

Tracking court use at Batshaw Youth and Family Centres & across Québec

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Building on the service outcome indicators developed at Batshaw Youth and Family Centres (Batshaw Centres) (see ITK volume 1, issue 2), the McGill Centre for Research on Children and Families (CRCF) and the Association des Centres Jeunesse du Québec (ACJQ) have been tracking and analyzing six service outcome indicators through the *Gestion fondée sur les indicateurs de suivi clinique* (GFISC) project¹. This article provides a review alongside an update on the **court use indicator** that was initially presented in ITK volume 1, issue 4 – by including an additional three years of data, as well as comparisons with provincial averages².

Measuring court use

Finding the best approach for engaging families, whether through court involvement or voluntary measures, is one of the challenges of youth protection work. While court orders are the most appropriate approach in some instances, engaging families on a voluntary basis can be a more collaborative approach to working with clients. The rate of use of court ordered measures provides a useful indicator of the extent to which families can be engaged without having to resort to the courts and potentially adversarial court procedures.

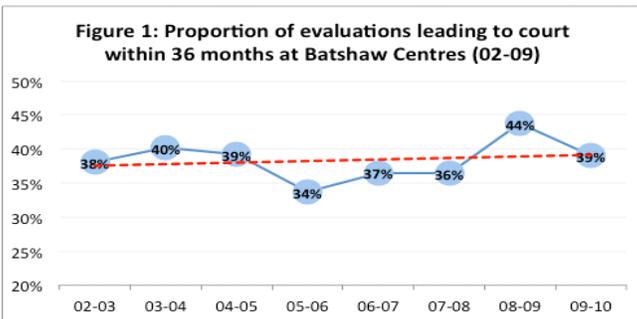
Court use can be measured in a number of different ways. Month end and year end service counts typically note what proportion of cases open at Application of Measures involve a court order, while this provides an easy snapshot approximation, it does not represent court use from the perspective of clients as they come into contact with Youth Protection. The GFISC court use measure tracks all Youth Protection Act (YPA) court events from the point of first contact at Evaluation by tracking any court event (including urgent, provisional, interim and final measures) under the YPA that occurs within 36 months of the initial retained report. In other words, this indicator measures the likelihood that the situation of a child investigated under the YPA ends up before the court within three years of an investigated report (i.e. a retained signalement).

In order to track these cases, a list was compiled of 133,150 children across Québec whose initial report was investigated from 2002-03 to 2009-10. Of the 133,150

children, 6,993 were children receiving services from Batshaw Centres. These cases were then monitored over 36 months for any YPA court involvement. For example, the children identified in 2009-2010 were followed until 2012-2013. To avoid double counting recurrent cases, children who received services within the previous 12 months were excluded. Youth who were older than 15 years at the time of the initial report were also excluded as they would turn 18 within the 3 year follow-up period. This poses a limitation given the relatively large proportion of youth in this age category. Further analyses should be adapted to this age group to better understand court use patterns specific to older youth.

Results

Results of our analyses of court use at Batshaw Centres are presented in the next four figures. Batshaw Centres rates are analyzed over time, then compared to the province as a whole, and are finally broken down by reason for investigation (“alinéa”) and age of the child at the time of the investigation.



On average 38% of retained reports at Batshaw Centres end up before the courts within three years of the report, a rate that fluctuates between 34% and 44% (Figure 1). As shown with the red dotted trend line, the rate of court use has remained in a consistent range.

¹ The project, entitled “*Gestion fondée sur les indicateurs de suivi clinique*”, is funded by the Youth Centres and a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for the Building Research Capacity with First Nations and Mainstream Youth Protection Services in Québec

² Each indicator compares Batshaw Centres to Québec, however, Batshaw Centres is also included in the overall Québec average.

