

**Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP)  
Final Evaluation:  
April 2019 - March 2020**

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**April 2019 - March 2020**

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## EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction and Program Description

The Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) is a five-year initiative (April, 2015 to March, 2020) that involves the delivery of programs and services to youth in three predominantly First Nation communities (Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay). The purpose of the initiative is to reduce youth offending and create safer communities. As such, it targets youth who are 12 to 24 years of age, “at risk” or already involved in the criminal justice system, who exhibit violent behaviour, and/or who are gang-involved or at risk of gang involvement. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice was awarded up to \$4.5 million from the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) to implement the project.

The University of Saskatchewan’s Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies was contracted by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice to complete a formative, process, and impact evaluation of the NYVRP. A formative evaluation (see Jewell, Mulligan, & Wormith, 2019) and a process evaluation of the program (see Jewell, Akca, Mulligan, & Wormith, 2019) were previously completed. The current report presents the findings of the final evaluation, which included: a) a process evaluative component examining program delivery during the final year of the project (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020); and b) an impact evaluative component investigating the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended outcomes.

The NYVRP is informed by two theoretical models: 1) the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP) model; and 2) the Re-Entry and Intensive Aftercare (RIAP). It is governed by an overarching Oversight Committee and local Advisory Committees and receives additional support and direction from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice. The NYVRP has a small staffing complement originally consisting of a Project Manager, a Manager of Program Operations (MOPO), and 6 Health and Wellness Workers (HAWWs). HAWWs work with Core Teams in each community to develop and monitor care plans through an integrated case management process. HAWWs have a caseload of up to 7 to 8 youth each and work with youth for up to 18 months. The NYVRP is a voluntary program.

By the end of 2019-20, 97 out of 151 youth who had been referred to the NYVRP consented to participate and at least 85% of these youth met the program eligibility criteria. Demographic characteristics of the youth enrolled in the NYVRP are presented in the following Table.

**Table: Demographic Profile of NYVRP Consented Participants (N=97)**

| Referral Source <i>n</i> (%) | Gender <i>n</i> (%)    | Age (years) <i>n</i> (%) | Ethnicity <i>n</i> (%)       |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Community</b> 33 (34%)    | <b>Male</b> 66 (68%)   | <b>12-14</b> 32 (33%)    | <b>First Nation</b> 94 (97%) |
| <b>Corrections</b> 26 (27%)  | <b>Female</b> 31 (32%) | <b>15-17</b> 40 (42%)    | <b>Métis</b> 3 (3%)          |
| <b>RCMP</b> 38 (39%)         |                        | <b>18-20</b> 18 (19%)    |                              |
|                              |                        | <b>21-24</b> 6 (6.1%)    |                              |

<sup>1</sup> This Executive Overview provides a condensed five-page summary of the overall results and recommendations stemming from this evaluation. The Executive Summary presents a more detailed, 15-page summary of the evaluation findings and recommendations.

## Evaluation of the Program

The purpose of the current evaluation is twofold: (1) to examine the NYVRP's program delivery (i.e., theoretical framework, governance structure, staffing, participant characteristics, adherence to the program delivery model, and satisfaction with the program); and (2) to examine the extent to which the NYVRP was able to achieve its intended outcomes (i.e., by assessing youth and stakeholders' perceptions of the outcomes achieved, change in youth's risk scores after program involvement, custody and remand rates pre-post program, and a cost analysis).

Data collection methods employed in the final evaluation included surveys with community stakeholders ( $N=25$ ), staff and stakeholder interviews ( $N=13$ ), photo-elicitation study with program participants ( $N=7$ ), participant survey ( $N=7$ ), database and casefile review, observation, pre-post risk assessment analysis, pre-post custody/remand analysis, and cost analysis.

## Evaluation Findings

### Findings on Program Delivery

Overall, the NYVRP was largely implemented in line with its program delivery model. Several planned adaptations of the YVRP and RIAP models were successfully incorporated into the program delivery model, such as a focus on support and rehabilitation rather than on strict supervision by police and probation officers, as well as adaptations that emerged during the first two years of program delivery, including increasing the length of time youth can be enrolled in the program, introducing a "Phasing Out" process to help youth transition out of the program, simplifying the risk assessment process, and incorporating cultural activities and teachings.

