

**CRIME PREVENTION AND THE YOUTH
COMMUNITY PROJECT IN GREATER VANCOUVER:
A PRACTICUM REVIEW ANALYSIS OF A POST-
ADJUDICATION INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

by

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ABSTRACT

The Youth Community Project (YCP) is an initiative undertaken by the John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland in British Columbia. This program targets high-risk youth and attempts to prevent recidivism through intervention methods emerging out of evidence-based practice. This paper provides an overview of successful crime prevention initiatives targeting young offenders in Canada, demonstrating the theoretical underpinnings of a social development approach. Through a focus on post-adjudication interventions, an examination of evidence-based practices reveals the potential of programs aligning with the principles of the risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation, particularly those following an integrated service delivery model. As a recognized alternative and/or supplement to custodial supervision, YCP is a promising approach to the reduction of recidivism among juvenile offenders in the greater Vancouver region. Adherence to RNR principles and adoption of evidence-based practices will contribute to its success in the field of post-adjudication intervention.

Keywords: high-risk youth; evidence-based practice; risk-need-responsivity model; crime prevention through social development; recidivism; community programming

DEDICATION

I dedicate this paper to my parents, for always telling me “smart in brain.”

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
CPTSD	Crime Prevention through Social Development
CSO	Custody and Supervision Order
DCSO	Deferred Custody and Supervision Order
EBP	Evidence-Based Practices
IRCS	Intensive Rehabilitative Custody and Supervision Order
ISDM	Integrated Service Delivery Model
ISP	Intensive Supervision Probation
ISS	Intensive Support and Supervision Order
JHSLM	John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland
LSI-R	Level of Service Inventory-Revised
MDYO	Mentally Disordered Young Offender caseload
NCPS	National Crime Prevention Strategy
PVO	Persistently Violent Offender program
RNR	Risk-Need-Responsivity Model
SDM	Social Development Model
SNAP	Stop Now and Plan
STICS	Strategic Training Initiative in Community Supervision
TC	Therapeutic Community
VOTP	Violent Offender Treatment program
VO/GS	Violent Offenders/Gang Specialist caseload
VPP	Violent Prevention Program
YARD	Youth At-risk Development program
YCJA	Youth Criminal Justice Act
YCP	Youth Community Project
YLS/CMI	Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory
YOW	Youth Outreach Worker program

GLOSSARY

Case Management	The process by which rehabilitative interventions are administered and offenders are provided “fully comprehensive and coordinated services that address their needs” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.597).
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	A counseling approach designed to help people recognize and modify the “dysfunctional beliefs, thoughts, and patterns of behaviour that contribute to their problems” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.598) through “goal-oriented, systematic procedures that use a combination of operant psychology, cognitive therapy, and social modeling theory” (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.274).
Community Corrections	“Non-incarcerating correctional sanctions imposed upon an offender for the purposes of community reintegration” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.598).
Community Residential Treatment Centres	Residential facilities for adjudicated juveniles who are not eligible for probation or may need “a period of readjustment after imprisonment” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.598).
Community Service	A sentencing option requiring offenders to work a pre-determined number of hours performing tasks that benefit the community.
Correctional “Boot Camps”	Military-style facilities where nonviolent young offenders are subjected to physical and educational programs as a short-term form of incarceration/discipline (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.275).
Correctional Institutions	Prisons and jails that classify inmates into “treatment programs that address their needs and perceived deficiencies...using the medical model to treat inmates...so that they may become productive members of society” (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.275).
Crime Prevention through Social Development	Involves “long-term, integrated actions that deal with the root causes of crime. Its aim is to reduce risk factors that start people on the road of crime, and to build protective factors that may mitigate those risks” (British Columbia, n.d.). This approach focuses on “developing programs and policies on the national scale to improve health, family life, education, housing, work opportunities, and neighbourhood activities” (Vallée, 2000b, p.12).
Criminogenic Need Factor	Dynamic risk factors that could reduce the likelihood of engagement in antisocial behaviours if they were altered.
Deferred Custody and Supervision Order	A sentencing option which allows a juvenile offender to serve a non-violent offence in the community instead of in custody. If the conditions are violated, the offender can be sentenced to custody (Carrington, Roberts & Davis-Barron, 2011).

Deterrence	A sentencing philosophy aimed at the prevention of crime by the threat of reprimand or penalty
Developmental Asset Approach	A conceptual framework that advocates “a specific form of strategic planning to fashion the range of services, supports and partnerships that need to be in place to ensure that communities can support the development of all of their youth” (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.53).
Evidence-based Practices	Practices that represent the integration of best research evidence with clinical expertise and client values, consistently showing to be effective (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.276).
Group Homes	“Residential placement facilities that operate in a homelike setting with unrelated children living together for varied periods of time, depending on their individual circumstances” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.600).
Halfway Houses	“A transitional, residential setting for offenders on community supervision ...either nearing release from prison or in the initial stages of return to the community” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.600).
Incapacitation	A sentencing philosophy referring to the inability of criminals to further commit crimes once they are incarcerated.
Integrated Service Delivery Model	This approach “allows for multiple needs to be addressed within a single treatment program”, and “assigns offenders to programs based on principles aligning with the RNR model of offender rehabilitation” (Horizons Community Development Associates [HCDA], 2008, p.151).
Intensive Rehabilitative Custody and Supervision Order	A sentencing option for serious violent offenders that is intended to be an alternative to youth transfers to adult court through individualized treatment plans. Using alternatives to incarceration such as intensive supervision and treatment, a portion of the sentence must be served in custody (secure and/or open) and a portion in the community (conditional supervision) (HCDA, 2008, p.66).
Intensive Supervision	“The extensive supervision of offenders who pose the greatest risk to society or are in need of the greatest amount of governmental services” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.601).
Intensive Supervision Probation	Typically reserved for youth as a last resort before incarceration, this form of sanction involves more frequent surveillance than that of traditional probation (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.222).
Intensive Support and Supervision Order	A sentencing option that assists the juvenile offender in changing their behaviour by providing more support and monitoring than a probation order.
Level of Service Inventory-Revised	A quantitative clinical inventory used to determine “offender likelihood of recidivism and suitability for community supervision.” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.601).

Logic Model	A depiction of program theory, which lays out “the expected sequence of steps going from program services to client outcomes” (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004, p.94).
Meta-analysis	A statistical procedure that analyses effect sizes derived from the quantitative results of multiple primary research studies, providing a “summary figure for the overall impact of an intervention” (Hollin & Palmer, 2006, p.3) for the purpose of “summarizing and comparing the findings of that set of studies” (Rossi et al., 2004, p.428).
National Crime Prevention Strategy	Administered by Public Safety Canada’s National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPCC), the NCPCC provides a policy framework for implementing crime prevention interventions in Canada. It is based on the premise that “well-designed interventions can have a positive influence on behaviours and crimes can be reduced/ prevented by addressing risk factors that lead to offending” (Public Safety Canada, 2009, p.1).
Positive Youth Development Framework	A theoretical orientation that focuses on “building multiple protective factors in youths and their contexts in an attempt to foster resiliency, increase youths’ ability to cope with stress in effective ways, and to respond constructively to future adversity” (Pepler, Knoll, Josephson, Simkins-Strong & Penn, 2008, p.10).
Probation	A sentence imposed as an alternative sanction to incarceration whereby the offender remains in the community under the supervision of a probation officer (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.280).
Process Evaluation	“A form of program evaluation designed to determine whether the program is delivered as intended to the targeted recipients” (Rossi et al., 2004, p.431).
Program Evaluation	“The use of social research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs in ways that are adapted to their political and organizational environments and are designed to inform social action in ways that improve social conditions” (Rossi et al., 2004, p.431).
Protective Factor	Characteristics of youth that “could reduce the likelihood of problem behaviours either directly or by moderating/buffering the effect of exposure to risk factors” (Arthur, Hawkins, Pollard, Catalano & Baglioni, 2002, p.576).
Recidivism	“A concept used to describe the process of an offender relapsing into criminal behaviour” (Hanser & Mire, 2011, p.5). Official measures are problematic due to differences in definition, police practices, and administration of justice across jurisdictions.
Rehabilitation	A sentencing philosophy aimed at treating criminals of their antisocial behaviour, as distinct from absolute punishment.

Residential Treatment Program	“Facilities that offer a combination of substance abuse and mental health treatment services while youth are kept under 24-hour supervision in a highly structured and secure environment” (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.604).
Restorative Justice	Practices that intend to repair the harm that has been caused by a criminal act, relying on “voluntariness, truth telling, and a face-to-face interaction” that revolves around the acceptance of responsibility (Latimer, Dowden & Muise, 2005, p.128).
Risk Factor	Static or dynamic characteristics of youths or their circumstances that increase the likelihood of delinquent or antisocial criminal behaviour taking place.
Risk, Need & Responsivity Model	<p>A treatment model that rests upon three basic principles fundamental to offender rehabilitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ “Risk Principle: Refers to an offender’s probability of reoffending and maintains that those with the highest risk should be targeted for the most intense treatment. □ Need Principle: Refers to an offender’s prosocial needs, the lack of which puts them at risk for reoffending; these needs should receive attention in program targeting. □ Responsivity Principle: Maintains that if offenders are to respond to treatment in meaningful and lasting ways, counselors must be aware of their different developmental stages and learning” (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, pp.278-280).
Social Development Model	“A theoretical orientation specifying developmental pathways to antisocial and prosocial outcomes, claiming that social development is influenced by important social structural factors and by individual characteristics” (Hawkins, Catalano, Hill & Kosterman, 2012, p.179).
Strategic Training Initiative in Community Supervision	A training program developed in order to increase probation officers’ adherence to the RNR principles with the expectation that this would lead to lower recidivism rates among their clients (Bonta, Bourgon, Ruge, Gress & Gutierrez, 2013)
Therapeutic Community	A residential community that provides “dynamic ‘mutual self-help’ environments and offers long-term opportunities for attitude and behavioural change and the learning of constructive prosocial ways of coping with life” (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.281).
Youth Criminal Justice Act	The law that governs Canada’s youth justice system, applying to youth aged 12 to 18. The YCJA holds a high focus on community reintegration and reserves custody sentences primarily for violent offenders and serious repeat offenders (Department of Justice Canada, 2013).
Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory	“A structured assessment instrument tool designed to facilitate the effective intervention and rehabilitation of youth offenders by assessing their risk, need, and protective factors” (Chu, Daffern, Thomas & Lim, 2011, p.134).

INTRODUCTION

The areas of crime prevention, program evaluation, treatment, and recidivism have attracted a cornucopia of research for those studying youth crime (Cross, Morrison, Peterson & Domene, 2012, p.64). Prevention efforts can be separated into three distinct but related levels — primary, secondary, and tertiary — and are often examined under the lens of social development or situational design (Vallée, 2010b). While crime prevention through social development is predicated upon the reduction of risk factors associated with early criminal involvement, crime prevention through situational design focuses on opportunistic and contextual causes of crime (British Columbia, n.d.). This paper will concentrate on efforts that are developmental in nature. The levels of crime prevention range from a general framework to more specific approaches, with tertiary efforts targeting youth who have been in contact with the criminal justice system. As post-adjudication intervention is the primary focus of this paper, programs on primary and secondary levels of intervention will be discussed briefly. Researchers within the field of program evaluation consider the theory behind a program and the impact it has on youth, focusing on best practices. Treatment modalities addressing the prevention of offending and reoffending behaviour range from a more therapeutic, rehabilitative approach to a control-oriented, punitive approach. There is also a lack of agreement on what constitutes ‘recidivism,’ contributing to an ambiguous and incomplete definition of key issues associated with youth crime.