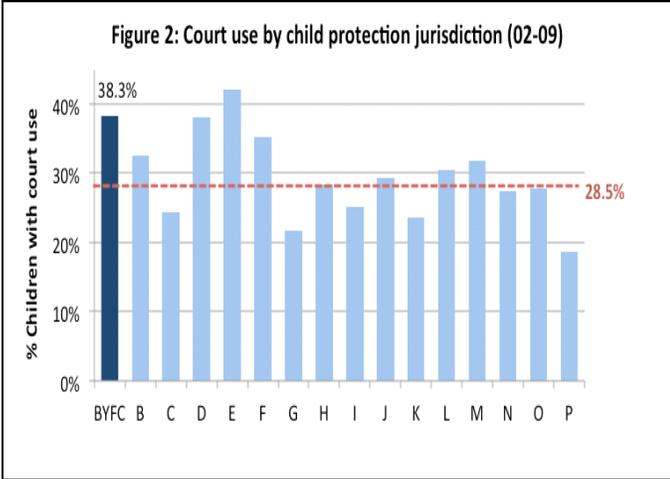


Figure 2 compares the overall rates of court use for cases evaluated between 2002 and 2009 by youth centre. While the provincial average was 28.5%, at 38.3% Batshaw Centres has one of the highest rates of court use in the province. The trend across province has been towards decreasing use of courts, dropping from an average of 30% from 2002 to 2005 to an average of 28% from 2006 to 2010. In other words, Batshaw Centres have one of the highest rates of court use and, unlike most of the province; the rate has remained fairly consistent.

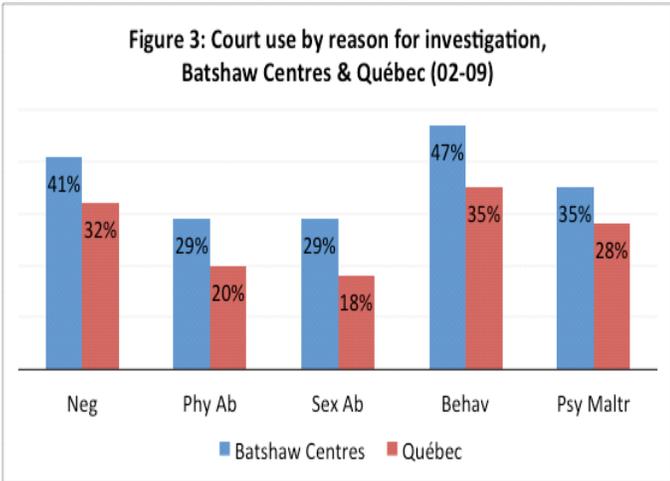


Figure 3 examines court use by primary reason for evaluation, comparing Batshaw Centres to all of Quebec. Two noteworthy patterns are apparent. First, regardless of the reason for investigation, rates of court use are higher at Batshaw Centres, showing that the high use of courts at Batshaw Centres cannot be explained because of one or two specific types of cases. Second, for both Batshaw Centres and the province as a whole, courts are used most often in cases investigated because of behaviour problems and neglect, and used the least often in cases involving physical and sexual abuse.

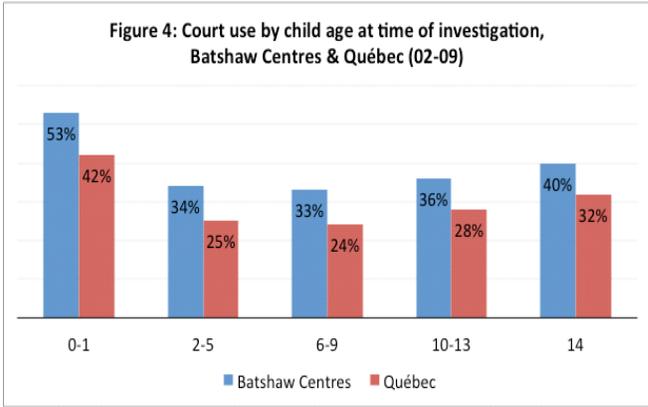


Figure 4 compares court rates by the child’s age at the time of the initial investigation. Across all age groups Batshaw Centres uses court more often than the province as a whole, and courts are used most often in cases involving infants and adolescents.