A two-tiered governance structure (i.e., an overarching Oversight committee and local Advisory Committees) has been maintained by the NYVRP throughout the initiative. In principal, the governance structure is adequate and comprehensive as it allows the local community to provide input and direction into the NYVRP. However, there were issues with the functioning of both the Oversight and Advisory Committees that hampered their effectiveness, such as a lack of interest among local agencies to support the NYVRP and limited participation by community leadership.

A core contingent of dedicated staff (the MOPO and 3 HAWWs) that remained with the NYVRP throughout the initiative and who were respected community members and passionate about supporting youth were key strengths of the program. However, some staff's limited computer skills and limited knowledge about correctional principles impeded the implementation of the program. Additional training for staff in these areas as well as on organizational skills and ethics is required. In 2019-20, staffing levels were well below the intended level. Moreover, staff's high level of commitment to their jobs led to widespread staff burnout. Despite these challenges, HAWWs had regular contact with the youth and were readily available to the youth whenever the youth needed them (day or night). In 2019-20, the combined caseloads at each site were between 10 to 13 clients, which is slightly below the targeted caseload outlined by the program delivery model. When communities (i.e., Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows for first half of the year) had two HAWWs, the average caseload per HAWW was five to six clients, which was lower than expected. When communities had one HAWW (i.e., Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows for last half of year), the average caseload was 10 to 11 clients, which was higher than expected.



The Ministry of Justice played an instrumental role in preparing the NYVRP for program delivery. However, the program did not receive the full level of support from the Ministry that was necessary to ensure that all aspects of the program could be delivered with full fidelity to the program delivery model (i.e., training for the staff, program materials such as participant forms, support for developing a program manual, and development of a database).

The new risk assessment process introduced in 2019 in which HAWWs completed the YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q with all youth referred to the program led to a remarkable increase in the number of risk assessments completed for NYVRP participants. Results from the risk assessments revealed that 92% scored as high risk on the YLS/CMI: SV. Youth also scored as high risk on the majority of the POSIT subscales, and the ACE-Q scores revealed that the NYVRP youth have experienced a substantial amount of trauma during their lives. The risk tools were intended to inform care plans for the youth; however, only 57% of the risk factors flagged on the YLS/CMI: SV were documented in the care plans. As a result, the necessary goals to address those risks/needs could not be developed and noted in the case plans of the clients.

Attendance at monthly Core Team meetings was an important indicator of the extent to which community agencies supported the NYVRP. The number of meetings, participating agencies, and agency participation rates varied by community with the RCMP, schools, and corrections being the most consistent attendees across all three communities. Further, the NYVRP was expected to work closely with the Creighton Community Corrections office. Despite some level of information sharing and reinforcing the same messages to the youth, there was some friction in their relationship due to organizational issues experienced with meetings and recordkeeping, as well as unclear expectations about each other's roles and information requests.

The NYVRP has been successful in identifying and connecting youth with a vast array of supports and services available in their communities, including those related to education, employment, mental health and addictions, cultural and land-based teachings, personal support and self-development, meeting court-ordered conditions, and recreational activities. Cultural and land-based teachings, including learning from Elders and Mentors, were identified as some of the most valuable opportunities offered by the NYVRP. Conversely, offering mental health therapy using remote presence technology (RPT) was not considered a valuable component of the program due to its limited usage, low cost-effectiveness, and lack of uptake by youth.

### **Findings on Program Outcomes**

According to stakeholders' and youth's perceptions, the NYVRP led to reduced violence, fewer interactions with the police, and moderate reduction in gang involvement. Program staff and stakeholders believed that youth who participated in the NYVRP had more positive attitudes towards both the police and school staff, better communication skills, greater compassion and respect for others, and a better understanding of the importance of rules.

The pre-post risk score analysis suggested that there was a significant reduction in substance use and improvements in mental health among the youth. Most notably, there had been no completed suicides among the program youth despite the high prevalence of suicide in the communities and the youth being high risk. The limited number of pre-post assessments completed indicated a significant reduction in risk scores of the youth on both YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT scales.

