 4Cs, and additional C of contribution, indicative of positive development by highlighting factors that can help make these outcomes more recognizable. This includes identifying: where life skills can be transferred (under *competence*), specific components of *caring/character*, types of *confidence* experienced by the youth, who youth can become *connected* with and the benefits of having those connections, and where and how youth can expend their voluntary efforts once they become more willing and able to *contribute*.

Furthermore, this research has given a lot of focus to the contribution aspects of PYD and the idea that youth who demonstrate the qualities of positive development are better equipped and more willing to engage in volunteering on their spare time. This is supportive of the 5Cs/4Cs framework and is a central tenet of PYD despite being an often ignored component and outcome of sport and recreation programs (Coakley, 2011). This research has offered evidence that PYD organizations providing participants with a useful set of life skills (e.g., leadership,

social and communication skills, teamwork and cooperation skills, etc.) and other positive qualities (e.g., the 4Cs including *helpfulness* and *empathy* under ***caring/character***) will have youth emerge more willing to contribute to the organization but also towards their own communities. Furthermore, though all the organizations examined have some emphasis on instilling community stewardship in youth, Agency C devoted the most focus towards having its participants become interested in volunteering both at the organization and in their communities. In particular, this focus is achieved by having staff actively encourage contribution while providing youth with volunteer experiences through programs such as the community action program and LIT. This finding helps further the call made by Coakley (2011) to implement greater focus on contribution within PYD programs while further supporting work by Mainieri and Anderson (2015b) that PYD programs with a community contribution focus can result in youth who are willing and capable of volunteering constructively to their communities.

The study of PYD is related to the concept of community development. At its core and early conceptions, PYD is an area of study where the end goal was turning youth into constructive members of society who contribute positively back to the communities that supported their development (Lerner et al., 2000). By helping youth thrive they should develop the skills needed to contribute constructively to civil society in addition to gaining an inherent interest in doing so (Lerner et al, 2003). However, many PYD programs focus on youths' individual development but neglect to try instilling in them the interest and skills needed to engage in community stewardship (Coakley, 2011). This study provides a unique look at PYD organizations that seek to, and successfully, instill a desire and capacity in youth to contribute to their communities through encouragement by staff but also through concerted efforts by Agency C which include the provision of opportunities to take part in community outreach. Youth also

appear to gain benefits related to the concept of social capital (Putnam, 2003) in terms of developing greater social networks containing peers and adults who can be important and influential in their lives. As a result of meeting individuals from the community who go to help out or speak at these organizations (including at Agency A and Agency B) or by being sent into the community to volunteer (at Agency C) youth are connected with influential people who can act as role models or even refer them to other positive opportunities (e.g., jobs). The staff, volunteers, and peers at all three organizations are also useful members of a youths' social circle due to the positive influences and opportunities that they themselves can provide.

Practical implications. The results of this study also have implications for recreational practitioners with regards to designing PYD programs as the logic model outlines key program components (under inputs) and implementation tactics (under activities) that can help promote program success. Specifically, designing successful PYD programs should take into account a variety of contextual factors while utilizing the assistance and efforts of staff, parents, youths' peers, community members and entities, and alumni if possible as external assets. Moreover staff should employ a wide variety of direct and indirect strategies for instilling positive development. The recreational organizations examined in this research have shown success within their positive development endeavours through their youth programming and have utilized many of the process variables listed in the logic model. Moreover, many of these processes are consistent with findings from previous research.

When it comes time for program evaluation this logic model highlights the objective measures (under outputs), the short-term outcomes, and long-term impacts that assessors should be addressing. First, it will be helpful for practitioners to measure program success by logging a variety of metrics associated with youths' development including number of registered youth

members in the program, measures of youths' engagement (e.g., attendance numbers), youths' achievements within the program (e.g., number of youth becoming volunteers or staff), and youths' achievements outside of the program (e.g., report card grades). Second, youths' acquisition of life skills are a helpful indicator of short-term outcomes signifying success, though the life skills being sought out can vary between programs. While some endeavours are hoping to produce a wide variety of life skills others are focused on purposely trying to develop one or a particular set of life skills (e.g., social skills is a central focus in the LiFE Sports Camp Program; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Lastly, long-term impacts, which take time to occur and are best assessed after youth spend pro-longed amounts of time within a program, can include the 4Cs and the outcome of youth contributing to the program and within their own communities. The use of the 4Cs (or 5Cs) model as an adequate operationalization representing youths' positive development has also been supported by previous research (Bowers et al., 2010; Côté & Gilbert 2009; Jelcic et al., 2007; Lerner et al., 2005; Phelps et al., 2009).

The creation of this logic model should help address a need within recreation and leisure services in that a guideline for program design around the positive development of youth currently does not exist. It has already been well established that recreational programs (sports, arts, extra-curricular activities, camps, etc.) need to be designed in a way that is conducive for PYD and that these activities do not automatically result in youths' positive development on their own. In response, a variety of mechanisms to which programs can be successful in bringing about positive developmental outcomes in youth participants have been revealed through much research over the years, especially sport psychology research. Regardless, recreation practitioners lack a curriculum of PYD that is guided and supported by empirical research. This may not be an issue for organizations such as Agency A who have their own programming

models and policies in place. However, many recreational PYD programs, especially those intending to help at-risk youth from under-privileged communities, are grassroots organizations run by individuals who often lack knowledge on what factors help ensure PYD program success. This logic model should be especially useful for these individuals who would find value in a programming guide.

