



NYVRP Final Evaluation

April 2019 - March 2020



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Program Description

The Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP):

- The Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice was awarded up to \$4.5 million from Public Safety Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) to implement the NYVRP project over five years (April, 2015 to March, 2020).
- The purpose is to reduce youth offending and create safer communities.
- Delivery of programs and services to high-risk youth in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay.
- Targets youth who are 12-24 years of age, "at risk" or already involved in the criminal justice system, violent behaviours, and/or gangs.

Staff and Management

- Project Manager
- Manager of Program Operations
- 6 Health and Wellness Workers (HAWWs)
- Core Teams in each community (teams consisting of agencies and staff that held monthly meetings to develop and implement case plans for youth)
- Governed by an Oversight Committee and local Advisory Committees
- Supported by the SK Ministry of Justice

Referrals	Total n (%)
Total referrals	151
Consented to participate	97
Community	
Deschambault Lake	36 (37%)
Pelican Narrows	30 (31%)
Sandy Bay	31 (32%)
Referral Source	
Community	33 (34.0%)
Corrections	26 (26.8%)
RCMP	38 (39.2%)
Gender	
Male	66 (68.0%)
Female	31 (32.0%)
Age	
12-14 years	32 (33.4%)
15-17 years	40 (41.6%)
18-20 years	18 (18.7%)
21-24 years	6 (6.1%)
Ethnicity	
First Nation	94 (96.9%)
Métis	3 (3.1%)

Theory of Change and Program Activities

Informed by the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP) and the Re-Entry and Intensive Aftercare (RIAP) models, the NYVRP aimed to reduce physical violence, violence victimization, and gang-related activities through supervision, rehabilitation, reintegration, and strong partnerships with community, agencies, and families. Program activities included:

- Assessment of referrals for program eligibility by the Core Teams.
- Collaborative case management by the Core Teams.
- Intensive support by the HAWWs to ensure participants are following through with rehabilitation activities and are adhering to court-ordered conditions.
- HAWWs carry out three primary activities:
 - Prepare youth for re/connection with the community
 - Prepare community supports for re/connection with the youth
 - Monitor/support the youth's re/engagement with the community

Evaluation Purpose and Design

Evaluation purposes were to examine:

- the program delivery, and;
- the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended outcomes.

Data collection methods included:

- surveys with community stakeholders (N=25);
- staff and stakeholder interviews (N=13);
- photo-elicitation study with participants (N=7);
- participant survey (N=7), and;
- pre-post risk assessment analysis, court order (remand and custody) data analysis, database and casefile review, and observation of program delivery by attending meetings.

Findings on Program Delivery

- The NYVRP was largely implemented in line with its program delivery model; however, it had some challenges with case management.
- Planned adaptations on the YVRP and RIAP models were timely and appropriate. Some of these adaptations were:
 - ✓ A focus on support and rehabilitation rather than strict supervision,
 - ✓ Increasing the length of time participants could be in the program
 - ✓ A "Phasing Out" process for slowly transitioning out of the program,
 - ✓ Simplifying the risk assessment process,
 - ✓ Incorporating cultural activities and teachings.
- Governance structure was adequate and comprehensive; however, the functioning of the Oversight and Advisory Committees was hampered by a lack of interest among local agencies and limited participation by community agencies and leadership.
- A dedicated core contingent of staff who were respected in the community and passionate about supporting youth were a strength.
- Staff's limited computer skills and knowledge about correctional principles hampered the implementation of the program (i.e., case management).
- Youth were connected with a wide variety of supports, services, and cultural activities.
- The new risk assessment process (i.e., YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q tools) introduced in 2019 led to a remarkable increase in the number of risk assessments completed. However, case plans were not adequately informed by the risk assessments.
- Core Team meeting attendance varied by each community. The RCMP, schools, and corrections were the most consistent attendees.