The program youth believed that being in the NYVRP helped them achieve better grades, attend school more, have more positive friends and stronger relationships with their families, and develop connections to Elders/ Mentors and cultural activities. In contrast to the youth, stakeholders did not perceive as much change in the youth's academic success, school attendance, and employment-related activities. However, the stakeholders believed the NYVRP led to greater involvement in prosocial recreational and cultural activities among the youth.

The analysis of court-order data (remand and custody) indicated that 78% of the NYVRP participants have not been in contact with the criminal justice system since they started the program although the vast majority were high risk in their initial risk assessment scores. Further, 12 participants desisted from crime after starting the program; however, 22% of NYVRP participants were taken into custody and/or remanded after they started the program. Overall, the program was successful at preventing recidivism or initial offending for most of the participants.

Analysis of de-identified RCMP data indicated there was a considerable reduction in the number of encounters NYVRP youth had with the police during the first two years of the program compared to the year before it was implemented. The number of police encounters increased during the last program year (mostly due to increased crimes against persons). During this year, most youth had been out of the program for one to two years, suggesting that the effects of the program may dissipate over time. Nearly two-thirds of the youth were also victims of crime, which is a higher victimization rate than the general youth victimization rate in the communities.

In addition, there is some evidence that the NYVRP led to increased capacity for community agencies to work together to address youth violence. Stakeholders agreed that the NYVRP both increased their interest and ability in collaborating with other agencies. However, some stakeholders perceived that there was more "talk" rather than "action" when discussing community issues. There also was dissatisfaction with the level of involvement in some of the collaborative activities of the NYVRP (i.e., the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams). Even so, the fact that the NYVRP was able to hold regular Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings suggests an increased capacity to work together.

Several unintended outcomes of the program were identified, many of which served as precursors to the main outcome areas of interest to the NYVRP. Specifically, it was perceived that the NYVRP youth had 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. Being able to establish a positive, trusting relationship with the HAWW also reflected an important achievement among the youth as many lacked this type of relationship in their lives. Finally, the NYVRP helped the youth meet their basic needs (e.g., by providing food/snacks).

The average cost of the program per participant was \$29,986 and the average cost per program completer was \$63,231. The cost of the program 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. Overall, the cost analysis of the NYVRP indicated that the program was cost-effective, as the estimated criminal justice costs remained dramatically higher than the program costs (even with the increased cost per participant in the later years of the program).

## Discussion

The results of the final NYVRP evaluation have been mixed, revealing areas where the program is performing well, as well as areas where improvements are required. Overall, there is evidence that the NYVRP is targeting its intended clientele and offering a wide range of supports to their clients. Modifications made to the program delivery model such as increasing the length of time youth can participate in the program and incorporating a ‘Phasing Out’ process were timely and needed. Further, land-based learning, cultural activities, and opportunities to learn from Elders and Mentors were valuable elements of the NYVRP. As staff become more experienced with the program delivery model, they are also becoming more adept at adhering to it. A dedicated core staff has been essential to ensuring the sustainability of the program. Additional attention is required to modifying the staffing model and caseloads, hiring an administrative assistant, increasing staff’s administrative skills and correctional practices, and promoting their wellbeing.

The impact evaluation findings suggested that the NYVRP has helped the youth achieve many of the program’s intended outcomes, such as reduced violence, increased involvement in cultural and prosocial activities, and increased mental health. Further, there is evidence that the program led to lower risk scores among the youth involved (with youth changing from being high risk to moderate risk by the end of the program) and limited contact with the criminal justice system. The cost analysis findings indicated that, even if the number of clients are low in the program, allocation of resources to programs for high-risk youth might lead not only to reduced recidivism rates and positive behavioural changes in youth, but also to savings in resources.

Moving forward, the program will need to turn its attention to using risk assessments to inform care plans for the youth. The functioning, purpose, and organization of the Oversight and Advisory Committees also needs to be refined with a greater focus on problem-solving rather than reporting on program activities. Some refinements of Core Teams are also required to place a greater focus on explicitly developing and refining care plans for youth and to improving the organization of the meetings. To improve relationships with stakeholders, specifically Creighton Community Corrections, open discussions need to occur to clarify mutual expectations.