With the exception of a lucky few, many grassroots PYD organizations do not last very long and are often canceled soon after being established for a variety of reasons (Beaulac et al., 2010). One reason includes an inability to fulfill organizational goals and objectives (i.e., bringing about positive developmental outcomes in youth participants) or to adequately specify when these have been fulfilled. This makes it hard for them to justify youths' continued membership and additional memberships while also making it difficult to maintain financial stability through grants, funding, and donations as these often require proof of success. Thus, this logic model should help practitioners design sustainable PYD programs that can adequately achieve and measure their intended results. However, it is acknowledged that the model in its current form is untested and could be changed in the coming years after going through further intervention research and analyses to confirm the reliability and validity of its structure and content.

Limitations

The logic model grounded within this research data collected from 48 youth and staff participants from three different locations can be considered well informed from a diverse set of PYD contexts and young members and adults within recreation. This logic model should also be useful for practitioners in the field of youth recreational programming looking for mechanisms and evaluative indicators to which they can design their programs around the positive

development of youth. However, this model in its current form has never been tested in an actual PYD context and it cannot be said whether a program designed around the inputs and activities listed would actually be successful as no evidence of this currently exists. Moreover, it remains to be seen whether the outputs, outcomes, and impacts listed would work as evaluative criteria.

The nature of the data that informed this logic model, as is the case with much qualitative research utilizing participant interviews, is anecdotal and the trustworthiness and legitimacy of this information depends on the truthfulness of the participants. It is for this reason that so many participants were selected from all three locations examined. Also, the themes selected to be in the model were determined to be truthful based on comments from a wide variety of participants in the organizations (e.g., the outcome of leadership skills) or receiving an in-depth explanation from one or a few of the participants (e.g., the outcome of networking skills). Also, it is entirely reasonable to argue that participants may have had a positive bias towards their organizations as they were either members or staff at these locations and could have developed loyalty. This was, nevertheless, expected as participants who had been at the organizations for a long time were sought out as they would be the most knowledgeable about its context and activities while also being in the best position to divulge their experiences of long-term changes (i.e., impacts) that they have witnessed over the years. Participants who have not been involved at these organizations for a very long time would not have been suitable for the purposes of this research as it involved staff who were very familiar with program procedures and youth who have experienced positive development in some way or form which would only occur after prolonged involvement.

Though member checking had occurred with close to 25% of the research interviews, doing this with all of the participants would have ensured greater amounts of reliability and

validity and lessened the chances of the researcher misinterpreting the data. However, many of the youth or junior staff participants were difficult to reach for second meetings as both showed up to the organization locations (i.e., Agency A and Agency C) at random times of the week while others had stopped attending by the time the principal investigator was scheduled to conduct member checking. Meanwhile, the youth at Agency B had limited time at the organization (i.e., a few hours during one day of the week) and it was determined that additional time taken by the principal investigator outside of the single focus group would have had them miss crucial program activities. This is why one of the senior staff who attended the focus group took it upon himself to undergo member checking of the transcript. It is also for this same reason that data had to be collected from the youth through a one hour focus group rather than in-depth interviews.

Through the focus group, various youth participants contributed to each of the questions when they felt they had something to add. However, not everyone in the group provided an answer to every question. More information could have been collected from one-on-one interviews as each individual would then be in a better position to answer every question asked of them. However, it was decided that a single focus group was the best means to collect information from these participants due to the weekly format of programs at Agency B, the limited time youth spend there each week, and the staffs' wishes that youth spend as much time benefitting from the organization as possible. Though this still gave an opportunity for youth from Agency B to provide some input into the research, more information would have been collected from one-on-one in-depth interviews.

Lastly, parents and youths' guardians would have been worthwhile participants in this study, particularly as useful sources of information on the short-term outcomes and long-term

impacts of their children's positive development resulting from their participation in their respective organizations. However, in the circumstances of this study, parents and guardians were not attainable participants as interviews could only occur at the locations of the organizations under supervision of program staff. Parents and guardians were not present in these settings. The only time parents and guardians showed up at these organizations was for pick-up and drop-off of their children, and typically they do not have time to engage in long interviews during these circumstances. Also, many of the youth in this study were old enough to permit themselves to go home from these organizations at their freedom, meaning some of their parents had no presence within these contexts at all. In the end it was decided that parents would be exempt from this study despite their potential value towards informing the two last steps of the logic model.