Discussion

The analyses presented in this issue of ITK raise questions about the relatively high use of court ordered interventions at Batshaw Centres. While the complexity and severity of many of the situations that are reported to youth protection may require intervention by the courts, the spirit of the YPA and Batshaw Centres’ own principles of effective social work practice encourage alternative decision-making procedures that integrate the collaborative approach philosophy and help to arrive at more commonly agreed upon plans and measures. However, before concluding that courts are overused at Batshaw Centres, further examination of court procedures and of the issues specific to the Montreal context are required. It would be interesting to compare the rate of court use to other jurisdictions with similar characteristics to get a better sense of whether they too have a higher likelihood of court use. A qualitative analysis of court use may also provide interesting insight into why Batshaw Centers’ workers have a higher tendency to orient cases towards court. It should also be noted that orienting a case to court does not mean that Batshaw Centres’ philosophy of collaboration is not being respected. It is entirely possible and common to work in collaboration with clients while still undergoing a court process. Another interesting avenue to explore could be how clients perceive the court process as well as how many cases are consensual between the family and Batshaw Centres. It is also important to keep in mind that while court use is a relevant indicator to track over time at the agency level, it should not be a consideration at the level of individual cases, where clinical and legal considerations, not agency trends, should guide decisions. Together with other outcome indicators, monitoring court use provides an overview of the complex issues common to families involved with child protection services, and should not be examined in isolation.

Harley Schwartz, Assistant Director of Youth Protection

Over the past year, Batshaw Centers began to re-examine our practice when considering the orientation of a family. Although many situations may dictate a court process, we needed to reflect on our practice and question whether the outcomes were being met, or no more successful, had we chosen the Regime of Voluntary Measures.

Several years ago we adopted the practice of the Collaborative Approach as we felt this intervention would provide the opportunity for a more conducive working relationship, resulting in better outcomes for the family. This approach allowed us to embrace a Strength-based Approach that would empower the family by engaging them in the process, with the objective of arriving at a more commonly agreed plan.

In the last several years, there has been a shift in thinking (Court versus Voluntary Measures) in cases involving addiction, Permanency Planning and issues of behavioural problems amongst adolescents. This coupled with the ongoing development of our partnerships within the community, such as schools and CLSC's, as well as increased support from programs, such as Programme crise-ado-famille-enfance (CAFE), have presented a greater opportunity in keeping with the spirit of the Youth Protection Act which includes a greater participation of families in decision-making

In keeping with these changes, as our ability to engage and connect with families increases, we should see a reduction over time in the number of court hearings being presented. The hope is that with these shifts in thinking and new partnerships, the result will be that families will see the process as more helpful, allowing for greater changes within the family. It is these outcomes that should govern our practice versus the need to follow agency and provincial trends regarding court use.

Sexual Abuse among Youth in Residential Care: A Multiple Source Comparison

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Problem

Child sexual abuse (CSA) has become increasingly recognized as a major problem that affects one in eight children worldwide, yet many CSA victims remain unknown due to an over-reliance on official records to estimate the problem (Stoltenborgh, van IJzendoorn, Euser, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2011). There is a particular lack of knowledge regarding CSA prevalence, severity and co-occurring maltreatment among youth in Residential care (RC), whose behavioural problems often overshadow underlying problems related to their maltreatment experiences. These youth are extremely vulnerable due to a host of internalizing and externalizing problems (Baker, Wulczyn, & Dale, 2005; Brady & Caraway, 2002; Briggs et al., 2012; Huefner, Handwerk, Ringle, & Field, 2009), which if untreated, can lead to long-term problems in adulthood (Anda et al., 2006; Bonanno, Noll, Putnam, O'Neill, & Trickett, 2003; Hillberg, Hamilton-Giachritsis, & Dixon, 2011).

Obtaining a clear picture of the CSA experiences of youth in RC is critical in light of the association between CSA and negative outcomes including depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, dissociation, neurobiological alteration, sexualized behaviors, self-mutilation, suicidal behaviors, and substance abuse, among many others (see review of meta-analyses by Hillberg et al., 2011 and reviews by Putnam, 2003, and Romano & Deluca, 2001). Studies on youth in RC have found that approximately a third to half of youth were victims of CSA (see Baker, Curtis, & Papa-Lentini, 2006; Brady & Caraway, 2002; Connor, Doerfler, Toscano, Volungis, & Steingard, 2004; Dale, Baker, Anastasio, & Purcell,

2007), with victimization nearly twice as likely as for youth in non-residential care (Briggs et al., 2012). Despite research supporting high CSA prevalence among this population, there is a lack of studies focusing on CSA from the perspective of multiple sources, which can help address the limitations inherent in relying on a single information source. Youth are rarely asked to report on their CSA experiences, which is crucial to developing a more accurate portrait of the problem of CSA, as well as providing insight into their challenges. While it is commonly known that victims of CSA usually delay reporting or never disclose their abuse (London, Bruck, Wright, & Ceci, 2007), studies illustrate that when youth are asked about CSA, they are more likely to disclose than to deny (London et al., 2007; Priebe & Sveiden, 2008). Another limitation in CSA research is the few studies that have included the perspective of RC educators, despite the close, nearly daily contact and rich information they possess about the youth with whom they work (see Baker et al., 2006).