In line with the findings, we recommend that a program manual outlining the program delivery model and procedures be developed, the program length for participants be further extended to 24 to 36 months to allow sufficient time to heal, and more explicit criteria be developed for moving through each phase of the Phasing Out process. In addition, based on initial program successes, we recommend a peer mentorship component be formally adopted to allow program graduates to become program mentors and maintain their connection to the NYVRP. The NYVRP was able to successfully partner with Indigenous Services Canada to deliver mental health services to NYVRP youth using RPT. However, RPT did not seem to be a satisfactory approach for providing the youth with mental health therapy due to its low cost-effectiveness and insufficient engagement of youth. If RPT is used in the future, in-person sessions with the therapist should be interspersed with remote sessions. Finally, for a more comprehensive and successful program delivery and evaluation, the program’s organization and recordkeeping need to be enhanced and a user-friendly database needs to be developed to allow for the collection of useable and reliable data. Moreover, the capacity of staff to be involved in evaluation activities and the role of geography needs to be considered when planning evaluation activities and design.

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1.1 Introduction

The Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) is a five-year initiative (April, 2015 to March, 2020) that involves the delivery of programs and services to youth in three predominantly First Nation communities (Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay). The purpose of the initiative is to reduce youth offending and create safer communities. As such, it targets youth who are 12 to 24 years of age, “at risk” or already involved in the criminal justice system, who exhibit violent behaviour, and/or who are gang-involved or at risk of gang involvement. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice, Corrections and Policing was awarded up to \$4.5 million from the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) to implement the project.

The University of Saskatchewan’s Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies was contracted by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice to complete a formative, process, and impact evaluation of the NYVRP. The current report presents the findings of the final evaluation, which included: a) a process evaluative component examining program delivery during the final year of the project (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020); and b) an impact evaluative component investigating the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended outcomes. A formative evaluation was previously completed (see Jewell, Mulligan, & Wormith, 2019) and spanned the first three years of the program (April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2017). A process evaluation (see Jewell, Akca, Mulligan, & Wormith, 2019) was conducted during the fourth year of the program (April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019).

## 1.2 Project Description

### 1.2.1 Primary Program Components

The NYVRP is informed by three theoretical models: 1) the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP) model; 2) the Re-Entry and Intensive Aftercare (RIAP) model (also referred to as the Community Connections Program in Saskatchewan); and 3) the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model. It is governed by an overarching Oversight Committee and local Advisory Committees and receives additional support and direction from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice. The NYVRP has a small staffing complement. Originally, staff included:

- 1 Project Manager, responsible for managing program development and delivery
- 1 Manager of Program Operations (MOPO), formerly called the Health and Wellness Coordinator (HAWC), responsible for providing clinical oversight
- 6 Health and Wellness Workers (HAWWs), two in each community, responsible for directly supporting youth enrolled in the program.

By the time the program ended in March 2020, the staff included:

- 1 Manager of Program Operations (MOPO)
- 4 Health and Wellness Workers (HAWWs)—one in Deschambault Lake, one in Pelican Narrows, and two in Sandy Bay.

HAWWs work with Core Teams in each community to develop and monitor care plans through an integrated case management process. HAWWs attempt to address youth's risk factors by connecting them with appropriate supports and services and meeting with them on a regular basis (at least three times per week). HAWWs have a caseload of up to 7 to 8 youth each and work with youth for up to 18 months. The NYVRP is a voluntary program.

### 1.2.2 Project Participants

Youth admitted to the NYVRP must be between the ages of 12-24 years old and have a current or recent history of violent behaviour and/or be gang-involved or at risk of gang involvement. Any youth enrolled in the program should be "high risk" to (re-)offend. Youth may be referred to the NYVRP by Corrections, the RCMP, or local community sources (e.g., schools, Holistic Health, families).