Future Research

Future research can quantitatively determine the applicability of the themes listed in the logic model by operationalizing them as questionnaire items measured in Likert scales. Next, performing analyses of reliability (e.g., Cronbach's Alphas) and validity (e.g., exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses) will affirm the dependability and accuracy of the logic model. In addition, it may be worth utilizing quantitative analysis techniques to conduct research utilizing the model with up to hundreds and thousands of research participants. Prospective, longitudinal, intervention based research utilizing either quantitative or qualitative approaches should also be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of this study's logic model. The model should be implemented into the design of a PYD program within an existing recreation organization or a new program can be designed from the ground-up following the inputs and activities outlined in the model. The effectiveness of the ensuing program should then be evaluated by examining the

presence of the outputs (i.e., objective success measures), outcomes (i.e., life skill acquisition), and impacts (i.e., the 4Cs) listed in the logic model which should determine program success and whether youth are experiencing positive development. In addition, if the program examined is started from the ground-up, this may help circumvent the limitation present in this dissertation study, that participants are biased towards their organization due to being involved (i.e., members, staff, or both) for a prolonged amount of time. Alternatively all youth and staff participants of an endeavour started from the ground-up would be providing first-hand experiences of a new program.

Longitudinal research would provide an effective way to measure whether youth obtain long-term benefits (i.e., impacts) from consistent engagement in the program. The reason for this is that youth would be monitored for several years and investigators can assess their acquisition of these outcomes in the latter years of this research. This can provide further evidence that the impacts listed in the model are reliable indicators of PYD in the long-term that can supplement the anecdotal data collected in this dissertation research. A longitudinal design may also help overcome the limitation of a low proportion of participant interviews undergoing member checking present in this dissertation. Through longitudinal research it would be intended that participants are closely monitored throughout the research process whereas participants were only interviewed cross-sectionally in this study and it was very difficult to reach out to them for a second meeting. Moreover, a proper proportion of time should be allocated so that researchers can engage in one-on-one interviews with all youth and staff participants while they can also engage in all the beneficial programming offered through the PYD intervention. Though this may require youth and staff to engage in interviews outside of program time, one-on-one interviews will provide much richer data than a single focus group and data that are not

influenced by the presence of a participant's peers within the same vicinity. Future research should also attempt to engage in interviews with youths' parents who may also be best approached outside of program time external to their own work hours. Parents can be particularly useful sources of information concerning the outcomes (short-term and long-term) of youths' participation in recreational programs, especially regarding behaviours that occur at home.

Future research can add towards the information provided in the logic model by examining, more in-depth, the training process that goes behind preparing junior and senior staff to deliver recreational programs aimed at PYD. This information was beyond the scope of this study and can be the subject of a future research project on its own. However, this information can help inform practitioners on the facets and processes needed to ensure staff are ready to take on these roles. Also, within the study of PYD in recreation and leisure studies more work needs to explore what mechanisms are in place that encourage the onset of developmental outcomes within these settings. Sports research has done much work on disseminating what program features allow athletic contexts to be conducive of these outcomes and what strategies coaches can use to bring about PYD in athletes. This has been scantily explored however in PYD programs within general recreational settings that offer more than just sports (e.g., leadership training, art programs, volunteering, etc.). Though the field of developmental psychology, where PYD arose originally, has explored general recreational programs (e.g., 4H; Lerner et al., 2005) not enough focus has been put into exploring the aspects of these settings that are conducive of PYD. Fortunately, work in this area is starting to gain ground in light of this dissertation research in addition to other recently published studies (Bean et al., 2016; Flouris et al., 2016; Mainieri & Anderson, 2015a; 2015b; Morgan et al., 2016).

Conclusion

This study set out to disseminate a logic model of recreational program design around the positive development of youth. The items listed in the model were derived from the thematic analysis of interviews from a number of youth and adult participants who were members and staff respectively at recreational organizations with programs focused on PYD. The results follow a typical logic model format of (1) inputs, (2) activities, (3) outputs, (4) outcomes, and (5) impacts. Within the planned work stages of the model, the process factors listed a set of contextual factors and external assets as inputs of PYD program design while a series of direct and indirect strategies are listed as facets of the activities section. Meanwhile, the intended results of the program include objective and numerical measures of PYD (outputs), life skills (outcomes), and characteristics or qualities indicative of positive development in youth (i.e., the 5Cs; impacts). This model should be a helpful guideline for practitioners intending to design their recreational programs around the positive development of youth.

Researchers are making great strides in understanding the factors that contribute to PYD. This particular study presents this information in a format that can be very applicable to community organizations implementing PYD programming as most of these services are structured in a way that can be boiled down to some variation of a logic model. This study's logic model (see Figure 1) should be particularly useful for smaller grassroots initiatives with staff who may be less knowledgeable on theories and best practices guiding PYD. Practitioners should try to keep knowledgeable on important research findings, up to date models, and practices that work in the field of PYD. While recreation has the potential to play a significant role in youths' positive development the process is not automatic. Many factors come into play

that allow PYD benefits to occur in recreational settings. Such factors should be taken into account when planning and designing programs for this purpose.