An initial overview of the practices associated with successful efforts at crime prevention highlights the shift to a more rehabilitative, less control-oriented approach within treatment modalities. An examination into the evolution of evidence-based practices elucidates the extent to which a risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation became the most widely recognized and implemented treatment paradigm. Promising initiatives are highlighted through the exploration of Canadian crime prevention programs targeting youth on all three intervention levels, particularly those addressing adjudicated youth. Canadian programs were selected on the basis of availability of publications, proper evaluations, prevalence, and lastly, program success.

The requirements and intent of this practicum paper have been developed in accordance with the School of Criminology's guidelines. Specifically, "the practicum requires a paper that is related to the field placement, and this report is not normally more than fifty pages in length, including bibliography and footnotes, but exclusive of appendices; the practicum paper does not require the completion of original research" (<http://www.sfu.ca/criminology/grad/MA/mareq.html>). In this context, the goal of this paper is to critically review the literature on prevention, evaluation, treatment, and recidivism in an attempt to contribute to the knowledge base surrounding evidence-based practice among programs targeting adjudicated youth.

The subject matter of this paper has been developed, in part, through several graduate classes taken throughout my studies at Simon Fraser University. As a result, this paper has expanded upon the introduction I received to program evaluation, youth offenders, and the opportunity to further cultivate my research interests in various course projects. The exploration of these interests was augmented by my Vancouver-based research placement in the summer of 2013 with the John Howard Society of the Lower

Mainland (JHSLM), a non-profit organization that assists individuals in the community and in correctional institutions. The Lower Mainland is comprised of a geographical area which includes the two regional districts of Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. During the course of this placement, I assisted in the conception, design, and planning of an initiative undertaken by JHSLM — the Youth Community Project (YCP). The content of this research paper is thus a synthesis of the available literature on best practices for juvenile offenders in Canada and the summer research practicum placement.

An examination into meta-analyses and evaluations of selected Canadian programs targeting youth will provide a platform upon which best practices can be incorporated into the guiding principles of the Youth Community Project. Clarification of the outlined goals, objectives, activities, and projected outputs, outcomes, and program impact behind YCP will guide the integration of theory and praxis in this paper. This paper will argue that YCP reflects an evidence-based, community sanction for adjudicated youth, and shows potential in the reduction of recidivism among young offenders in the Lower Mainland.

CRIME PREVENTION IN CANADA

An examination of this topic should first address founding principles underlying crime prevention initiatives in Canada.¹ As Barton-Bellessa and Hanser (2012, p.134) point out, correctional policy has oscillated between punishment and deterrence strategies to treatment and constructional strategies. While the former was more representative of the early 20th century, the latter dominated the 1950s-1970s. A shift was later witnessed in the 1980s away from a rehabilitative approach to corrections (Hollin & Palmer, 2006, p.2), influencing Canada's current adoption of a modified justice model (Corrado, Gronsdahl & MacAlister, 2007). There was also limited federal interest in crime prevention initiatives before the 1990s, and the late 1980s brought widespread recognition of the need for a comprehensive crime prevention policy (Vallée, 2010a). During this time, initiatives undertaken by non-government organizations represented the bulk of crime prevention efforts. The National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) was ultimately developed by the Government of Canada in 1998, providing a "policy framework for implementing crime prevention initiatives in Canada" (Public Safety Canada, 2009, p.1).

The NCPS is based on the premise that well-designed interventions can have a positive influence on behaviours; crimes can be reduced or prevented by addressing risk factors that can lead to offending (Public Safety Canada, 2009, p.1).

¹ For a more complete synopsis of the historical development of crime prevention efforts in Canada, refer to Vallée (2010a).

The NCPS supports evidence-based interventions and draws heavily on the social development model which gained popularity and national support in the 1990s, ultimately guiding provincial efforts at crime prevention in Canada (Vallée, 2010a). Crime prevention through social development (CPTSD) has its roots in a longitudinal study — the Seattle Social Development Project — that put forth a “theory-guided, universal intervention approach... specifying etiological pathways to antisocial behaviour” (Hawkins, Catalano, Hill & Kosterman, 2012, p.178). Proponents of this model claim that social development is affected by important social structural factors and by individual characteristics, thus providing a framework for preventive measures in Canada.

In a revision to the NCPS in 2001, the development of “inclusive community governance structures and the application of knowledge-based intervention strategies” (Vallée, 2010a, p.46) was instituted. This modification of the NCPS reflected the continued acceptance of principles associated with the social development model of crime prevention and the establishment of evidence-based practices within a comprehensive national crime prevention policy. It can be argued that the field of crime prevention has advanced past the view espoused by the much-debated proclamation by Martinson (1974) that ‘nothing works’ (Borum, 2003; Cortoni, Nunes & Latendresse, 2006; Vallée, 2010a; van der Knapp, Leenarts, Born & Oosterveld, 2012). Although it has been argued that Martinson’s (1974) report led to “the collapse of the rehabilitative ideal” (Tanner, 2009, p.257), it has been found to be largely misquoted (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.129). Martinson eventually retracted his statement (Banks, 2013, p.261), which in effect drew attention to the flawed research methodologies underlying the “nothing works” claim (Hanser & Mire, 2011, p.5; Hollin & Palmer, 2006, p.2).

Crime prevention methods in Canada are predicated upon numerous strategies: community crime prevention, situational crime prevention, developmental crime prevention, and crime prevention through social development (Vallée, 2010b, p.6). The CPTSD category comprises the focus of this paper. Likewise, efforts rest on three levels — primary, secondary, and tertiary. Table 1 below encapsulates these intervention typologies, outlining key premises and noteworthy models. As a policy framework, CPTSD can be said to encompass efforts on all three levels through differing theoretical models for intervention.

Table 1. Intervention Typologies under Crime Prevention through Social Development

Level	Basic Premise	Associated Theoretical Model	Program Examples	Relevant Readings
Primary	Universal approach that attempts to prevent delinquent behaviour among a general youth population	Developmental Assets Approach	Big Brothers Big Sisters Healthy Families program	<input type="checkbox"/> Boyes, Hornick & Ogden, 2010 <input type="checkbox"/> Corrado & Peters, 2013 <input type="checkbox"/> Eccles & Templeton, 2001 <input type="checkbox"/> Linden, 2010
Secondary	Targeted approach that attempts to prevent further involvement with the criminal justice system after delinquent behaviour has occurred among at-risk youth	Positive Youth Development Framework	Stop Now and Plan Youth at Risk Development program Youth Outreach Worker program	<input type="checkbox"/> Augimeri, Walsh & Slater, 2011 <input type="checkbox"/> Knoll, Pepler & Josephson, 2012 <input type="checkbox"/> Koegl, Farrington, Augimeri & Day, 2008 <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Canada, 2011, 2012, 2013
Tertiary	Targeted approach that attempts to reduce recidivism among high-risk youth who have already been in contact with the criminal justice system	Integrated Service Delivery Model	Intensive Supervision (Deferred Custody & Supervision, Violent Offender Treatment) Probation & community service	<input type="checkbox"/> Corrado & Peters, 2013 <input type="checkbox"/> Cortoni, Nunes & Latendresse, 2006 <input type="checkbox"/> HCDA, 2008 <input type="checkbox"/> Serin, Gobeil & Preston, 2009 <input type="checkbox"/> Stewart, Oldfield & Braham, 2012

On the primary level, a *developmental assets approach* promotes the skills and strengths of youth, viewing youth as “assets in the making” (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.56). This developmental crime prevention approach plays a role in addressing problem behaviours among the general youth population through an attempt to build assets and develop positive ways for youth to manage negative life experiences (Vallée, 2010b). Early intervention has been shown to be effective in reducing later criminal behaviour (Jonson, Cullen & Lux, 2013), pointing to the success of crime prevention initiatives emerging from a developmental or life course perspective. Despite this evidence base, universal intervention initiatives may not always be applicable. Youth with a higher inclination toward criminal behaviours may exhibit risk factors that require more specific intervention efforts. Intervention efforts on the secondary level target at-risk youth (Greenwood & Edwards, 2011; Lundman, 2001) under a *positive youth development framework* that emphasizes “capacity building, increasing supports and opportunities, and developing outcomes, community strategies, and long-term outcomes” (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.55). Initiatives on the secondary level may however be insufficient in addressing particular factors that continue to permeate the circumstances surrounding a youth’s desistance from criminal activity. Tertiary level crime prevention efforts thus target high-risk youth in their attempts to reduce recidivism through a variety of initiatives (Greenwood & Edwards, 2011; Lundman, 2001). The amalgamation of treatment modalities and case management practices guides the *integrated service delivery model* (Horizons Community Development Associates [HCDA], 2008, p.151) that is arguably influential among post-adjudication interventions. Although this paper will provide an overview of examples of Canadian programs existing on all three levels, those initiatives on the tertiary level will remain the focal point of discussion.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

Evidence-based programs have their roots in research studies implicating the successful practices revolving around crime prevention, intervention, and reduction. The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a resurgence of studies relating to offender assessment and treatment (Craig, Dixon & Gannon, 2013, p.3), fuelling more rigorous evaluations (Bonta & Andrews, 2010, p.30) and a move towards acceptance of evidence-based practices within criminal justice policies and community supervision efforts (Bourgon, Bonta, Rugge & Gutierrez, 2010, p.91; Day & Doyle, 2010; Farrington, Loeber & Howell, 2012; Linden, 2010; Lipsey, 2012, p.182; Vallée, 2010a; Welsh, 2007).

While the knowledge base surrounding evidence-based crime intervention practices is arguably still in the early stages of its development (Lipsey, 2012, p.196), research on what works has shown that attempts at reducing recidivism work best when programs are therapeutically oriented, rehabilitation focused, community-based, multi-modal, and when they target identified risk factors (Bonta, Wallace-Capretta & Rooney, 2000; Borum, 2003; Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.66; Guerra, Kim & Boxer, 2008; Lipsey, 2009; Vieira, Skilling & Peterson-Badali, 2009; Wilson & Hoge, 2012). In particular, cognitive behavioural treatment (CBT) strategies have been shown to be successful in the reduction of both problem behaviours and offending rates (Bonta et al., 2000; Borum, 2003; Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.67; Day & Doyle, 2010; Farrington et al., 2012; Guerra et al., 2008; Koehler, Losel, Akoensi & Humphreys, 2013; Lipsey, 2012). Stephenson, Giller and Brown (2011, p.205) point out that CBT is commonly used for “anger

management, behaviour modification, cognitive restructuring, cognitive skills training, moral reasoning, relapse prevention, social skills training, and victim impact.”