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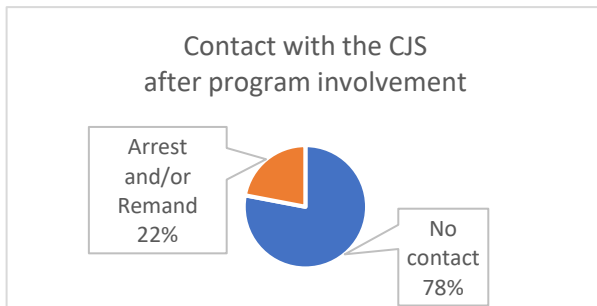
Findings on Program Outcomes

School and Relationships

Program **youth** believed that being in the NYVRP helped them:

- Achieve better grades and attend school more.
- Have more positive friends and stronger relationships with their families.
- Develop connections to Elders/ Mentors and cultural activities.

Recidivism and Desistence from Crime



- The recidivism rate among the participants was 15.4% based on the custody rates, and 11.3% based on the remand rates, which are lower rates than found in the literature on high-risk youth.
- 12 out of 16 participants (75%) who were remanded before the program were not remanded after starting the program.
- Nine out of 15 participants (60%) who were taken into custody before the program were not taken into custody after starting the program.
- RCMP data showed that the number of encounters participants had with police decreased during the first two years of the NYVRP and increased in the final year after most youth had exited the program, suggesting that the effects of the program dissipate over time.
- Fifty-eight participants (70%) were victims of crime.

Unintended (Positive) Outcomes

- NYVRP youth were perceived to have more **self-esteem and confidence**, which facilitated their ability to be more open, communicate their thoughts and feelings more freely, and be more optimistic about their lives.
- Many youth established a positive, trusting relationship with the HAWWs, which they lacked in their lives before.
- The NYVRP helped the youth meet their basic needs (e.g., by providing the youth with snacks/food).

Violence Reduction

Stakeholders and programs staff believed the NYVRP led to:

- Reduced violence and fewer interactions with the police.
- Moderate reduction in gang involvement.
- More positive attitudes towards both the police and school staff.
- More communication with, and compassion and respect for, others.
- Better understanding of the importance of rules.
- No change in the youth's academic success, school attendance, and employment-related activities.

Community Capacity

Regarding the **community agencies'** capacity to work together to address youth violence, a survey revealed that NYVRP stakeholders believed:

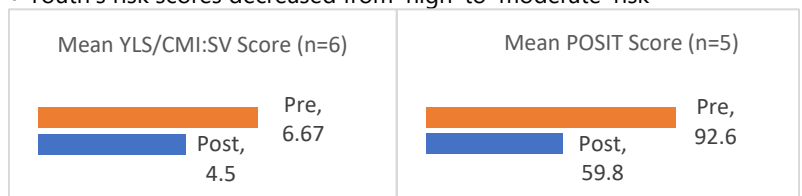
- NYVRP had increased their community's capacity to address youth violence (89%) and gangs (72%).
- NYVRP had led to increased mental health support for youth in the communities (86%).
- NYVRP had made positive sustainable impacts on their community (89%).
- Their interest and ability in collaborating with other agencies increased.
- Regular Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings suggested an increased capacity to work together.

Some challenges were also identified by NYVRP stakeholders:

- Some perceived that there was more "talk" rather than "action" with respect to addressing community issues
- Some agencies and community leaders should have been more involved in the collaborative activities of the NYVRP

Pre-Post Program Risk Assessment

- Pre-post program **risk scores** analysis was possible for a limited number of participants (6 in YLS/CMI: SV, 5 in POSIT scale)
- Youth's risk scores decreased from 'high' to 'moderate' risk



Cost Analysis Findings

- The average cost of the program per participant was \$29,986.
- The cost per participant increased throughout the last three years of the NYVRP, largely due to a decrease in the number of participants involved in the program.
- The yearly estimated criminal justice costs (i.e., victim costs, correctional costs, and other criminal justice system costs) for the youth were 6 to 13 times higher than the NYVRP costs.
- The program was found to be cost-effective based on the estimated criminal justice costs for the age and risk levels of the program youth.

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