Considering this model's relevance within more practical settings, knowledge translation activities would be an important consideration going forward. The next step, after this research, is to get the model into the hands of practitioners focused on promoting PYD in their participants and encourage them to use it in the design, implementation, and evaluation of their recreation programs. One way of doing this is to present the model at more practice oriented educational conferences or symposiums which practitioners regularly attend. Also possible is reaching out to and meeting with practitioners in person, especially those seeking to promote PYD, in order to convince them to implement the model into their programming. In addition, it may be useful to publish information on this logic model in materials that practitioners often consult as opposed to simply peer reviewed research journals that are typically only read by academics. Various practice related publications and magazines exist and are read by practitioners in both Canada and the U.S. One last concern is that the logic model on its own, despite being set up to be as easily understandable as possible, might require a written instructional manual that helps specifically describe how it can be utilized as a guide for program design. Specifically, such a publication can help contextualize it and indicate both: (1) how its inputs and activities should be utilized in recreational contexts to bring about PYD outcomes and (2) how to properly evaluate the outputs, outcomes, and impacts highlighted. The writing and distribution of this instructional manual constitutes an important knowledge translation activity going forward and can help promote the successful implementation of this study's logic model.

Since the early nineties we have seen a drastic change from the deficit reduction approach to dealing with negative youth behaviours to the PYD framework which has shown more success

through its emphasis on building youths' potential to be competent and successful. Park and recreation agencies, not-for-profit youth groups, churches, sports, and camps have provided successful initiatives aimed at PYD utilizing recreational activities. However, recreational activities are not automatically conducive to positive developmental outcomes and a variety of contextual and human assets as well as implicit and explicit strategies are needed. For this reason the logic model should be helpful as it highlights what process factors are needed at certain stages of program design and delivery while also highlighting evaluative features that can help assessors identify program success. Recreational practitioners who intentionally design their programs around PYD should help steer at-risk youth, underserved in terms of beneficial services, away from risky problem behaviours such as delinquency and drug use during their growth into adulthood. However, such programs can also help youth in all demographic strata, at-risk or not, to learn a variety of helpful life skills, develop many positive characteristics, and embrace a willingness and capability to contribute to their communities.

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Appendix A – Interview Guide for Youth

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Organization:

I am doing a study to find out about youths' and staffs' views on positive youth development through youths' participation in recreation. By positive youth development I'm referring to youth gaining the intellectual and social skills and qualities needed to grow into adulthood successfully and positively.

Your participation is voluntary and you can leave at any time. You do not have to answer a question if you are uncomfortable with it. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. You can answer them however you want. I am just interested in your views of your experiences in participating in youth recreation.

Opening Questions

- What organized programs are you involved in right now?
- Have you participated in other organizations before? (probe for details)
- How long have you been involved with (this organization)?
- Did you want to sign up for [organization name]? For what reasons did you want to participate in [organization name]?
- What do you like most about this organization?

Youth Development

Outcomes

- What do you think you have gotten out of this organization?
- Have you gotten better at anything since you've started taking part in the organization?
- What do you think you've learned since you've started taking part in this organization (is there anything that sticks with you)? Have you learned anything that can be useful outside of this organization? How is this lesson useful outside of this organization?
- What skills do you think you've learned? What skills do you think you've improved on? What skills have you learned that can be used outside of this organization? (Commitment to learning? Positive values? Social competencies? [personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose, positive view of future])?

Impacts

- In what ways, if any, has your participation in [organization name] impacted you in the long-term?
OR
- In what ways do you believe your participation in this organization will impact you in the long-term?
- Have you used anything you learned in [organization name] (such as those skills) in places or situations outside of the organization?
- **(If yes)** Where have you been able to use these lessons/skills? How did these lessons/skills come in handy there? Are you confident in your ability to use these lessons/skills in other settings? **(If yes)** How come?
- **(If no)** Do you think these lessons/skills could be useful in other places or situations? (probe for details)
- Do you think that you have changed at all since you began in this organization (e.g., the way you behave/ the way you approach situations)? How so?
- What is different about you now from before you were in this organization? How do you behave now around your family? Relatives? Friends? Teachers? Neighbours? Others in your community?

Mechanisms of Youth Development**Inputs**

- What is it about this organization that helped you learn/contributes to your learning (of lessons and skills)?
- What is it about this organization that helped you change/ contributes to the change in your behaviour from before you were involved in the organization (e.g., everyday behaviour)?
- What is it about the organization's surroundings/environment that helped you learn/ contributes to your learning (of lessons and skills)?
- What is it about the organization's surroundings/environment that helped you change/ contributes to the change in your behaviour from before you were involved in the organization? (e.g., everyday behaviour)
- What rules and expectations are you expected to follow in this organization? Do you believe that following these rules and expectations helps you learn (lessons and new skills)?
- Do you believe that following these rules and expectations helped you change from before you were involved in the organization? (e.g., everyday behaviour)