By the end of 2019-20, 151 youth had been referred to the NYVRP and 97 consented to participate. Based on the data available, at least 85% of these youth met the program eligibility criteria. More youth may have met the criteria, but data was unavailable to verify their eligibility. Demographic characteristics of the youth enrolled in the NYVRP are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of NYVRP Consented Participants (N=97)**

| Referrals              | Total<br><i>n</i> (%) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Referral Source</b> |                       |
| Community              | 33 (34.0%)            |
| Corrections            | 26 (26.8%)            |
| RCMP                   | 38 (39.2%)            |
| <b>Gender</b>          |                       |
| Male                   | 66 (68.0%)            |
| Female                 | 31 (32.0%)            |
| <b>Age<sup>1</sup></b> |                       |
| 12-14 years            | 32 (33.4%)            |
| 15-17 years            | 40 (41.6%)            |
| 18-20 years            | 18 (18.7%)            |
| 21-24 years            | 6 (6.1%)              |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>       |                       |
| First Nation           | 94 (96.9%)            |
| Métis                  | 3 (3.1%)              |

## 1.3 Evaluation of the Program

The purpose of the current evaluation is twofold. First, to examine the NYVRP's program delivery, the following key areas were examined:

- Adaptations made to the YVRP and RIAP models for the NYVRP
- Functioning of the governance structure
- Adequacy of staffing levels and training for staff
- Degree of adherence to the risk, need, and responsivity principles

- Characteristics of NYVRP participants
- Degree of adherence to the program delivery model
- Degree of satisfaction with the NYVRP

Second, to examine the extent to which the NYVRP was able to achieve its intended outcomes, the following were investigated:

- Youth's perceptions of the NYVRP's impact on their lives
- Stakeholders' perceptions of the NYVRP's impact on the youth involved
- Change in youth's risk scores pre-post program involvement
- Change in youth's involvement in the criminal justice system pre-post program involvement
- Stakeholders' perceptions of the NYVRP's impact on the communities involved
- Cost and cost-effectiveness of the NYVRP

Data collection methods employed in the final evaluation included:

- Community Stakeholder Survey ( $N=25$ ; response rate of 45%)
- Staff and stakeholder interviews ( $N=13$ )
- NYVRP photo-elicitation study ( $N=7$ )
- NYVRP Participant Survey ( $N=7$ )
- Pre-post risk assessment analysis: YLS/CMI: SV ( $N=6$ ) and POSIT ( $N=5$ )
- Pre-post court order analysis (i.e., custody and remand;  $N=97$ )
- RCMP data on participants' police encounters from 2016-2020 ( $N=82$ )
- Database review (i.e., Community Data Collection tracking sheet) of 151 individuals
- Casefile review of 97 individuals
- Document review of Performance Monitoring and Assessment reports (PMAs), meeting minutes, financial reports, as well as program forms and materials
- Cost Analysis
- Observation

## 1.4 Process Evaluation Findings

### 1.4.1 Adapting the YVRP and RIAP Models

Overall, the NYVRP followed the basic structure of the YVRP and RIAP models. Several planned adaptations were incorporated into the program delivery model (including a focus on support and rehabilitation rather than on strict supervision by police and probation officers). Following the implementation of the NYVRP, a handful of additional modifications were required to improve the functioning of the program, including:

- increasing the length of time a youth can be enrolled in the program from 12 to 18 months to account for the level of trauma experienced by youth and length of time required to heal
- introducing a "Phasing Out" process to help youth transition out of the program
- simplifying the risk assessment process to include a suite of three tools: YLS/CMI: Screening Version, POSIT, and ACE-Q
- incorporating land-based learning, cultural activities, and cultural teachings from Elders/Mentors to support the youth

This final evaluation suggested that two aspects of the NYVRP may require further refinement (i.e., further increasing the program length and the use of risk assessments to inform care plans); however, overall, the NYVRP seems to be a reasonable adaptation of the YVRP and RIAP models that could be implemented in other communities.