Programs incorporating evidence-based principles are not as readily implemented — “lack of standardization and accountability for performance, funding, competition, and resistance from program staff” are all contributing factors (Greenwood & Edwards, 2011, p.372). Awareness of the completion of methods based on evidence-based principles is also limited, as few studies examine the longevity of these efforts (Howell, 2012) and there is often a gap between the specification of program practices and their implementation (Guerra et al., 2008). The research domain on youth programming is also limited to findings on brand name ‘model’ programs (i.e. commonly funded initiatives), rather than the wider range of currently available programs (Lipsey, 2009). This limited approach implies that evidence-based practice surrounding crime prevention efforts among youth should be based on an archetypal program. These issues, coupled with the dearth of research on the effectiveness of Canadian prevention and treatment programs (Borum, 2003; Day & Doyle, 2010; Welsh et al., 2012), contribute to a rather scant knowledge base surrounding evidence-based practice for youth crime prevention programs.

In their discussion of tenets of evidence-based programming, Stohr and Walsh (2012, p.248) emphasize the assessment of actuarial risk and needs. Consisting of static risk items, actuarial risk assessment instruments (ARAIs) are viewed as “the most reliable predictive instrument” (Craig et al., 2013, p.95). Conversely, structured clinical judgments (SCJs) assess dynamic risk factors (Craig et al., 2013, p.95). Although interventions often focus on risk rather than need assessment (Artz, Nicholson, Halsall & Larke, 2010), the use of widespread objective assessment tools — e.g., the Level of

Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) — is not intended to replace professional judgment but rather to augment it (Hanser & Mire, 2011, p.65).

Recent innovations involving risk assessment include the combination of risk and need assessments (Hanser & Mire, 2011, p.348; Merrington, 2004, p.48), and the integration of risk assessment and prediction tools within case management models (Turner, 2010, p.344). Although there are different types of case management models currently in use, assessment tools integrating risk and need would make probation services more effective and assist with the prediction of recidivism, supervision, and planning (Merrington, 2004, p.67) by “matching supervision levels through the definition of intervention goals” (Hanser & Mire, 2011, p.348). While the development and usage of systematic assessment tools has been vital to the expansion of evidence-based practice (Turner, 2010, p. 352), risk assessment and risk management efforts need to be combined in an attempt to produce successful intervention programs and assist in the evaluation of these initiatives (Borum, 2003).

Since comprehensive strategies and instruments for case planning have yet to be standardized (Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.64), the knowledge base surrounding evidence-based practice is far from offering a comprehensive analysis (Linden, 2010; Lipsey, 2009). Case management practices have become more commonplace, especially those assessing juvenile offenders. Derived from the LSI-R, the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) is a tool developed by Hoge and Andrews (2002) in order to combine case management and risk/needs assessment into one convenient system (as cited in Hoge, Andrews & Leschied, 2002). While this widely used risk management tool was informed by the RNR framework, it appears to be less useful for predicting recidivism among females than males (Vitopoulos, Peterson-Badali

& Skilling, 2012). Examples of international actuarial instruments for young offenders include the Wisconsin Juvenile Probation and Aftercare Risk Instrument (WJPARI) and the UK's Asset assessment tool (Putnins, 2005) and OASys — the Offender Assessment System. Furthermore, Cross et al. (2010) highlight the success of practices involving interagency case management procedures.

Examples of evidence-based practice within the Criminal Justice System are evident in offending behaviour programs (Hollin & Palmer, 2006, p.33). Emerging out of meta-analytic research, programs targeting sex offenders, serious and violent young offenders, substance abuse related offenses, and offenders with mental health issues portray a fraction of the treatment effectiveness literature. The goal of this paper is to provide a description of several Canadian initiatives that have been well-documented, properly evaluated, and/or shown to be effective in reducing problem behaviours and criminal conduct among youth populations. While a randomized controlled experiment is the 'gold standard' in evaluation research design, the majority of program reviews tend to be systematic or meta-analytic reviews and descriptive summaries (Welsh, 2007). As such, the programs reviewed in this paper have been taken from program scans (HCDA, 2008), accounts of best practices for youth programming (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005), reports from the National Crime Prevention Centre (Public Safety Canada, 2011, 2012, 2013), and process/program evaluations (Augimeri, Walsh & Slater, 2011; Knoll et al., 2012; Koegl, Farrington, Augimeri & Day, 2008).

It is vital at this juncture to mention a few caveats regarding the content of this paper. Although substance abuse and violent offender treatment programs are mentioned at various points throughout, they are not the focal point. Rather, an examination into crime intervention initiatives would not be complete without reference to

these programs and their contribution to the field of evidence-based practices. To that end, there is a distinct overlap between many of the programs explored within this paper in terms of theoretical frameworks; efforts were made to streamline the inherent concepts. The topic of crime prevention among youth offenders is a multi-faceted knowledge base spanning several domains and disciplines. The scope of this paper is limited to research on Canadian programs and initiatives with a mention of international comparisons where applicable. Though the research literature is vast, most program reviews take into consideration one particular program or type of program (Lipsey, 2009).

EXAMPLES OF CANADIAN PROGRAMS

Pre-Delinquent Intervention

On the primary level, prevention efforts tailor the conditions that lead to delinquency in the physical and social environment, targeting the general population of youth (Greenwood & Edwards, 2011; Lundman, 2001, p.25). Often operating on a family, school, or community level (Welsh, 2007) under a *developmental assets approach*, interventions on this level fall under the umbrella of 'developmental crime prevention' (Vallée, 2000b). According to Vallée (2000b, p.10), "crime prevention from a developmental perspective is largely based on the idea that criminal activity is determined by behavioural and attitudinal patterns that have been learned during a child's psychosocial development." Hence, a *developmental assets approach* puts forth a set of 'building blocks,' or a set of indicators that assist youth in healthy development (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.56). These blocks are equally divided into external and internal assets. External assets include "support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time", while internal assets include "commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and a positive identity" (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.56; Moody, Childs & Sepples, 2003). Developmental crime prevention promotes the strengths and skills of youth, seeking to "avoid 'pathologizing' target populations" (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.7). This approach typically involves "shifting issues to a more holistic approach, focusing on community mobilization, and creating an all-encompassing strategy that supports the capacity of youth" (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.8).

Big Brothers Big Sisters is an example of a highly documented, well-established primary intervention program. Researchers have found an appreciable increase in grade point average, parental trust (Eccles & Templeton, 2001), as well as “greater self-control, assertiveness and healthy/ adaptive coping in peer-pressure situations” (Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.67), and reductions in “problem behaviours, likelihood of initiating alcohol and drug use, skipping school and lying to parents” (Eccles & Templeton, 2001, p.37). While this mentoring program is aimed toward youth in general, there is evidence that it is highly effective among at-risk youth (Linden, 2010).

Similar programs exist across Canada, often administered in a variety of settings such as schools, community centres, or churches. Boyes, Hornick and Ogden (2010) report positive long-term outcomes of five Healthy Families program sites across Canada, an initiative providing services to families identified as requiring assistance with the upbringing of their first child. This home visitation approach introduces parents to community support services while developing positive and practical skills. Studies examining early intervention programs have found success among those offering parental and social skills training to decrease disruptive behaviour (Beelmann, 2012, p.152), in addition to home visitation (Corrado & Peters, 2013; Linden, 2010). The success of these programs mirrors the suggestion that primary methods of intervention are the most effective approach for the reduction of antisocial behaviour (Boyes et al., 2010; Quinsey, Skilling, Lalumiere & Craig, 2004, p.139).

The extent to which pre-delinquency programs have been properly evaluated and well documented is limited (Ward et al., 2010; Welsh et al., 2012), as several challenges exist to evaluating programs on a primary level of intervention (Eccles & Templeton, 2001, p.6). First, there is usually no long-term follow-up of participants once they have

left the program. National organizations also differ in their local programming, so there is considerable variability between well-known programs. In addition, the voluntary, diverse, and evolving nature of community programs makes exact specification of the treatment problematic, as youth may select which programs they wish to take part in, and their continued involvement is not required to stay with the organization (Eccles & Templeton, 2001, p.6). Aside from difficulties associated with inadequate evaluation of pre-delinquency programs, crime prevention efforts also need to take into consideration that the significance of risk, need, and protective factors may vary with developmental age (Hoge et al., 2012). For instance, risk factors in the family domain show the strongest association with recidivism in early adolescence, while the school domain is more relevant in late adolescence (van der Put et al., 2011). Though crime prevention initiatives may include components of early intervention, a developmental perspective has only recently been applied to these models (Boyes et al., 2010, p.98).

Pre-Adjudication Intervention

Intervention efforts on the secondary level target at-risk youth, focusing on the early diagnosis of problem behaviours and diversion (Greenwood & Edwards, 2011; Lundman, 2001, p.27). Interventions on this level typically tend to follow a *positive youth development framework*, a conceptual model that endeavors to build “multiple protective factors in youth and their contexts in an attempt to foster resiliency and promote competence, caring, character, confidence, and correction” (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005, p.7; Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak & Hawkins, 2004, p.101; Eccles & Templeton, 2001, p.29; Knoll et al., 2012, p.85; Pepler et al., 2008, p.10). Although developmental research on juvenile delinquency has grown considerably in the last few decades, there

is still a distinct lack of research on positive youth development programs that are community-based (Knoll et al., 2012; Welsh et al., 2012).

“Programs incorporating more elements of the youth development framework exhibit more positive outcomes, a decrease in adolescent risk-taking behaviours, and increased competencies” (Eccles & Templeton, 2001, p.29). This is attributed to the fact that youth development programs are increasingly being designed to both “decrease risk processes and increase protection processes across multiple social domains” (Pepler et al., 2008, p.10). Risk and protective factors associated with adolescent problem behaviours are promising targets for preventive intervention (Arthur et al., 2002, p.575) since chronic offenders have been shown to not only present multiple risk factors but also to lack protective factors (Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.66; Public Safety Canada, 2009). It is important to note though, that simply counting risk and protective factors is not enough, and it is crucial to “understand the multiple contexts in which development occurs” (Boyes et al., 2010, p.98).

A key factor distinguishing programs on the secondary level from those targeting youth in general is their ability to examine specific contexts of youth — for instance, gang involvement, poverty, or mental health. Accordingly, these efforts tend to be smaller in scale and community driven (Vallée, 2010b), attempting to address the particular needs of a certain population. This finding is reflected in the literature on three well-established and properly evaluated secondary intervention programs in Canada — Stop Now and Plan, the Youth at Risk Development program, and the Youth Outreach Worker program. Although a universal approach to crime prevention addresses a range of youth and can reduce stigmatization, it can be costly and the impact of specific programs can be unclear (Beelmann, 2012, p.142). Likewise, a targeted prevention

approach is “better tailored, more specific, potentially more effective, and relatively low in cost”; however, there can be a “higher degree of stigmatization and implementation problems, as well as difficulty with screening and selection of the target group” (Beelmann, 2012, p.142).