- Do you feel that you play an important or valuable part/role in this organization? Do you believe that having this important and valuable part/role in the organization helps you learn (lessons and new skills)?
- Do you believe that having this important and valuable role in the organization contributed to you changing from before you were involved in the organization? (e.g., everyday behaviour)
- Are there people involved in this organization (e.g., the leader or peers) that help you learn the lessons and skills that we talked about? **If Yes:** How is he/she/they involved in helping you learn these lessons and skills? What does/do he/she/they do? (e.g., Communication styles? Amount of interaction?)
- Are there people involved in this organization (e.g., the leader or peers) that helped you change from before you were involved in the organization? (e.g., everyday behaviour)? **If Yes:** How is he/she/they involved in helping you change? What does he/she/they do? (e.g., Communication styles? Amount of interaction?)
- Are there people outside of the organization (e.g., parents, relatives, family friends, peers) that help you learn to use the lessons and skills that you learn in [this organization]? **If Yes:** Who are they? How are he/she/they involved in helping you learn to use these lessons and skills? What does he/she/they do?
- Are there people outside of the organization (e.g., parents, relatives, family friends, peers) that helped you change from before you were involved in the organization (e.g., everyday behaviour)? **If Yes:** Who are they? How is he/she/they involved in helping you change? What does he/she/they do?

Activities

- Again, what lessons and skills do the leaders here teach you? How do the leaders teach you these lessons and skills?
- Does [leader's name] collaborate with you?
- Does [leader's name] have discussions with you
- Does [leader's name] involve your parents or anyone else?
- Does [leader's name] obtain help from the community?
- Does [leader's name] have you test the lessons and skills they teach you?
- Does [leader's name] also follow the lessons and use the skills that they teach you? (like a role model)?
- Do the leaders here teach you how to use the lessons and skills you learn in this organization in places or situations outside of this organization itself? (**If yes**) How do they do this?
- Does [leader's name] collaborate with you?
- Does [leader's name] have discussions with you?
- Does [leader's name] involve your parents or anyone else?

- Does [leader's name] obtain help from the community?
- Does [leader's name] have you test the lessons and skills they teach you outside of the organization?
- Do the leaders here help you feel confident in your ability to use these lessons and skills? (*If yes*) How do they help you feel confident?
- Do they have you Practice these lessons and skills?
- Do they Motivate you to learn and use these lessons and skills?
- Do they Help you perform these lessons and skills?
- How have the leaders here helped you change from before you were involved in the organization (e.g., everyday behaviour)? (e.g., Collaborate? Discussions? Involve Parents? Obtain help from community? Rules and expectations for youth to follow? Role modeling these behaviours?)

Closing Questions

- How can [organization name] improve on teaching you new lessons and skills?
- Is there some way that the leaders can improve on teaching you lessons and skills?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share about your participation in [organization name] that I haven't asked?

Appendix B – Interview Guide for Employees

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Organization:

I am doing a study to find out about youths' and staffs' perspectives of the positive developmental benefits youth gain from participation in recreation programs and how these programs are able to create these benefits. By positive development I'm referring to youth gaining the intellectual and social skills needed to grow into adulthood successfully and positively.

Your participation is voluntary and you can leave at any time. You do not have to answer a question if you are uncomfortable with it. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. You can answer them however you want. I am just interested in your views of your experiences in leading youth recreation.

Opening Questions

- What organized programs are you currently in charge of delivering?
- Have you delivered other programs before? (probe for details)
- How long have you been working for [this organization]
- Why did you decide to work for [organization name]? What got you interested in working in youth recreation? What got you interested in working in positive youth development organizations?
- What do you like most about this organization?

Outputs (employees only)

- Does your organization have measures in place to gauge....
- Whether or not your programs are achieving positive youth development? *If Yes: How is your organization able to gauge whether or not your programs are achieving positive youth development in your youth participants?*
- Whether your youth participants are learning lessons and skills that can be used outside of the organization in their everyday lives? *If Yes: How is your organization able to gauge whether or not your youth participants are learning lessons and skills?*
- Whether your youth participants are utilizing these lessons and skills in places and situations outside of the organization itself? *If Yes: How is your organization able to gauge whether or not these lessons and skills are being used in places and situations outside of the organization itself by your youth participants?*

Youth Development

Outcomes

- What are some things that you have noticed that youth are gaining out of this organization?
- Do the youth seem to get better at anything from when they begin taking part in the organization?
- What kind of things (lessons) are you teaching the youth participants through this organization?
- What skills are you teaching the youth participants? What skills are you helping the youth participants improve on? What skills have you taught the youth participants that can be used outside of the organization? (Commitment to learning? Positive values? Social competencies? [personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose, positive view of future])?

Impacts

- In what ways, if any, have your youth participants been impacted by their participation in this organization in the long-term?
OR
- In what ways do you believe youths' participation in this organization will impact them in the long-term?
- Have you determined if youth are using their newly acquired lessons and skills in places or situations outside of this organization? (School? Home? Community? With other adults? With their peers?)
- **(If yes)** How have you been able to determine this (are there processes in place)? Where have they been able to use these lessons/skills? How are these lessons/skills being used in these places or situations? Do the youth seem confident in their ability to use these lessons/skills in other settings?
- **(If no)** Do you think these lessons/skills have any use for your youth participants in places or situations outside of this organization? (probe for details)
- Have you noticed any developmental behavioural changes in the youth participants that may be a result of them participating in [organization name] (like how they behave, how they approach situations)?
- **(If yes)** Can you explain the behavioural changes that you have witnessed in your youth participants from before they were involved in this organization?
- Is developmental behavioural change a part of this organization's operations?