Objectives

To fill this knowledge gap regarding the CSA experiences of youth in RC and to lay the groundwork for crucial future research, this exploratory study aimed to examine CSA prevalence, severity, and co-occurring maltreatment among a group of youth placed in Batshaw Centres from the perspective of multiple sources. First, CSA prevalence among the youth was examined, with a focus on abuse, severity and co-occurring maltreatment. Second, comparisons were made between the reports of youth and their educators, who often work most closely with the youth. Finally, youth and educator reports were compared to the PIJ record that includes the current reason

for service under article 38 of the Quebec Youth Protection Act, thereby triangulating the findings.

Method

Sample Youth placed in six Batshaw Centres RC units at Prévost and Dorval campuses were invited to participate in the study. Of 56 youth whose parents consented to their participation, 53 agreed to participate in the study and provide verbal consent and written assent. Fourteen participating educators also provided written consent. All study material was denormalized and is stored in a secure data lab at McGill University. Males comprised just over half of the sample (N= 29; 54.7%), with an age range of 14-17. Nearly 38% of youth identified themselves as Caucasian, 23% as Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit, or Métis), 19% as Black, and 20% of mixed or other ethnic background. The great majority of youth (N=44) were involved with Batshaw Centres for serious behavior problems.

Measures Youth completed the *Childhood Trauma Questionnaire* (CTQ) (Bernstein & Fink, 1998), a 28-item self-report that screens for a history of abuse and neglect at four severity levels of maltreatment: *None or minimal, low to moderate, moderate to severe, and severe to extreme*. Educators or unit managers completed the *Child Welfare Trauma Referral Tool* (CWT) (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2008), which is designed to help workers make trauma-informed decisions for referral to general and trauma-specific mental health services. The educator most familiar with the youth completed the measure through file reviews and key informants. Finally, the youth's PIJ record was accessed to determine the current reason for involvement under article 38 of the *Youth Protection Act*.

Results

The study found that among 53 youth, 20 youth (38%) reported at least one experience of CSA, nearly three times higher than prevalence rates in the general population (Stoltenborgh et al., 2011). Girls were almost four times more likely (63%) to be victims of CSA than boys (17%), twice as high as what is generally found in CSA research for girls (Putnam, 2003). These girls are known to be at higher risk for clinical levels of sexual concerns, PTSD, and dissociation symptoms (Collin-Vézina, Coleman, Milne, Sell, & Daigneault, 2011).

The study also found high agreement between youth reports of CSA and the reports of their educators (see Table 1). Youth and educators who reported the occurrence or non-occurrence of CSA resulted in agreement in almost 70% of cases. This agreement rate increased substantially when cases of suspected CSA were included (85%), and is much higher than what was found for all other maltreatment types. With respect to the PIJ record, as Quebec youth protection law applies only to the present situation as opposed to lifetime victimization, it was not expected that CSA reports by youth and their educators would be significantly correlated with the PIJ record. It was nonetheless surprising to learn that while 20 youth self-reported CSA, only three were currently involved with Batshaw

Centres for CSA. For two of these cases, there was perfect agreement between the three sources, while in one case the worker suspected CSA. Complete agreement among the three sources on the occurrence and non-occurrence of CSA was nearly 60%.

Agreement on CSA reports between Youth (CTQ)¹, Educators (CWT)² and the PIJ Record

	N	%
Youth and educator – YES (agreement)	8	15
Youth and educator – NO (agreement)	29	55
Agreement between youth and educator (%)		70
Youth – YES / educator – SUSPECTED	8	15
Total agreement between youth and educator (%)		85
Youth, educator, PIJ record – YES (agreement)	2	4
Youth, educator, PIJ record – NO (agreement)	29	55
Overall agreement between youth, educator, and PIJ		59

¹ Childhood Trauma Questionnaire ² Child Welfare Trauma Referral Tool

Finally, the study found very high levels of co-occurring types of maltreatment. All of the self-reported CSA cases co-occurred with at least one other maltreatment type, and 75% co-occurred with all other maltreatment types, namely physical abuse, neglect, and psychological ill-treatment. These results are particularly concerning, as youth subjected to multiple forms of victimization are known to be at high risk for traumatic psychological impacts (Finkelhor, Ormrod, & Turner, 2007).