Arguably the most documented evidence-based intervention model, Stop Now and Plan (SNAP) shows demonstrably high program effectiveness in the reduction of antisocial behaviour among children under twelve with a prior history of police contact (Augimeri et al., 2007, 2011; Koegl et al., 2008; Public Safety Canada, 2013). Involving a “cognitive behaviour strategy intended to help children control impulsivity, think about the consequences of their behaviour, and develop a socially appropriate plan” (Augimeri et al., 2011, p.333), empirical validation exists for SNAP-GC (Girls’ Connection), SNAP-BG (Boys’ Group) and SNAP-ORP (Outreach Project). A recent evaluation of SNAP-ORP highlighted significant pre-post changes upon assigning 80 youth participants to one of three conditions (Koegl et al., 2008). Specifically, in the control group, no ORP was administered; in the matched group, ORP was administered; in the experimental group, an enhanced version of the ORP was administered. The results of this randomized controlled trial provide compelling support for the efficacy of the ORP program in reducing delinquency and aggression (Koegl et al., 2008, p.432). Originating in Toronto, Ontario, SNAP has been implemented in the United States, Europe, and Australia, and reflects the finding that secondary interventions work best when implemented during the school age years (Quinsey, et al., 2004, p.149). Despite the substantial success of the SNAP initiative, these process evaluations have reported a large attrition rate and also maintain that clinical assessment often neglects to take into account client characteristics (Augimeri et al., 2007, 2011; Koegl et al., 2008).

Programs comparable to SNAP exist across Canada. The majority of existing initiatives on a secondary level of intervention tend to be localized efforts emerging from the formal recognition of crime-related issues in major metropolitan areas. For instance, the Youth at Risk Development program (YARD) targets Calgary youth aged ten to seventeen who are either gang members or at high-risk of gang involvement (Public Safety Canada, 2011, 2012). Coordinated through the Calgary Police Service, YARD services are adapted to the needs of youth and availability of resources in the area. Individualized assessments, service plans, and case management also provide an ongoing and comprehensive approach to youth intervention (Public Safety Canada, 2011, 2012). A third party evaluation consisting of a non-randomized comparison group design mixed with qualitative case studies revealed significant effect sizes and a positive impact on program participants.

YARD was successful in reaching its targeted population and appears to have had a positive impact on the lives of its participants... Youth gang involvement declined as did positive attitudes towards gangs. Youth's attitudes toward employment, family bonding, and communication improved. Youth also made some positive changes in their relationships with peers, attitudes toward anti-social behaviours, drug usage, and their ability to control their anger. (Public Safety Canada, 2012, p.9).

Similar to the way in which the YARD program emerged in response to gang activity in a large Canadian city, the Youth Outreach Worker (YOW) program targets marginalized youth in thirteen Toronto neighbourhoods, particularly those associated with higher levels of poverty and violence (Knoll et al., 2012; Pepler et al., 2008). Consisting of demographic and interview data as well as focus group discussions, a process evaluation of the YOW revealed a positive program impact, particularly for youth who developed a positive working relationship with their superior (Knoll et al., 2012; Pepler et al., 2008). The invaluable ability of the workers to connect and engage with

youth reflects research pointing to the importance of a positive worker-youth relationship (Artz, et al., 2010). Knoll et al., (2012, p.86) also note that “the YOW program aims to build multiple assets in youth to foster resiliency, the ability to cope effectively with stress, and the capacity to respond constructively to adversity,” reflecting principles associated with a *positive youth development framework* (Eccles & Templeton, 2001). The program thus succeeds in reaching at-risk youth through partnering with community agencies and linking youth to numerous service systems in Toronto’s most marginalized neighbourhoods (Knoll et al., 2012).

SNAP, YARD, and YOW represent three of the most successful and properly evaluated secondary intervention programs in Canada; however, other localized initiatives have also been implemented. For instance, Centre 24-7 in Halifax (HCDA, 2008, p.199), Bladerunners in British Columbia (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005), and Pathways to Education across Canada (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005; Boston Consulting Group, 2011; Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.109). Despite the contention that prevention and intervention programs within the realm of social development have not been adequately evaluated (Bonnell & Zizys, 2005; Borum, 2003; Knoll et al., 2012; Welsh et al., 2012) these efforts have still demonstrated to be a good fit across samples (Hawkins et al., 2012). Catalano et al. (2004) note that the constructs of competence, self-efficacy, and prosocial norms were evident in their systematic review of positive youth development program literature. Therefore, a social development model for crime prevention shows potential thus far on the primary and secondary levels of intervention.

Despite advances in various crime prevention initiatives operating under a social development model, the literature consistently indicates that a small proportion of juvenile offenders account for the majority of serious offenses (Borum, 2003; Doob &

Cesaroni, 2004; Linden, 2010; Vieira et al., 2009). This assertion lends credence to Moffit's (1993) argument for the existence of two distinct offending groups — those that engage in crime from an early age, continuing into late adolescence, and those that engage in crime solely during early adolescence as part of a developmental process — the former of which would be deemed a chronic offender. These groups tend to exhibit different risk factors and also differ in their trajectories and criminal pathways (Bliesener, 2012, p.61; Yessine & Bonta, 2009). For instance, “impulsivity, lack of guilt, poor parental supervision, association with delinquent peers, academic difficulties, and availability of weapons” are key identified risk factors for serious and violent antisocial behaviour in adolescents (Borduin, Dopp & Taylor, 2013, p.201).

Risk factors also operate in a cumulative fashion and likelihood of future offending behaviour can be increased with the cultivation of risk factors acquired in the adjudication process (Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.62-66; Wilson & Hoge, 2012). Aside from risk factors identified for general youth offending, studies distinguish different risk factors for recidivism (Mulder, Brand, Bullens & van Marle, 2010, 2011; van der Put et al., 2011) and subgroups of offenders (Bliesener, 2012; Mulder et al., 2012; Yessine & Bonta, 2009). A recent study found support for the existence of four distinct subgroups of juvenile offenders, each displaying a different set of risk factors that best predicted severity of recidivism (Mulder et al., 2012). This is echoed in Tanner's (2009, p.167) account of common gang predictors, with “poor inner-city neighbourhoods, single-parent households, dropping out of high school, adolescence, and belonging to a racial minority group” being highly associated with youth gang activity. Programs targeting adjudicated youth therefore need to follow a different theoretical structure from those targeting at-risk youth or youth in general.

Post-adjudication Intervention

On the tertiary level, post-adjudication interventions focus on the reduction of recidivism among high-risk youth through rehabilitation, incapacitation or deterrence (Greenwood & Edwards, 2011; Lundman, 2001, p.28). Efforts on this level often target the needs of adjudicated youth in an effort to prevent future criminal acts through general, offense-specific, or offender-specific initiatives (Vallée, 2010b). As depicted in Figure 1 below, post-adjudication programs represent a 'continuum of sanctions' ranging in severity from community access centres and probation orders (the least severe sanctions) to incarceration and secure residential treatment facilities (the most severe sanctions) (as adapted from Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.17).

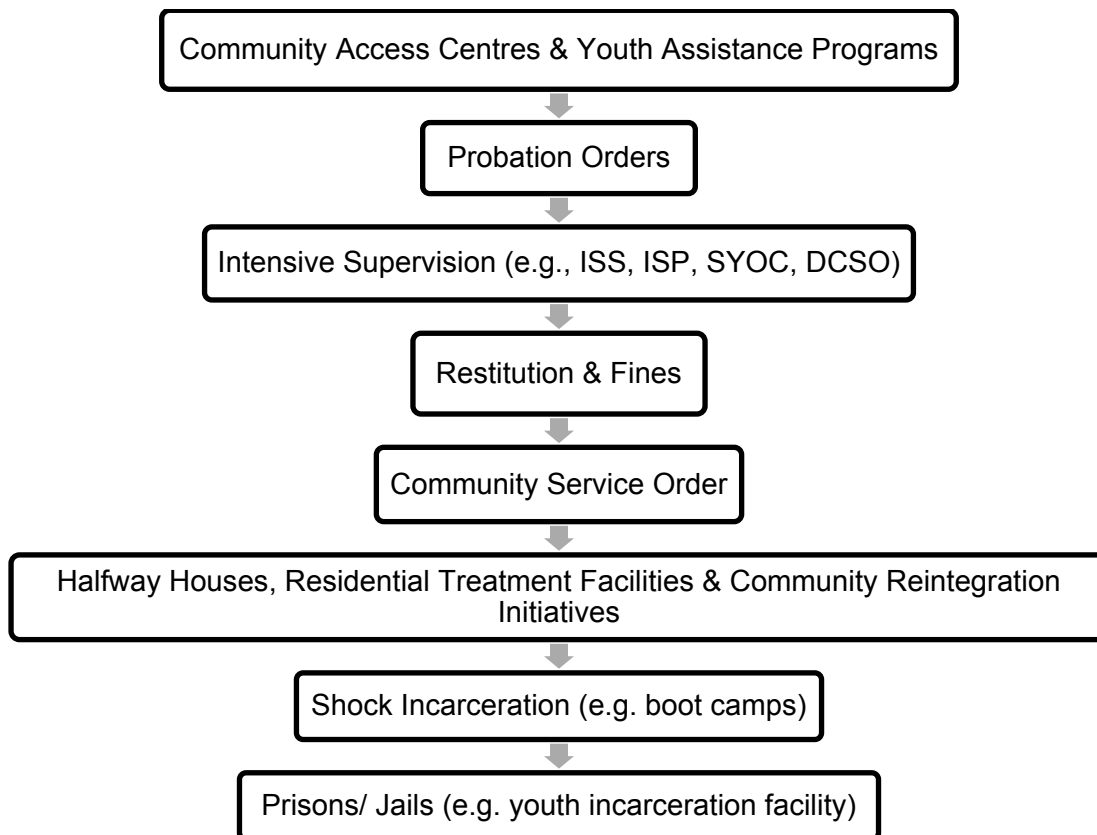


Figure 1. Continuum of Community Sanctions for Youth Offenders

This paper will now explore the extent to which available community sanctions for youth in Canada reflect evidence-based practices. It is important to note that sentences tend to be imposed on young offenders based on a multiplicity of factors; namely, proportionality, prior police contact, and type of offense (Department of Justice Canada, 2013). Those options most applicable to young offenders will be discussed, with emphasis on demonstrably effective or promising approaches. A risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation has demonstrated the most potential for substantial reductions in recidivism among juvenile offenders (Bonta et al., 2000, 2011; Chu, Daffern, Thomas & Lim, 2011; Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.63; Koehler et al., 2013; Lipsey, 2009; van der Knapp et al., 2012; van der Put et al., 2011; Vieira et al., 2009; Vitopoulos et al., 2012).

Established by Andrews, Bonta and Hoge (1990), the RNR model guides the treatment of youth within judicial and correctional settings. It is an empirically driven approach based on the concept that “early criminal behaviour can be predicted, that risk interacts with level of treatment intensity and targets in influencing treatment outcomes (i.e. recidivism), and that those factors interact with offender-based factors in influencing outcome” (Craig et al., 2013, p.6). The model rests on three basic principles that are fundamental to offender rehabilitation;

- **Risk** refers to “matching the level of services to the risk level of the offender,” so that those with the highest risk receive the most intense treatment
- **Need** argues that criminogenic factors should be the target of intervention
- **Responsivity** refers to “matching the style and mode of intervention to the learning style, motivation and ability of the offender” so that offenders may respond to treatment in meaningful and lasting ways (Bonta et al., 2011, p.1128)

Since the inception of the RNR model, a fourth principle — professional discretion — has been developed “to allow for clinical judgment to override the three principles if circumstances warrant” (Craig et al., 2013, p.6).