Mechanisms of Youth Development

Inputs

- What is it about this organization that contributes to youths' learning (of lessons and skills)?
- What is it about this organization that contributes to youths' developmental behavioural change from before they were involved in the organization?
- What is it about the organization environment/setting/atmosphere that contributes to youths' learning (of lessons and skills)?
- What is it about the organization environment/setting/atmosphere that contributes to youths' developmental behaviour change?

- What rules and expectations are youth participants expected to follow in this organization? Do you believe that youth following these rules and expectations contributes to them learning new lessons/skills?
- Do you believe that youth following these rules and expectations encourages positive developmental behavioural change in them?

- Are the youth given an important or valuable part/role to play in this organization? Do you believe that having this important and valuable part/role in the organization contributes to youth participants learning new lessons/skills?
- Do you believe that having this important and valuable role in the organization encourages positive developmental behavioural change in youth?

- Are there people involved in this organization (e.g., you or youths' peers) that help youth participants learn the lessons and skills that we are talking about? **If Yes:** How are you/he/she/they involved in helping youth learn these lessons and skills? What do you/he/she/they do?? (e.g., Communication styles? Amount of interaction?)
- Are there people involved in this organization (e.g., you or youths' peers) that help encourage positive behavioural change in youth participants? **If Yes:** How are you/he/she/they involved in helping youth experience positive behavioural change? What do you/he/she/they do? (e.g., Communication styles? Amount of interaction?)

- Are there people outside of the organization (e.g., the parents) that help youth participants learn to use the lessons and skills that they learn in [this organization]? **If Yes:** Who are they? How are he/she/they involved in helping youth learn to use these lessons and skills? What does he/she/they do?
- Are there people outside of the organization (e.g., the parents) that help encourage positive developmental behavioural change in your youth participants? **If Yes:** Who are they? How are he/she/they involved in encouraging youths' developmental behavioural change? What does he/she/they do?

Activities

- Again, what lessons and skills do you teach the youth participants? What strategies do you use to teach your youth participants new lessons and skills?
- Do you collaborate with youth participants?
- Do you have discussions with youth participants?
- Do you involve youths' parents or anyone else?
- Do you obtain help from the community?
- Do you have youth participants test the lessons and skills that you teach them?
- Do you ever try to role-model the lessons and skills that you teach youth?

- Do you use any strategies in this organization to teach youth how to use the lessons and skills they learn in places or situations outside of this organization itself?
- **(If yes)** What strategies are these?
- Do you collaborate with youth participants?
- Do you have discussions with youth participants?
- Do you involve youths' parents or anyone else?
- Do you obtain help from the community?
- Do you have youth participants test the lessons and skills that you teach them?
- Do you use these lessons and skills in places outside of the organization itself? To the best of your knowledge, are the youth participants aware of you doing this?

- Do you attempt to build upon or develop youths' confidence in their ability to use these lessons and skills? **(If yes)** How do you achieve this?
- Do you have the youth Practice these lessons and skills?
- Do you Motivate the youth to learn and use these lessons and skills?
- Do you Help the youth perform these lessons and skills?

- What strategies do you use to bring about developmental behavioural changes in youth participants? (e.g., Collaborate? Discussions? Involve Parents? Obtain help from community? Rules and expectations for youth to follow? Role modeling these behaviours?)

Closing Questions

- How do you feel [organization name] can improve? Do you believe that there is some way that they can provide a better experience for the youth and enhance their positive development?
- How do you feel you can improve? Do you think there is some way that you can make the youths' experiences better and enhance their positive development?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share about your youth participants' participation in [organization name] that I haven't asked?

Appendix C – Informed Consent for Youth

Title of the study: Towards a General Logic Model for Recreation-based Youth Development Programs

Researcher: Evan Webb
Affiliation: Department of Human Kinetics,
Faculty of Health Sciences,
University of Ottawa

Supervisor: Dr. George Karlis
Affiliation: Department of Human Kinetics,
Faculty of Health Sciences,
University of Ottawa

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in a research study conducted by Evan Webb and Dr. George Karlis. This study is being conducted on behalf of the University of Ottawa and independently from _____. This project is being conducted as part of Evan Webb's doctoral thesis, under the supervision of Professor Karlis.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to find out how community recreation organizations are able to achieve positive development in the youth who participate. The aim of this study is to create a model that helps recreation programs design their activities in a way that leads to positive development in the youth involved.

Participation: My participation will consist of being interviewed by Evan Webb. This interview will last for roughly 30 minutes in which I will respond to Evan's questions as best I can. The session has been scheduled for _____.

I will also be asked by Evan to meet with him again at a later date for **member checking** to make sure that what I have said was transcribed (written) and interpreted correctly by him. This session will also last roughly 20-30 minutes. During this meeting it is expected that you comment only on your own transcripts and that your parents comment only on their own transcripts.

Benefits: My interview with Evan may make me partly responsible for providing information that may help improve the design of activities held by recreation organizations in a way that can result in positive youth development. This may help increase the number of recreation organizations that can achieve positive youth development and the number of youth who could grow positively into adulthood.