Discussion

Overall, this cross-sectional exploratory research gathered important information from youth and their educators, highlighting the need for this information to be systematically documented to ensure the provision of effective and coordinated services for youth. Indeed, it remains unclear the extent to which this information would be provided outside of a research context, suggesting the benefits of a standardized, clinical assessment protocol for youth entering RC. The alarmingly high rate of CSA among girls (63%) makes a strong argument for systematically screening for CSA among youth in RC, an initiative that would fit well with the goal of agencies such as Batshaw Centres in developing trauma-informed models of care for youth in out-of-home care (Briere & Lanktree, 2008; Igelman et al., 2007; NCTSN, 2008; Taylor and Siegfried, 2005). The study demonstrates the capacity of youth to self-report CSA and for educators to reliably identify victims. Finally, the study highlights the need for PIJ records to include accessible, complete maltreatment profiles of youth. Adapting PIJ to clearly reflect multiple maltreatment types (present and past) would benefit youth, and assist agencies in better knowing their clientele, thereby increasing their ability to advocate for their needs. The research also revealed that many victims are still reticent to disclose to authorities, implying a need for changes to the way Youth Protection and other official bodies handle reports.

6th Colloque sur la Maltraitance envers les enfants et les adolescents

By Stephanie Perron, Social Worker, The Department of Youth Protection

The following is a clinical commentary on a workshop entitled “Intervention Relationnelle”, which was given at the 6th annual Colloque sur la maltraitance envers les enfants et les adolescents. The workshop was given by Ms. Chantal Cyr and Ms. Diane Rivard, from the Centre d’expertise sur la maltraitance – Centre jeunesse de Montreal – Institut universitaire.

Intervention Relationnelle (IR), is an attachment theory-based intervention focused on parental sensitivity. This refers to a parent’s capacity to recognise, interpret and respond in a timely and appropriate manner, to their child’s signals and needs. The presentation demonstrated the benefits of the IR approach on the evaluation of parental capacities, as well as for children in placement and their parents.

The program aims to address core relationship issues, such as insufficient parent-child interaction, which is often an issue when children are exposed to maltreatment.

A review of studies evaluating the effectiveness of intervention programs based on attachment theory found significant improvements in parental capacities, specifically parental sensitivity, in maltreating parents; in comparison with those receiving traditional child protection follow up. The program was found to reduce the negative consequences of maltreatment on children (Moss, Dubois-Comtois, Cyr et al. 2010).

The program consists of 8 weekly home visits lasting approximately an hour and a half. The aim of each visit is to reinforce sensitivity behaviours through video feedback. The visit is divided into 4 segments. 1) discussion with the parent, 2) recording of parent-child play (10-15 minutes), 3) feedback on the video, reinforcing positive behaviours 4) summary of the home visit and homework and objectives for the following week.

The “IR” approach helps to strengthen the parent-child relationship and bond. The “IR” approach assists parents in improving their capacity to observe, to better understand and to better interpret the child’s signals and needs, in order to respond to them more appropriately. The “IR” also helps the child to better express his/her needs, to develop more confidence and trust in their parents and to reinforce their role as the child in the relationship.

The video recording provides the opportunity to share observations, promotes better collaboration, helps to focus on the parents’ strengths and limitations as well as documenting the parents’ progress.

The use of IR in the evaluation of parental capacities

The “IR” has been used to make important decisions related to the type of services to provide to families. It also helps to determine whether a child should remain in the care of their parents. During evaluations using “IR”, the focus is placed on the parents’ strengths and limitations, but also on the parent-child relationship. The quality of the parent’s interaction with the child and how this impacts development are strongly considered. The key elements assessed are: the parent’s capacity to protect, to care and to change. Other forms of evaluations can be incomplete or and inadequate, if based solely on questionnaires and not on observations.

The use of “IR” with children in placement and their parents.