The RNR model has been firmly established in the literature, with adherence to its ideals resulting in considerable reductions in recidivism. Research outside of Canada also supports these findings. A meta-analysis of offender treatment programs in Europe revealed the highest effect size among those programs based on the RNR model, followed by CBT models, then deterrent and supervisory interventions (Koehler et al., 2013). Also, violence prevention programs based on the RNR model have been shown to reduce violent recidivism among Australian gangs (Chu et al., 2011), and treatments complying with RNR principles in the Netherlands demonstrate significantly higher effectiveness than criminal sanctions or non-RNR models (van der Knapp et al., 2012).

The RNR model has recently come under attack from critics claiming that its associated practices represent a ‘variables paradigm’ (Howell, 2012, p.136) in which youth context is overlooked (Craig et al., 2013, p.7). As Boyes et al. (2010, p.100) argue, “risk, opportunity, and development must be considered in the contexts that consist of the child and his or her immediate family, friends, neighbourhood, spiritual community, and school.” Still, Vieira et al. (2009, p.397) note that “regardless of youths’ criminal history and assessed risk for re-offense, the greater the percentage of individual criminogenic needs matched via services received through probation, the greater the reduction in number of new convictions.” As such, the RNR model remains firmly established in offender treatment literature.

Research into evidence-based programming directed towards adjudicated offenders shows that high-risk youth typically require relatively intensive levels of treatment (Bonta et al., 2010, 2011; Borum, 2003; Caldwell & van Rybroek, 2005; Putnins, 2005; Ward et al., 2010). Accordingly, offenders deemed to be lower risk require less intensive treatment; this demonstrates accordance with the risk principle of the RNR model. Similarly, Borum (2003) found that individual counseling was effective among serious offenders, yet showed no considerable outcomes among delinquency on a general (i.e. primary or secondary) level of intervention. This finding illustrates adherence to the need principle of the RNR model. Lastly, the ineffectiveness of interventions that attempt to aggregate high-risk youth (Borum, 2003; Lipsey, 2012) has pointed to the need to consider personal traits of the offender; this is in keeping with the responsivity principle of the RNR model (Bonta et al., 2010, 2011).

Utilization of the RNR model displays acceptance of evidence-based practices, the rising popularity of which has been noted in the literature (Day & Doyle, 2010; Farrington et al., 2012; Linden, 2010; Lipsey, 2012, p.182; Vallée, 2010a; Welsh, 2007). Despite the wealth of support for the RNR model, evidence-based programs for adjudicated youth are few and far between (Farrington et al., 2012; Guerra et al., 2008, p.86; Howell, 2012; Ward et al., 2010). Regardless of the call for more implementation of evidence-based programs for young offenders (Farrington et al., 2012), research on adjudicated youth has shown that systematic evaluations of intervention programs are scarce (Borum, 2003; Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.59; Day & Doyle, 2010; Knoll et al., 2012, p.85; Polaschek, Wilson, Townsend & Daly, 2005; Welsh et al., 2012).

As shown in Figure 1, prisons and jails represent the most severe type of sanction. The use of incapacitation, detention, and punishment measures in the

reduction of recidivism has been called into question (Cross et al., 2012; Wodahl et al., 2011), influencing revisions to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* in 2003 (Department of Justice Canada, 2013). Judicial practices have been geared towards diversion from the youth courts since these amendments in an attempt to emphasize rehabilitation and use of extrajudicial measures in response to criminal events (Wilson & Hoge, 2012). Secure custody facilities are now frequently viewed as a last resort (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.17; Cross et al., 2012) and the rate of youth being processed in the correctional system has declined in recent years (Brennan, 2012; Calverley, Cotter & Halla, 2010; Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.60; Dauvergne, 2013; Kong, 2009). This decline includes the number of cases brought to court, the rate of incarceration among youth offenders, and formal custody sentencing. Research also points to the effects of incarceration in the compounding of risk factors among young offenders, finding negative long-term effects of residential care (Casey et al., 2010; Cesaroni & Peterson-Badali, 2005; Howell, 2009, p.253). Studies also continue to show that diversion and rehabilitation-based practices result in lower rates of recidivism than a punitive approach (Bonta et al., 2000; Guerra et al., 2008; Lipsey, 2009, 2012; Vieira et al., 2009; Yessine & Bonta, 2009).

Representing a form of shock incarceration, boot camps are typically recommended as a form of treatment for young offenders that have committed a property offense. Boot camps have remained controversial since their introduction into the criminal justice sphere in the 1980s (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.334; MacKenzie, Wilson & Kider, 2001). Depicting correctional practices similar to military style discipline, studies have converged on the general consensus that boot camps are ineffective (Banks, 2013, p.262; Howell, 2009, p.253; MacKenzie et al., 2001; Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.103). Alongside “zero tolerance policies, D.A.R.E. programs, curfew

laws, long terms of confinement, and scared straight programs, boot camps tend to employ a punishment, discipline and deterrent-based approach that has failed to influence the offending behaviour of youth” (Howell, 2009, p.253).

Next, halfway houses, residential treatment facilities, and community reintegration initiatives are typically viewed as a combination of rehabilitative and punitive approaches to offender treatment, often providing access to social supports and offering drug and/or alcohol treatment programs (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.322; Brown et al., 2010; Casey et al., 2010). The youth equivalent to these community sanctions is residential treatment programs and group homes, both demonstrating mixed results in terms of program effectiveness (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, pp.498-502). Group homes are typically a last resort before secure detention, and tend to be even less effective than the ever-debated foster home.

Despite these assertions, a recent scan of programs for youth who commit serious violent offenses demonstrates the potential of secure treatment facilities (HCDA, 2008). The Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre in Burnaby, British Columbia and Kinark Child and Family Services in Toronto, Ontario display successful treatment modalities for incarcerated offenders in a secure setting. Funding by the Ministry of Education allows the Maples Centre to effectively care for youth who may express “persistent difficulties at home, school and in their communities” (HCDA, 2008, p.92). Operating as a residential mental health facility, the Maples Centre offers a variety of programs that espouse an attachment-centered approach to development and rehabilitation, showing significant reductions in problem behaviours (Moretti, Holland, Moore & McKay, 2004). Based on the principles of detention, custody, and treatment typically associated with secure facilities, Kinark also offers more therapeutically-

oriented treatments and an intensive supervision component (HCDA, 2008, p.88). It can thus be argued that secure treatment facilities hold some merit in the prevention of re-offending behaviour among young offenders, provided that they demonstrate some acceptance of evidence-based practices.

Programs that successfully integrate therapeutic practices into *both* a community and institutional setting hold more promise in the field of post-adjudication intervention than those that simply operate within one of these spheres. For instance, Ottawa's Community Reintegration Project is a comprehensive, therapeutically oriented approach that addresses multiple risk factors through a counseling approach (HCDA, 2008, p.26). The project is delivered in the correctional institution, community, school, and family spheres, showing the highest success when youth get involved with the program prior to release. The project offers a wide range of services such as "counseling, advocacy, employment assistance, living skills, and resources on substance use and abuse" (HCDA, 2008, p.27). The success of this program is reflected in research advocating for community-based interventions over those that take place in an institution (Bonta et al., 2000; Guerra et al., 2008; Lipsey, 2009; Wilson & Hoge, 2012).

There is still potential within interventions that are primarily institution-based, however — especially if they adopt a theoretical model operating under a social development approach to crime prevention and treatment. For instance, the Rideau Correctional Treatment Centre in Toronto, Ontario offers a range of programs aligning with the principles set out by the RNR framework (HCDA, 2008, p.151). At the Rideau centre, "assessment and treatment are both integral parts of programming" (HCDA, 2008, p.151), with offenders assigned to programs based on their risk, need, motivation level, and sentence length. While each program offered at the centre addresses basic

treatment in relation to topics such as anger management or substance abuse, case management procedures ensure that high-risk residents are assigned to more intense programs. Treatment in these programs focuses on topics such as post traumatic stress disorder, childhood sexual abuse, and parenting skills. Reliance on cognitive behavioural therapies, comprehensive case management procedures, and a range of treatment services has resulted in positive program evaluations of the Rideau Centre, finding noteworthy differences in recidivism between treated offenders and comparison groups (HCDA, 2008, p.151). The success of the Rideau Centre can be attributed to its adoption of an *integrated service delivery model*, which

...allows for multiple needs to be addressed within a single treatment program [and] offers treatment more consistent with the principles of effective correctional treatment programming, which means including behavioural or cognitive-behavioural therapies, targeting appropriate criminogenic needs, matching treatment with appropriate offender risk levels, and including relapse prevention components. (HCDA, 2008, p.151)

Research consistently identifies the importance of integrating services that include a wide range of resources for comprehensive prolific offender case management (Borum, 2003; Corrado & Peters, 2013; HCDA, 2008; Morley & Rossman, 1997).

Next, the commission of property crimes typically results in restitution or community service performed by the youth offender (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.18; Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.222). These sentences are frequently used and have demonstrated some success in the reduction of recidivism (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.371). Bouffard and Mofti (2007) found support for “the use of community service over other community-based sanctions typically used with comparable types of less serious offenders” (as cited in Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.396). These sentences are also

vital elements of the restorative justice philosophy, a model relating to offender rehabilitation (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.222). Typically reserved for less serious crimes, restorative justice practices rely on “voluntariness, truth telling, and a face-to-face interaction” that revolves around the acceptance of responsibility and the reparation of victim harm (Latimer, Dowden & Muise, 2005, p.128).

Usually imposed as a last resort before incarceration, intensive supervision efforts are meant for high-risk offenders and can be quite diverse in practice (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.373; Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.102, p.222). Examples of these efforts include deferred custody and supervision orders (DCSO), intensive support and supervision orders (ISS), specialized young offender caseloads (ex: MDYO, VO/GS), violent offender treatment programs (e.g., VOTP, VPP, PVO), and intensive rehabilitation custody and supervision orders (IRCS). Intensive supervision efforts generally consist of an offender management plan in which probation officers regularly assess youth offenders based on the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI).

Initially developed as an alternative to incarceration (Barton-Bellessa & Hanser, 2012, p.387), intensive supervision initiatives are offered through treatment centres in the community (e.g., Kinark Child and Family Services), yet tend to be operated through provincial correctional services (HCDA, 2008, p.215). Evaluation literature surrounding intensive supervision is mixed, generally noting that the inclusion of appropriate rehabilitative services is more likely to contribute to their success (HCDA, 2008). For instance, Bonta et al. (2000) found reductions in recidivism among intensive probation services only when offender treatment is a significant component of the program. Similarly, Wodahl et al. (2011) found higher success rates in an intensive supervision

program in the USA which used both sanctions *and* rewards. In a criticism of intensive supervision programs, Banks (2013, p.262) argued that less structured approaches centred on casework are ineffective.

Recent years have witnessed an increase in DCSOs (Brennan, 2012; Dauvergne, 2013; Kong, 2009), a less time-consuming sanction than a custody and supervision order (CSO). DCSOs tend to be imposed in situations where the offender shows greater promise of reform (Carrington, Roberts & Davis-Barron, 2011) — in accordance with proportionality and sentencing principles under the YCJA (Department of Justice Canada, 2013). Although the majority of DCSOs are completed successfully, they only account for a small proportion of sentences imposed in youth court (Carrington et al., 2011). Further, youth who were admitted to custody from DCSOs do not typically get sentenced to secure custody (Carrington et al., 2011), reflecting the increase in open custody sentences among young offenders (Cesaroni & Peterson-Badali, 2005). However, Bonta et al. (2011) found little evidence that these community supervision orders contribute to the reduction of recidivism, adding to the debate surrounding the effectiveness of custodial sentences (Corrado & Peters, 2013). Although community sentences offer more access to counseling resources, they are arguably apt to lose efficacy due to their focus on surveillance, control and intensive supervision measures.