Confidentiality: Evan assures me that the information I share will remain strictly confidential. I understand that the content of my interview will be used only for Evan's research analysis. Only Evan Webb and his supervisor, Dr. George Karlis, will have access to any of the data collected from my interview. The data collected will be kept in a secure manner.

Anonymity: Research results will not be linked to me in any way. The final research report will hide my real name with a pseudonym (fake name). Only Evan Webb will be able to link the pseudonym to my real identity. Any identifying information given in my response will not be seen in the final research report. I am aware that parts of my interview (quotes) may be in the final research report as evidence but that I will not be identified in that quote in any way.

Conservation of data: Tape recordings of interviews and transcripts (written versions of the tape recordings of interviews) will be kept in a secure manner. Tape recordings will be recorded on a password protected smart phone and quickly transferred to a password protected lap top computer. Transcripts will be created on the same password protected lap top computer. Audio recordings and data will then be kept

on a password protected computer in the locked office of Dr. George Karlis at the University of Ottawa campus. Only Evan Webb and his supervisor, Dr. George Karlis, will have access to any of the interview data collected for this study. All data will be kept for 5 years after Evan has completed collecting data.

The written version of my interview will be printed for **member checking** in which Evan will meet with me again to discuss whether he is interpreting my interview response correctly. This print out will be stored in the office of Dr. George Karlis in a locked filing cabinet and only shown to me, and no one else, during member checking. The printout will then be shredded.

Voluntary Participation: I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time. I am also allowed to refuse to answer any questions without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, Evan will delete the data gathered and not use it in his study.

Acceptance: I, _____ agree to participate in the above research study conducted by *Evan Webb* (Human Kinetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa) which is under the supervision of Dr. George Karlis.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher or his supervisor.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5.

Tel.: (613) 562-5387

Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

Participant's signature:

Date:

Researcher's signature:

Date:

Appendix D – Informed Consent for Employees

Title of the study: Towards a General Logic Model for Recreation-based Youth Development Programs

Researcher: Evan Webb
Affiliation: Department of Human Kinetics,
 Faculty of Health Sciences,
 University of Ottawa

Supervisor: Dr. George Karlis
Affiliation: Department of Human Kinetics,
 Faculty of Health Sciences,
 University of Ottawa

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Evan Webb and Dr. George Karlis. This study is being conducted on behalf of the University of Ottawa and independently from _____. This project is being conducted as part of Evan Webb's doctoral thesis, under the supervision of Professor Karlis.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to find out how recreation programs are able to achieve positive development in the youth who participate in community recreation organizations. The aim of this study is to create a model of recreation delivery to help recreation organizations design their activities in a way that helps achieve positive development in the youth involved.

Participation: My participation will consist of being interviewed by Evan Webb. I will meet with Evan for an interview which will last for roughly 30 minutes during which I will respond to the questions asked of me to the best of my ability. The session has been scheduled for _____.

I will also be asked by Evan to meet with him again for member checking at a later date, of my convenience, to confirm that what I have said was transcribed and interpreted correctly by him. This session will also last roughly 20-30 minutes.

Benefits: My participation in this study may make me partly responsible for providing information that may help improve the design of activities held by recreation organizations in a way that can result in positive youth development. This may help increase the number of recreation organizations that can achieve positive youth development and the number of youth who could grow positively into adulthood.

Confidentiality: I have received assurance from the researcher that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. I understand that the contents will be used only for research analysis and that my confidentiality will be protected. Only Evan Webb and his supervisor, Dr. George Karlis, will have access to any of the data collected from my interview. The data collected will be kept in a secure manner.

Anonymity of participants will be protected for this study as the results of this research will not be linked to participants in any way. When the results of this research are reported, the final document will hide my real name with a pseudonym (fake name) so that any of the results or direct quotes from interviews cannot be linked to me in any way. Only Evan Webb will be able to link my pseudonym to my real identity. Furthermore, any identifying information given in my responses will not be reported in the final document of this research. I am aware that parts of my responses (quotes) may be included in the final document as evidence but that any identifying information will be left out of that quote.

Conservation of data: The data collected, specifically the tape recordings of interviews and the electronic transcripts (written versions of the tape recordings of interviews) will be kept in a secure manner. Tape

recordings of interviews will be recorded on a password protected smart phone and quickly transferred to a password protected lap top computer. Electronic transcripts will be created on the same password protected lap top computer. This data (audio recordings and electronic transcripts) will then be kept on a password protected computer in the locked office of Dr. George Karlis on the University of Ottawa campus. Only the researcher, Evan Webb, and his supervisor, Dr. George Karlis, will have access to any of the data collected for this study. All data will be kept for the duration of this research and 5 years after data collection has completed.

Some transcripts will be printed in hard copy for **member checking** in which Evan will meet with me again to determine if he is interpreting my interview responses correctly. These will be stored in the office of Dr. George Karlis in a locked filing cabinet and only shown to participants (who were involved in the interview that is transcribed and to no one else) during member checking. Afterwards these documents will be shredded.

Voluntary Participation: I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be deleted and not utilized in this study.