The “IR” has also been used in rehabilitation centers. For children in care, the approach facilitates the formation of a significant relationship with an adult; it helps the child to manage their feelings around the separation, possible conflict and stress related to their placement. The “IR” also assists the parents to develop trust in the child protection workers, creating a less threatening environment and improving the parents’ ability to reappropriate their parental role.

The “IR” approach concretely addresses parent-child relationship issues and demonstrates effective implementation of attachment-based interventions.

If you are interested in reading about other presentations from the 6th Colloque sur la Maltraitance envers les enfants et les adolescents, a list of presentations and the accompanying power point presentations are available through the library.

Madeleine Bérard, Director of Youth Protection

A provincial framework and an implementation plan to integrate the concept of attachment and related programs in all Youth Centres were adopted by the General Directors of the Youth Centres in 2011. Subsequently, Batshaw Centers adopted a local Action Plan in 2013. This action plan reflects several of the initiatives already undertaken by us, such as incorporating the notions of attachment in our Neglect Program, ensuring coherence with the Connecting to Kids training, and integrating into the Clinical Development Activities Tool Kit, etc. It also includes activities to be completed this year, such as our participation in the IR approach training.

In the fall of 2013, some educators from Family Preservation and Resources team attended the first part of a training offered by the ACJQ with financial support by the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation. Once they complete the training, our colleagues could be in a position to train more interveners and support the implementation of this best practice in several of our services.

Victim Sensitization Program

Vitale Teolis, M.S.W., Young Offenders Services

This article is a summary of an Independent Study Project (ISP) conducted as a Master's Degree requirement for the McGill School of Social Work. The ISP focused on the effectiveness and feasibility of using group work therapy with delinquency-oriented adolescents. An overview of the perceived strengths and weaknesses of group work dealing with this population were examined within a social work perspective. More specifically, the Victim Sensitization Program (V.S.P.) offered by the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres' Division of Young Offenders Services was examined as an example of group work intervention. The V.S.P. group consists of ten weekly sessions for a period of two and a half hours. The sessions expose the participants to the development of both moral-reasoning and empathy. The mission and purpose of the V.S.P. program is to instill a sufficient degree of empathy and moral-reasoning that hopefully gives the adolescents that are delinquency-oriented a 'second thought' before committing another crime. A population of adolescents that are delinquency-oriented whom have participated within the V.S.P. program was extracted as a sample. The purpose was to statistically evaluate the program to serve as evidence as to its effectiveness, in an effort to validate group work intervention. Data was utilized starting from January 2010 and compiled all participants within a two year period through December 2011. The program was evaluated by examining the rate of recidivism as well as the seriousness of crime. The hypothesis was that delinquency-oriented adolescents who participate and complete the V.S.P. program are less likely to re-offend. If they do reoffend, their crime(s) will be less severe in nature than their previous crime(s) for which they were convicted prior to having attended this program.

It is evident within the school of criminology that some crimes are more serious than others. Various professionals within the field have attempted to precisely define what makes one crime more serious than another. There are many variables that can affect the perception of crime.

Societal/cultural values, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, population mean age, gender, and personal past experiences are only some variables that can affect one's perception of crime. In addition, these public perceptions are under constant evolution. Measuring seriousness of crime can serve to determine an individual's criminal career and can be used to assess delinquent profiles. The public can share its perceptions of what crimes can be viewed as being more serious, but the Justice Department in order to be coherent and consistent with rendering fair sentences, had to develop its own ranking system of criminal offences. For the purpose of this study a criminal severity scale developed by Quirk, Nutbrown and Reynolds (1996) of the Ontario Correctional Institute was used to measure crime severity.

For the purpose of evaluating the V.S.P. program, if participants whom have completed the program recidivated and committed crimes similar or more serious than their previous crimes, then this would indicate that the program has had minimal to no impact and that the adolescent that is delinquency-oriented continued to escalate in his/her criminal career. People who engage in serious crimes typically start off engaging in petty crimes and, before engaging in petty crimes, they misbehaved in less serious ways at home and in schools. Therefore, all participants in the sample were labeled according to their seriousness of crime. In order to determine whether the participant committed a crime equal or more serious than the original crime, all offences must be ranked in the order of severity. Criminal behavior before and after participation in the V.S.P. program were coded and analyzed. The increase or decrease of criminal behaviour was calculated to determine the impact of group work intervention.