Intensive Support and Supervision (ISS) is a community-based sentencing alternative within the YCJA that is typically reserved for youth who are either in custody or likely to receive a custodial sentence (HCDA, 2008, p.215). ISS provides direct and indirect interventions within the family and education spheres, focusing on community awareness/leisure and behaviour issues (HCDA, 2008, p.215). Through the development of an offender management plan, probation officers focus on school

reintegration, family reintegration, employment opportunities, therapeutic and behavioural programs, and leisure and prosocial activities (HCDA, 2008, p.217). Studies indicate promising outcomes, and offenders have been shown to demonstrate slight reductions in recidivism and acceptance of more prosocial activities upon completion of intensive supervision probation (ISP), a similar sentence (Stohr & Walsh, 2012, p.102).

Intensive case programming initiatives such as the Mentally Disordered Young Offender (MDYO) Caseload and the Violent Offenders/Gang Specialist (VO/GS) Caseload in Vancouver, British Columbia also hold potential in the field of offender treatment (Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.69). These specialized young offender caseloads represent prolific offender case management through intensive supervision and resource allocation among higher risk cases. Offering a wide range of treatment, programming, and monitoring, these initiatives directly reflect the research literature concerning the provision of higher intensity treatment services to more chronic offenders (Bonta et al., 2010, 2011; Borum, 2003; Caldwell & van Rybroek, 2005; Putnins, 2005; Ward et al., 2010). These initiatives also employ mentoring and one-on-one services and offer alternative schooling (Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.70). There is limited research on specialized young offender caseloads however and proper evaluations still have yet to be conducted.

There is reason to doubt the effectiveness of custodial sentences, as ISS and specialized caseloads have produced only mildly successful results in the reduction of recidivism (Corrado & Peters, 2013; Bonta et al., 2011). There is further debate regarding the efficacy of violent offender treatment programs, a broad category of interventions referring to violence prevention that is delivered on various organizational levels. The Violent Offender Treatment Program (VOTP) is a therapeutic provincial

program aimed at treating youth who are medium to high-risk for future violent behaviour (HCDA, 2008, p.176). Offered in British Columbia and administered through Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services, the VOTP uses a standardized approach and relies on cognitive behaviour strategies in an effort to reduce recidivism, address risks and needs, and strengthen protective factors (Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.67; HCDA, 2008, p.176;). Catchpole and Gretton (2003) reported reductions in recidivism among participants, and the review provided by HCDA (2008, p.177) notes a reduction in violent and nonviolent recidivism among male and female participants that completed the program in BC. While it is primarily classified as an institutional intervention, facets of the program operate on the community level.

Similar initiatives have been implemented throughout Canada, reflecting Correctional Service Canada's increased focus on violence-related programs (Cortoni et al., 2006). For instance, improvements in institutional behaviour were found among those incarcerated males deemed to be persistently violent offenders that completed a Violent Prevention Program (VPP) in Canada (Cortoni et al., 2006). Yet, an evaluation of the Persistently Violent Offender (PVO) program, a similar initiative implemented by the Correctional Service of Canada, found no such positive program effects in a sample of participants from Ontario and New Brunswick (Serin, Gobeil & Preston, 2009). Arguing that program completion was not superior to non-completion, this study found no increase in knowledge and skills related to the reduction of recidivism through "a treatment program predicated upon personal motivation, problem definition, and skills acquisition" (Serin et al., 2009, p.61). Despite the numerous studies that have praised violent offender treatment programs in past years (Borum, 2003; Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.67; Day & Doyle, 2010; HCDA, 2008; Lipsey, 2012; Polaschek et al., 2005),

Canada's present approach to correctional intervention among violent offenders — targeting anger and arousal — may not be the best method (Serin et al., 2009).

International evaluations of violent offender treatment programs have also produced mixed results. Stewart, Oldfield and Braham (2012) found some support for a VOTP program in the United Kingdom, though participants noted several shortcomings of the initiative. Inconsistency relating to discussions and staff facilitation of the program, perceived low levels of control amongst staff members, and a lengthy program implementation were the most common criticisms of this initiative (Stewart et al., 2012, p.145). Day and Doyle (2010) argue that reductions in recidivism among violent offenders in Australia can be witnessed in the combination of VOTP and therapeutic community (TC) models. A TC model “uses the community to provide a range of life situations in which members can re-enact and re-experience their relationships in the outside world, with opportunities provided through a group and individual therapy process to examine and learn from any difficulties that are experienced” (Day & Doyle, 2010, p.382). Rehabilitative programs for violent offending in Australia are still in their infancy (Polaschek et al., 2005) and few studies have examined the reoffending rates of participants. Nevertheless, there is early promise for intensive, CBT-based prison programs for high-risk violent males in Australia (Polaschek et al., 2005). Likewise, Day and Doyle (2010) argue that CBT remains the preferred method of treatment among programs for violent offenders, a common finding in crime prevention literature.

Bonta et al. (2000, p.316) argue that “political and criminal justice landscapes continue to be dominated by traditional concepts of punishment and intensive probation,” despite the considerable amount of literature illustrating the effectiveness of offender treatment in reducing recidivism. While a rehabilitative approach may hold the most

promise, the field tends to be dominated by initiatives emerging from deterrence, supervision, and control orientations of criminal justice practice. Offered as an alternative to incarceration under the YCJA, Intensive rehabilitative custody and supervision (IRCS) orders operate in both the community and institution spheres, depicting a promising approach to the integration of these two perspectives (HCDA, 2008, p.210). Conditional (community) supervision represents a portion of this sentence, while another portion resides in secure and/or open custody. These programs promote regulated case management among high-risk offenders with an underlying mental health issue in an effort to successfully reintegrate them into the community; proper evaluations have yet to be made of these programs (HCDA, 2008). Still, Bonta et al. (2000) found support for intensive supervision and rehabilitation programs, the efforts of which can be said to comply with principles of the RNR model.

First, IRCS orders are geared towards serious and violent young offenders, thus matching the intensive levels of service to only high-risk individuals. This reflects research which argues that higher risk individuals required more intensive treatment (Bonta et al., 2010; Borum, 2003; Caldwell & van Rybroek, 2005; Putnins, 2005; Ward et al., 2010). Second, a multi-modal approach is used in order to address the risk factors for recidivism within the individual, reflecting intensive treatment (i.e. the need principle). Lastly, community treatment and reintegration is predicated upon “individualized case management procedures”, with particular young offenders receiving additional support, services, and resources (HCDA, 2008, p.213). Similarly, Vieira et al. (2009, p.397) note that “rehabilitative interventions should be tailored not only to youth’s needs but also to their personal abilities and characteristics.” This reflects the importance of locating context and resources in order for treatment modalities to be successful at reducing

youth reoffending (Artz et al., 2010; Boyes et al., 2010). The wider range of services offered through IRCS orders thus reflects youth needs, yet intensive treatment and resource allocation attenuates to the political agenda of criminal justice ideologies.

Research into offender rehabilitation tends to support the claim that treatment and sentences served in the community hold more promise (Bonta et al., 2000; Borum, 2003; Corrado & Peters, 2013, p.66; Guerra et al., 2008; Lipsey, 2009; Wilson & Hoge, 2012). Yet, widespread statistics are virtually nonexistent in regards to sentencing in youth courts across Canada, and data tend to be obtained from the Youth Court Survey and the Youth Custody and Community Services Survey (Carrington et al., 2011, p.72). Studies have shown that a large amount of incarcerations can be traced back to parole and probation violations (Farrington et al., 2012), and probation continues to be the most common sentence for youth in Canada (Brennan, 2012; Dauvergne, 2013; Doob & Cesaroni, 2004, p.217). Although there is provincial variation in probation length, these sentences tend to be used in combination with other dispositions (e.g., custody, deferred custody and supervision order, fines) (Doob & Cesaroni, 2004, p.217).

Despite the prevalence of community supervision, there is a paucity of research on its effectiveness (Bonta et al., 2010). In 2005, Public Safety Canada developed the strategic training initiative in community supervision (STICS) in order to ensure probation officers' adherence to the RNR framework (Bonta, Bourgon, Ruge, Gress & Gutierrez, 2013). Reporting lower recidivism rates and more RNR-based skills, trained probation officers displayed successful completion of the initiative. Through a three-day training course and ongoing skill maintenance consisting of meetings and clinical feedback, probation officers adhered to RNR principles that were initially introduced into offender treatment frameworks in the 1990s (Bonta et al., 2013). Although different risk/need

assessment instruments were used in each jurisdiction, a uniform measure was constructed for Bonta et al.'s (2013) study.

The implementation of STICS demonstrates the need for a comprehensive national case management system, as well as the need for an integrated tertiary level intervention strategy that is based on evidence-based practice. The diversity of programs available for the reduction of recidivism among adjudicated youth in Canada is evidence of a distinctly weakened knowledge base surrounding best practices for young offenders (Kurlychek, Wheeler, Tinik & Kempinen, 2010; Lipsey, 2009). For instance, there is support in the literature for programs predicated upon intensive supervision (e.g., ISS/ISP), those that take place in a treatment centre (e.g., Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre, Kinark Child and Family Services), and initiatives espousing a more rehabilitative approach to custody (e.g., IRCS). These disparate findings also contribute to a lack of definition regarding the theoretical framework that encompasses tertiary level intervention. While effective primary and secondary intervention programs can best be understood through the lens of social development models (i.e. developmental asset approach and positive youth development framework) — treatment modalities surrounding tertiary intervention are not classified with the same ease.

While it is difficult to pinpoint best practices for adjudicated youth, it can be argued that those initiatives reflecting a comprehensive approach to offender treatment and rehabilitation through the provision of intensive treatment services and integrated case management practices hold more merit within the field of evidence-based practice. Of particular importance is the distinction of individuals that may be higher in risk, as they would require more intensive treatment and resource allocation. Thus, an integrated service delivery model that has adopted principles associated with the RNR framework

holds the most promise for the treatment of young offenders. It can therefore be argued that the acceptance of RNR principles under a social development framework for crime prevention gives rise to practices associated with an integrated service delivery model, contributing to the treatment literature on evidence-based practice for adjudicated youth.

There exist a plethora of community programs that attempt to address the same issues as government-funded initiatives or secure treatment facilities such as the abovementioned examples of tertiary-level Canadian programs. For instance, the John Howard Society is a national organization in Canada that strives to improve the lives and conditions of those who have been affected through involvement with the criminal justice system (<http://www.jhslmbc.ca/>). While there is variation in organizational structure and programs that are offered between provincial and regional branches, the basic premise upon which the John Howard Society was founded remains the same — that individuals are capable of reform, and deserving of fair and compassionate treatment. There are few rigorous evaluations of the programs offered through these agencies, yet their continued existence is evidence of the demand for such programs. Most crime prevention efforts tend to be under-resourced and funded for a short period of time (Linden, 2010) — the John Howard Society is no exception. Supports and services offered through these agencies are indicative of an approach that is entirely community-based, an infrequent occurrence in the program literature. That they continue to remain operational could be seen as evidence of their success in achieving their defined goals as a rehabilitation-focused organization that assists adjudicated individuals. Of the few community programs that may seemingly reflect a social development approach to crime prevention, an even smaller amount incorporate principles of the RNR framework into their organizational structure; the Youth Community Project aims to match this disparity.

THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF THE LOWER MAINLAND

The mandate of the John Howard Society as a non-profit organization is to promote a safe and peaceful community through effective and humane criminal and social justice programs, providing services in the community and within institutions to assist individuals impacted by involvement in the criminal justice system (<http://www.jhslmbc.ca/>). With over sixty-five offices throughout Canada, branches offer a wide range of services and programs to young offenders. This includes education, training, employment services, counseling, literacy and life skills, residential programs, and general youth advocacy (<http://www.jhslmbc.ca/>). Although the John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland offers a variety of services — i.e. community assistance, prison to community reintegration, employment preparation, general outreach assistance, and a homelessness partnering strategy — youth advocacy is presently the only program directly targeting young offenders. It entails a weekly visit to the Burnaby Youth Custody Services Centre, allowing for advocacy and support at the group and individual level, providing youth with the necessary knowledge and resources that will facilitate the reintegration process upon re-entry into the community. In addition, an educational intervention program — Choices and Consequences — is delivered in local schools and community centres. This program attempts to inform youth about the perils of gang life and involvement with the criminal justice system, raising awareness of the incarceration experience (<http://www.jhslmbc.ca/services/choices-and-consequences/>).

In comparison to other John Howard agencies, the Lower Mainland office does not offer as many youth programs, demonstrating a gap in available services. For instance, the John Howard Society of Regina offers crime prevention programs for elementary school students, youth community service programs, Young Offender Extrajudicial Sanctions Programs (YOESP's), a stop-lift initiative targeting the prevention of shoplifting, young offender/victim mediation services, Next Step (a program offered as an alternative to custody sentences) and housing options(<http://www.sk.johnhoward.ca/>). It is evident from this range of programs that certain agencies have accepted the principles laid out by the new YCJA more freely than others, and continue to comply with these tenets as a part of their organizational structure and daily procedures. Conversely, agencies such as the John Howard Society of Nova Scotia (<http://ns.johnhoward.ca/>) offer fewer programs and thus, have a limited focus on youth advocacy and intervention. Arguably, the lack of youth programming on Canada's east coast is indicative of the smaller population in their surrounding metropolitan area. In contrast, larger cities tend to have more clients to serve, more funding, and more resources to distribute.

Despite the reasoning for this disparity, Vancouver displays a lack of community programming for adjudicated youth. While programs do exist, rarely are they a joint effort with government organizations such as Correctional Services of Canada, nor do they adequately target high-risk youth. For instance, the Broadway Youth Resource Centre is arguably the most successful intervention community initiative in the Lower Mainland. Operated through Pacific Community Resources, the Centre offers a varied range of services to homeless and at-risk youth through an integrated, accessible, centralized facility. Programs related to victim support, housing, transition and development, youth advisory, and general resources make up the daily activities of the Broadway Youth

Resource Centre (http://www.pcrs.ca/broadway_youth_resource_centre). It is also affiliated with several counseling services for addiction, health (general and mental), and community work. Still, this organization does not target adjudicated youth specifically and may not properly address the issues these youth face.

Gang involvement has been an issue in the Lower Mainland for over 50 years (Doob & Cesaroni, 2004, p.97), and few initiatives have emerged to address this concern. While programs may exist that do offer assistance to at-risk youth, those who are at a higher risk for gang involvement or exhibit multiple risk factors for criminal involvement may not be properly treated in the community. Youth who have already come into contact with the criminal justice system are at a higher risk of sustaining this involvement, and thus have specific risks that need to be addressed. Fortunately, the recent collaboration of the John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland with the John Howard Society of the Fraser Valley holds potential in addressing these concerns. Since there is a distinct lack of services targeting tertiary-level crime prevention in Vancouver, a project such as YCP could fill this service gap and provide youth with the resources they require to leave a life of crime.

Youth Community Project© (YCP)

The Youth Community Project is an eight-week facilitated program that aims to reduce youth criminal involvement and strengthen communities (John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland [JHSLM] & Mirilovic, 2013). It is available for youth aged twelve to seventeen who have been in contact with the criminal justice system, and referral is conducted through several affiliated organizations. For instance, staff in the Vancouver Police Department or the Burnaby Youth Custody Centre or the youth probation officer

may contact the John Howard Society to enroll an individual into the program. YCP is designed to be an alternative and/or supplement to community sentences such as probation, parole, deferred custody and supervision orders, or intensive support and supervision. According to sentencing and proportionality principles laid out by the YCJA (Department of Justice Canada, 2013), more punitive sentences tend to be served by higher-risk individuals. Youth lower in risk would benefit from receiving knowledge of community resources and being equipped with the necessary information to navigate these services on their own. Since the program is designed to be a more general approach to addressing risk factors specific to adjudicated youth, youth identified as being at a demonstrably higher risk for re-offending would likely still be required to serve a community sentence in addition to completion of the YCP (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013).

The program will be administered by staff members of the John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland, with volunteers assisting in the organization, management, and implementation. Staff members hold training in “nonviolent crisis intervention, de-escalating difficult behaviour, standard first aid, risk assessment, risk management instruction, working with mental health and developmental disability populations, effective leadership, and successful supervision” (<http://www.jhslmbc.ca/about/#training>). Non-profit organizations tend to struggle with funding allocation, and the John Howard Society is no exception. While the primary point of contact for the YCP will be Pamela Flegel, the Manager of Community Services, volunteers will be responsible for the majority of the program activities. Throughout the administration of the program, guest speakers will include social workers, community activists, mental health clinicians, and other associated professionals (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013). Figure 2 below provides a detailed explanation of the program description (i.e. logic model).

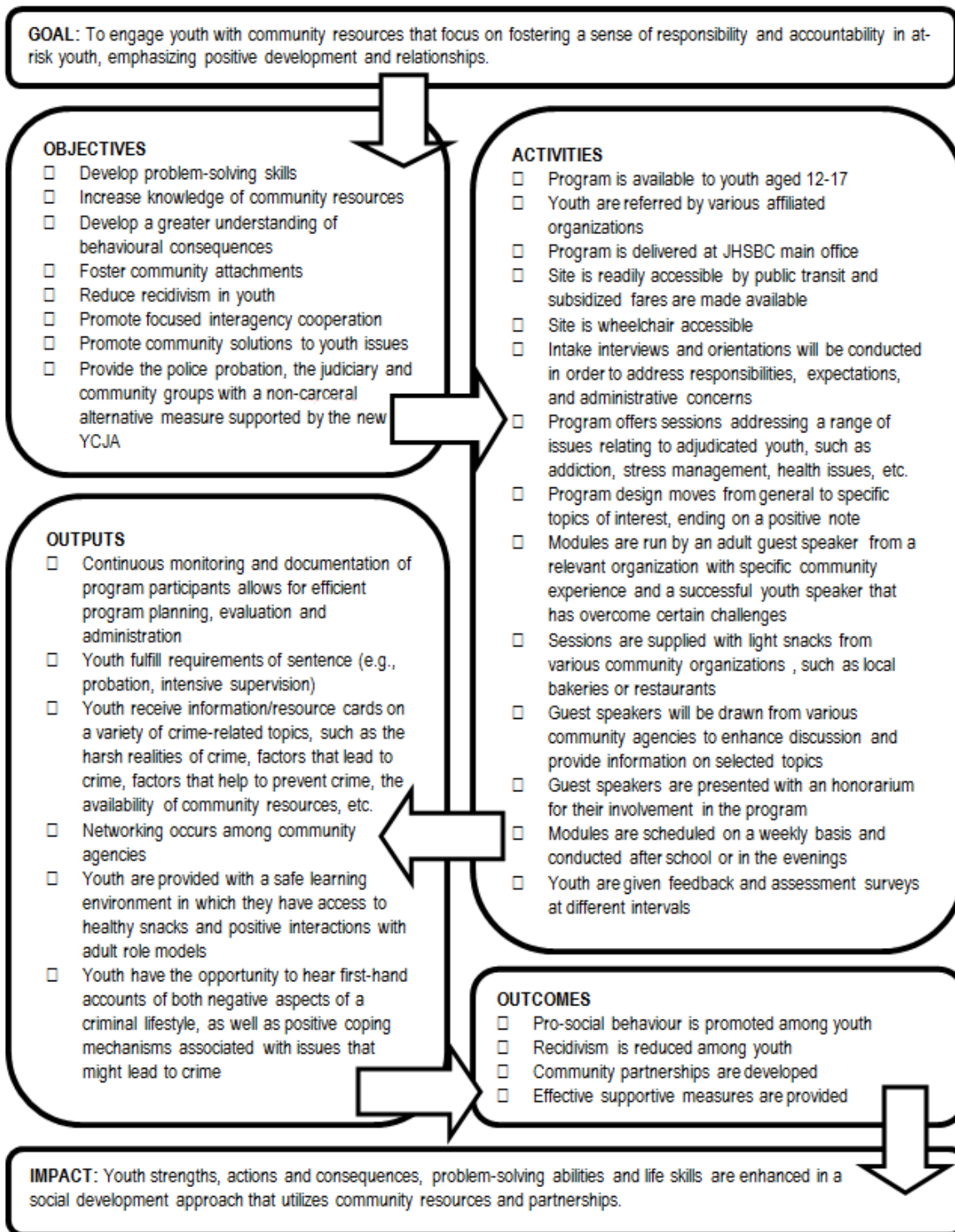


Figure 2. Youth Community Project Logic Model (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013)

Attempting to target youth who have recently been incarcerated, street youth, or youth who have come into contact with police, the project will offer weekly modules addressing a range of topics that are relevant to the target clientele (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013). These topics will relate to issues that youth in Vancouver may face, engaging them with community resources that focus on fostering a sense of responsibility and accountability. Roundtable discussions and information cards will provide youth with the necessary knowledge regarding the provision of these services in the area. Should specific issues be identified as requiring further attention with particular youth, the probation officer or otherwise primary contact will be informed so that the youth may receive the corresponding treatment. Thus, exposure to available resources will facilitate the allocation of youth to appropriate community organizations.

With continuous program monitoring and documentation aimed at efficient planning, evaluation and administration, the Youth Community Project aims to be fully operational by the end of 2014. Program delivery will entail a projected schedule of four programs throughout the course of each year. It is expected that sessions will hold anywhere between eight to twelve clients and take place in the conference room at the head office for the John Howard Society of British Columbia, located at 763 Kingsway Ave in Vancouver. Light snacks and subsidized fares for public transit will also be provided as further incentive for continuous participation in the program.

The outlined objectives of the Youth Community Project include the development of problem-solving skills and a greater understanding of behavioural consequences, increasing knowledge of community resources and fostering community attachments, reducing recidivism in youth, promoting focused interagency cooperation, and providing a non-carceral alternative measure that is supported by the new Youth Criminal Justice

Act (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013). Topics such as gang involvement, mental health awareness, and substance abuse will be discussed (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013). These topics have been identified as relevant risk factors for recidivism among youth, particularly those in an area defined by gang issues. Although certain practices (namely, cognitive behavioural strategies) have been identified as holding success within the reduction of recidivism, they will not be used in the current project due to financial and time constraints. For CBT methods to be successful, clients need to be engaged with a trained professional for a prolonged period of time. Nonetheless, engaging with community leaders in the areas relevant to youth on a tertiary level of intervention will assist in the reduction of recidivism among youth participants enrolled in YCP.