Acceptance: I, _____ agree to participate in the above research study conducted by *Evan Webb* (Human Kinetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa) which is under the supervision of Dr. George Karlis.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher or his supervisor.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5.

Tel.: (613) 562-5387

Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

Participant's signature:

Date:

Researcher's signature:

Date:

Appendix E – Recruitment Text

Hello,

My name is Evan Webb and I'm a PhD candidate at the University of Ottawa. I am conducting a study about positive youth development within community recreation organizations. This study is being conducted on behalf of the University of Ottawa and independently from (Agency A; Agency B; Agency C). I am looking for youth participants, parents of youth participants, and employees who lead these programs to join me for a recorded interview. This interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and information that you provide is anonymous and confidential. If you wish to withdraw from the interview at any time you are free to do so and all recorded information will be deleted. Information that you provide will go towards the development of a model of youth recreation delivery that can help the organization you are associated with, along with many other youth recreation organizations, become successful at promoting the positive development of youth and their positive growth into adulthood.

If you have time, and are willing to participate, email me at so that we can schedule an interview at a designated room at this organization. Also let me know if you have any questions regarding the study. Thank you for your time.

Evan Webb
PhD - Candidate, University of Ottawa

Dr. George Karlis
Professor, University of Ottawa

Appendix F – Debriefing Text

Dear Participant,

Thank you very much for participating in this research project. Your data will be very useful in helping me develop a model of youth recreation delivery that will aid in promoting the positive development of youth participants. Once again all data collected is anonymous and confidential. Also, the audio recorded data I collected will be stored securely on a password protected computer in the locked office of my thesis supervisor, Dr. George Karlis, at the University of Ottawa campus. The same goes for the written version of our interview (transcripts). Any transcripts that are printed in hard copy will be locked in a filing cabinet in the office of my thesis supervisor Dr. George Karlis.

Member Checking

At this point I would like to invite you to engage in **one more meeting** with me at a later date and time. The purpose of this meeting will be to look over the written version of our interview in addition to some of the themes and interpretations that I have developed from the data. What I would like you to do at that point is to confirm that the information you provided is exactly what you would like to contribute to this research project. Also, I would like you to look over my interpretations of the data and confirm that it is correct and represents the ideas that you intended to provide. This meeting should take no longer than 20 minutes. If you agree, I will contact you at a later to date to schedule this meeting.

If you have any other questions pertaining to the study you may contact me at

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board Protocol Officer (613-562-5387, ethics@uOttawa.ca).

Regards

Evan Webb
PhD Candidate, University of Ottawa

Dr. George Karlis
Professor, University of Ottawa

Appendix G – University of Ottawa Ethics Approval

File Number: H04-15-01

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 07/02/2015



Université d'Ottawa
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa
Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Ethics Approval Notice Health Sciences and Science REB

Principal Investigator / Supervisor / Co-investigator(s) / Student(s)

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Role</u>
George	Karlis	Social Sciences / Human Kinetics	Supervisor
Evan	Webb	Health Sciences / Human Kinetics	Student Researcher

File Number: H04-15-01

Type of Project: PhD Thesis

Title: Towards a General Logic Model for Sport-based Youth Development Programs

<u>Approval Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</u>	<u>Expiry Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</u>	<u>Approval Type</u>
06/19/2015	06/18/2016	Ia
(Ia: Approval, Ib: Approval for initial stage only)		

Special Conditions / Comments:

Partial Approval as of June 19, 2015: Recruitment and data collection can begin at

Partial Approval as of June 26, 2015: Recruitment and data collection can begin at

Full approval as of July 2, 2015: Recruitment and data collection can begin at

Appendix H – Request for Modification to Research Project 1

Dear Mr. Webb and Professor Karlis,

Thank you for submitting a request for modification for your research project titled: “Towards a General Logic Model for Sport-based Youth Development Programs” (ethics file #H04-15-01).

The Chair has reviewed and has approved the following modification:

1. **Location of study:** The [Agency B] Program has been added as another recruitment site. A letter of permission was submitted along with the modification request.

Please note that this modification is covered by your current ethics certificate, valid until June 18, 2016.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Jasmine Sarazin

Coordonnatrice d'éthique / Ethics Coordinator

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche / Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Université d'Ottawa / University of Ottawa

Tél : [613-562-5387](tel:613-562-5387)

Fax : [613-562-5338](tel:613-562-5338)

<http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/index.asp>

550 Cumberland (Pavillon Tabaret Hall), salle/Room 154

Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

Appendix I – Request for Modification to Research Project 2

Dear Mr. Webb and Professor Karlis,

Thank you for submitting a request for modification for your research project titled: “Towards a General Logic Model for Sport-based Youth Development Programs” (ethics file #H04-15-01).

The Chair has reviewed and has approved the following modification:

1. **Location of study:** [Agency C] and it's Youth Program has been added as another recruitment site. A letter of permission was submitted along with the modification request.

Please note that this modification is covered by your current ethics certificate, valid until June 18, 2016.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Jasmine Sarazin

Coordonnatrice d'éthique / Ethics Coordinator

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche / Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

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