A pre- and post- comparison study was utilized to capture the evolution of criminal behavior. Moral-reasoning growth is a learning process that can take time particularly depending on the adolescent's level of comprehension and cognitive distortions. It is fair to report that these individuals whom commit lesser offences are in this learning stage and thus the V.S.P. program may have had some level of positive impact.

The sample population consisted of adolescent offenders who were court-ordered to participate in and to complete the V.S.P. program between January 2010 and December 2011. Out of all the potential study participants, 74 subjects whom had attended minimally the first session, qualified to be included in the study. A total of 31 participants, who did not complete the program, were remanded back to court, and represented as the control group, whereas the remaining 43 participants served as the treatment group. For the purpose of treatment evaluation (i.e. V.S.P. Program), the crime severity scale was applied to all the participants. All statistical analysis was conducted using methods that have been tested for both reliability and validity.

The global recidivism rate after having had some exposure to the V.S.P. program including all participants (whether they completed the program or not) was 54%. For participants whom completed the program, 24% had committed another crime, as compared to 30% for participants whom did not complete the group. In an effort to measure the program impact, the following cross-tabulation not only included participants whom did not recidivate, but also those whom had committed a lesser crime as individuals having been positively influenced by the program. Whether or not they completed the program they have been nonetheless exposed to some degree to the V.S.P. program.

In this regard, 73% of the total participants demonstrated some level of positive impact. This includes the participants whom did not recidivate or committed a lesser crime. Comparatively, 27 % of the participants demonstrated no influence or impact from the program. However, 49% of the participants whom completed the program experienced a positive impact from the treatment as opposed to 24% of the participants whom did not complete the program. Therefore, the likelihood ratio of program impact is approximately double for participants that complete the program as opposed to the participants who did not complete the program.

In analyzing crime distribution and the impact of the V.S.P. group, the results can vary. From the sample population, a total of 25 participants representing approximately 30% of the total sample had committed crimes of robbery. Accordingly, 17 participants (68%) whom originally committed the crime of robbery completed the program. Ten participants out of 17 (58%) did not recidivist or at least committed a lesser crime after having completed the V.S.P. program. In addition, participants whom had committed robbery and did not complete the program (being one participant or 4%), committed a crime equal or greater than his/her original crime. For adolescents whom had committed crimes of robbery, there appears to be a significant correlation that the V.S.P. program has had a particularly positive impact. It could be speculated that adolescents whom have committed crimes that are more serious in nature such as robbery have benefited from this type of group intervention. According to these findings, there exists a strong correlation that

the V.S.P. program has a pro-social impact on its participants. The program has demonstrated its success through the use of the group work model. The V.S.P. program has succeeded in developing empathy and moral-reasoning through the use of group work intervention. Although this study bears some limitations, one can generalize that adolescents that are delinquency-oriented responded positively to group work intervention within the V.S.P. program.

In examining the results, there appears to be a more diverse distribution of crime types/offences post- V.S.P. exposure as compared to pre- V.S.P.. It can be speculated that the participants have also been exposed to other criminal offenders and hence a sharing and exchange of criminal knowledge existed leading offenders to experiment in committing other types of crimes.

Although more conclusions can be derived from the data, the pertinent information to evaluate this program was accomplished. If an adolescent is delinquency-oriented attends the V.S.P. program and successfully completes all the sessions, that individual has twice the likelihood of not committing another crime or at least committing one of lesser severity in nature as opposed to someone whom does not complete the program. Hence, the use of group work is an effective and cost efficient technique in reducing adolescent crime rate. It was evident that for the participants whom had not completed the program, they had nonetheless experienced some positive effect derived from having attended some of the group sessions. Therefore, increasing group work intervention in social work practice with this population can seemingly serve to yield better results.

The juvenile justice system and social work practice have been evolving in prescribing group work as part of individual and/or family treatment plans and group work intervention and therapy should increasingly utilized. At present, there is limited knowledge from research and from an evidence-based perspective to conclude that group work specifically among adolescents that are delinquency-oriented is effective. However, it became clear that the V.S.P. program offered at Batshaw Centres has a significant positive impact on its clientele.

References for Abuse among Youth in Residential Care: A Multiple Source Comparison By Lise Milne

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