A preliminary design layout of the Youth Community Project illustrates the following weekly topics; (i) incarceration and its effects on the individual — choices and consequences; (ii) law and enforcement, crime prevention, and safety; (iii) gang involvement and peer pressure — recognition of gang indicators, consequences of involvement, and resources for exiting; (iv) communication and family relationships; (v) anger/stress management and mental health — recognition of stress factors and resources; (vi) drugs and alcohol — risk factors for involvement, addiction services, and recovery options; (vii) recreation, organized sports and hobbies — opportunities for youth involvement in extracurricular activities; and (viii) employment and volunteer engagement, preparing youth to be positive and engaging members in society (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013).

The initial session will commence with a speaker from Choices and Consequences (<http://www.jhslmbc.ca/services/choices-and-consequences/>), engaging participants in a roundtable discussion, the basis of which will form the structure for the

subsequent sessions. Speakers will be sought from a variety of community organizations such as the Vancouver Police Department, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a secure incarceration facility (e.g., Burnaby Youth Custody Centre), a charitable social services organization (e.g., the YMCA, Family Services of Greater Vancouver, Pacific Centre Family Services Society), an organization that informs youth on the dangers associated with violence and gang association (e.g., Odd Squad Production Society, Leave out Violence — LOVE BC), and a health/treatment facility (e.g., Kelly Mental Health Resource Centre, Vancouver Coastal Health, Watari Counseling and Support Services Society, PLEA Community Services). These organizations would provide opportunities for youth to interact with community leaders and gain information on available resources. Youth volunteers and mentors will also be recruited to provide youth with a more comfortable setting in which to share their experiences.

The Youth Community Project compels participants to be mindful of their actions, willing to confront specific decisions that led them to their involvement in criminal activities, and ready to explore available options in desisting from a life of crime (JHSLM & Mirilovic, 2013). The projected impact of YCP is to enhance youth strengths, actions and consequences, problem-solving abilities, and life skills through a social development approach that draws on community resources and partnerships by promoting pro-social behaviour, reducing recidivism, developing community partnerships, and providing effective supportive measures. The recognition of key risk and protective factors will contribute to the incorporation of principles associated with crime prevention through social development into a community-led post-adjudication intervention initiative. As a community leader in the advocacy for humane treatment of individuals affected by

involvement in criminal behaviour, the John Howard Society aims to assist adjudicated youth through the implementation of the proposed Youth Community Project.

Adoption of Evidence-Based Practices

The formulation of the Youth Community Project was predicated upon adoption of several evidence-based practices for adjudicated youth. Namely, the research literature on what works in crime prevention initiatives, an examination of successful youth programs, and the espousal of a theoretical framework associated with crime prevention through social development. It can be argued that the organizational structure of the program reflects the research on best practices for adjudicated youth in the following ways; therapeutically oriented and rehabilitation focused program delivery on a community level, and targeting multiple identified risk factors. YCP can also be seen as a reflection of best practices emerging from previously mentioned programs; specifically, YARD, YOW, certain community reintegration initiatives, and probation orders. YCP has also adopted a theoretical framework associated with prolific offender case management under crime prevention through social development — an integrated service delivery model.

That YCP would be offered in a community setting, focus its efforts on rehabilitation and not incapacitation, target several risk factors specific to adjudicated youth, and not rely on control strategies reflects the literature on what works in crime prevention. Mulder et al. (2011, p.118) argue that “targeting poor parenting skills, involvement in criminal environment, lack of treatment adherence, and problematic coping strategies should reduce the severity of recidivism.” Thus, YCP’s focus on anger/stress management, incarceration, gang involvement, and family relationships is

directly tied to the research on identified risk factors for adjudicated youth. Through informal roundtable discussions that take place in a non-carceral setting, youth are presented with the opportunity to modify the circumstances that led them to commit criminal acts; rehabilitation is the focus of these weekly discussions.

Certain aspects of YCP's structure were also based on successful youth programs previously discussed in this paper. For instance, the adherence to RNR principles among youth probation officers and the comprehensive, therapeutic nature of particular community reintegration initiatives is arguably reflected in YCP. In addition, YCP also resembles the YOW program, which partners with community agencies and links youth to numerous service systems in Toronto's most marginalized neighbourhoods (Knoll et al., 2012). Similarly, services for the YARD program are coordinated through the Calgary Police Service and adapted to the needs of youth and availability of resources in the area (Public Safety Canada, 2011, 2012). In this way, the basic premise behind YCP reflects successful initiatives which have recognized the needs of their clientele, and how their surroundings can be used in order to better serve the youth who use their services. Vancouver has encountered a rather onerous gang problem, the source of which can be linked to numerous risk factors similar to those for general offending (Doob & Cesaroni, 2004, pp.97-99). Proper identification and management of these issues can be dealt with in a manner that adequately addresses the root causes of continual criminal involvement through a social development model of crime prevention.

Offering an integrated approach to crime prevention, a social development model involves long-term actions that attempt to reduce risk factors and build protective factors in areas associated with criminal involvement as well as other social problems (Hawkins

et al., 2012). This framework is evident on primary and secondary levels of crime prevention, through the adoption of a *developmental assets approach* and a *positive youth development framework*. However, crime prevention through social development is less evident on a tertiary level, and would best be implemented through an *integrated service delivery model*. This approach offers treatments more consistent with the principles of effective correctional treatment programming and allows for multiple needs to be addressed within a single treatment program (HCDA, 2008, p.151). In this model, offenders are assigned to programs based on principles aligning with the RNR model of offender rehabilitation.

YCP aims to comply with the RNR framework of offender rehabilitation (Bonta et al., 2010, 2011, 2013) in three distinct ways. First, the level of service delivered correlates to the risk level of the offender. The program is designed for lower risk adjudicated youth, so its focus is not specialized (i.e. it does not target sex offenders, violent offenders, mentally disordered offenders, etc.). However, it provides services that would not typically be directed toward youth who have not yet come into contact with the criminal justice system (i.e. pre-delinquency or pre-adjudication). For instance, the allocation of services relating to both mental health awareness and gang involvement is atypical of secondary level interventions. Most pre-adjudication crime prevention initiatives target one area specifically; for instance, the YARD program dealt with gang-involved youth, while SNAP targeted behavioural consequences of impulsivity and aggressiveness. Second, the target of intervention within YCP is the criminogenic factors that lead to re-offending behaviour. For instance, Mulder et al. (2010, 2011, 2012) found a different set of risk factors for recidivism, severity of recidivism, and category of recidivism (four identified subgroups of offenders). YCP will target the risk factors

associated with recidivism in general. Third, the style and mode of intervention will be matched to the ability and learning style of the offender. Since adjudicated youth represent a unique and particular set of offender characteristics, the mode of delivery will vary between sessions in order to match each different youth. For instance, smaller group discussions will be employed for particular topics, while one-on-one analysis is a more appropriate fit for others. The small number of clients will facilitate the administration of the sessions due to the reduced range of risk factors.

A successful program for adjudicated youth should take into consideration the best practices surrounding treatment on a tertiary level, and not be modeled after those initiatives on a primary or secondary level of intervention. Arguably, the principles upon which YCP was founded represent the knowledge base surrounding successful tertiary intervention — that programs should be developmentally informed, align with the RNR model, follow evidence-based practices, and be structured in a way that is conducive to evaluation. In line with the available literature, best practices for youth programs should be rehabilitative, operate on a community level, address a multiplicity of risk factors, and administer CBT methods. Aside from the administration of CBT methods, YCP reflects the available research on evidence-based practice for adjudicated youth.

In particular, CBT methods could not be undertaken due to financial and time constraints. It can be argued that the length of delivery may not be sufficient to produce meaningful results within the youth. Research has shown a substantial decrease in recidivism among individuals receiving ninety days of aftercare in comparison to those receiving thirty days or no aftercare services (Kurlychek et al, 2010). However, it is expected that youth will branch out from the sessions and obtain information on community resources that will sustain their aftercare treatment past the initial

engagement with the program. In terms of financial constraints, government funding tends to be allocated to institution-based methods and non-profit organizations tend to struggle to maintain appropriate levels of program funding. Another limitation to the structure of YCP is its inability to address all identified risk factors for adjudicated youth due to the short length of program delivery. Thus, topics such as parenting skills and psychological functioning cannot accurately be treated.

Personal Reflections

My time spent with the John Howard Society introduced me to the individualized issues that youth of Vancouver must contend with, problems that were further augmented upon interaction with the criminal justice system. The impersonal nature of some government efforts at crime prevention often left youth feeling unaided and estranged. They would routinely make their way through the adjudication process unaware of their rights or the options they have available to them. If by some chance they were assigned a youth case worker, the high turnover rate among employees in the social service sector (particularly within youth justice) would undoubtedly contribute to an inadequate youth-worker relationship. This has serious implications for a youth's likelihood of reoffending, as literature on offender treatment consistently highlights the importance of a positive youth-worker relationship (Knoll et al., 2012; Pepler et al., 2008). Involvement with YCP would be an asset to these youth, providing them with resources and relationships that facilitate a rehabilitative journey towards desistance from crime.

CONCLUSION

This paper has provided an overview of crime prevention efforts within several treatment modalities resting on primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of intervention. It has also examined the principles that provide the structure to evidence-based practice, revealing the extent to which a risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation has dominated treatment paradigms. Through the examination of best practices for youth programs and the development of models for crime prevention, this paper has provided a platform upon which interventions targeting adjudicated youth can be discussed. Although young offender treatment programs are arguably still in their infancy (Day & Doyle, 2010; Polaschek et al., 2005), this paper has explored several community treatment initiatives ranging from probation to secure residential facilities. Despite the recent shift to a more rehabilitative approach to juvenile crime prevention (Department of Justice Canada, 2013), punitive approaches that rely on incarceration, supervision, and deterrence strategies still dominate the political landscape of criminal justice policy (Bonta et al., 2000, p.316). Successful initiatives exist on all levels of the community sanctions continuum, targeting different offender types. Since there is no 'model' program for adjudicated youth, the knowledge base on best practices for the treatment of young offenders is arguably limited and incomplete. The ability of a single initiative to effectively address all the issues that adjudicated youth may face is an arduous task which has yet to be undertaken.

The purpose of this paper was to explore the extent to which a proposed post-adjudication community program reflects the research literature on crime prevention initiatives in Canada. This project has evolved out of a collection of literature developed in previous classes relating to program evaluation, youth and the criminal justice system, and a graduate research practicum placement with the John Howard Society of the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. It has been argued that the Youth Community Project reflects an evidence-based community initiative targeting adjudicated youth. This program holds promise for the treatment of high-risk youth who have come into contact with the criminal justice system, particularly those that may be involved with gangs. The Youth Community Project is an attempt to combine the efforts of several researchers in the field of community corrections, particularly those advocating for the application of evidence-based practices into real-life initiatives, the implementation of the RNR framework into offender rehabilitation, and the systematic monitoring and evaluation of successful initiatives that contribute to the literature on evidence-based practice for adjudicated youth.

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