#### **1.4.2 Governance Structure**

A two-tiered governance structure has been maintained by the NYVRP throughout the initiative (i.e., an overarching Oversight committee and local Advisory Committees). In principal, the governance structure is adequate and comprehensive as it allows for local community representatives to provide input and direction into the NYVRP, while also providing a mechanism for higher level decisions makers to be involved in the program. However, there were issues with the functioning of both the Oversight and Advisory Committees that hampered their effectiveness. Further, the value of the Advisory Committees was questioned. Many of the concerns raised related to the purpose, structure, and organization of meetings. Broader issues affecting the functioning of the Advisory Committees included a lack of interest among local agencies to support the NYVRP, lack of participation by community leadership, tendency of the communities to only come together in response to negative incidents, and lack of experience with evidence-based models.

#### **1.4.3 Staffing and Training**

Throughout the NYVRP, staffing has been both an area of strength and challenge for the program. One of the greatest strengths of the program was its ability to retain a core contingent of four staff (the MOPO and 1 HAWW in each community) who had been with the program since the beginning. Further, the staff were respected community members, passionate about helping youth, and readily available to the youth, regardless of the time of day. One of the challenges experienced with staffing was that the HAWWs did not necessarily have much formal education or training. As a result, a lack of computer skills and limited knowledge about correctional principles (e.g., Risk-Need-Responsivity [RNR] principles) and the application of evidence-based practices hampered the implementation of the NYVRP program delivery model (e.g., staff struggled with using risk assessments to inform the case management process). Additional training was required in these areas, as well as in areas such as organizational skills and ethics.

In 2019-20, staffing levels were well below the intended level. Further, staff's high level of commitment to their jobs led to several staff experiencing burnout. In the future, it was recommended that a dedicated mental health support worker be available to support the staff. It also was suggested that the NYVRP's staffing model be restructured to have at least three HAWWs per community, wherein HAWWs would alternate the roles of conducting one-on-one visits, providing programming, and completing administration duties. Alternatively, it was suggested that more HAWWs be hired, but have them work part-time hours with fewer youth.

#### **1.4.4 Ministry Support of the NYVRP**

It was originally proposed that the Ministry of Justice would support the NYVRP in three ways: providing training, implementation assistance, and quality assurance support to the communities. While the Ministry played an instrumental role in preparing the NYVRP for program delivery, it did not follow through with the full level of support necessary to ensure that all aspects of the

program could be delivered with full fidelity to the program delivery model. First, the NYVRP staff required additional training on correctional theories and practices to increase their understanding of the RNR framework and the risk assessment protocol they were expected to carry out. Second, all of the necessary program materials to support program delivery were not in place at the time that the NYVRP started accepting clients. As a result, forms were introduced as late as one month before the NYVRP ended and a program manual was never completed. Third, due to several issues encountered within the government, it was not possible to develop a database and staff struggled with the substitute Excel Community Data Collection (CDC) Tracking Sheet. Consequently, the program lacked reliable data.

#### **1.4.5 Adherence to Risk, Need, Responsivity Principles**

A new risk assessment process was introduced in January 2019 and has led to a remarkable increase in the number of risk assessments completed for NYVRP participants. YLS/CMI: SVs, POSITs, and ACE-Qs were completed with 84% of clients ( $n=58$ ) who were active between January 2019 to March 2020. In comparison, only 2 YLS/CMIs and 14 POSITs were completed by program staff in 2017-18. The high risk assessment completion rates are an important achievement in the delivery of the program; however, there was a decrease in completion rates in 2019-2020 (64% to 71% for all eligible youth depending on the specific assessment considered) compared to 2018-19 (89% to 91% depending on the specific assessment considered).

Further, results from the risk assessments revealed that 92% scored as high risk on the YLS/CMI: SV, indicating that the NYVRP is targeting high risk youth. Youth also scored as high risk on the majority of the POSIT subscales. Delinquent peer networks, personality/behaviour problems, not having leisure/recreation activities, antisocial attitudes, poor educational and vocational status were among the most common risk factors that contributed to their high risk scores. Further, the ACE-Q revealed that the NYVRP youth have experienced a substantial amount of trauma during their lives. All of the youth met the ACE-Q's criteria for referral to mental health counselling.

Beyond providing a risk score to determine program eligibility, the risk tools employed in the NYVRP were intended to inform care plans for the youth. Based on an analysis of the care plans, the adherence of the program to the 'need' and 'responsivity' principles were not at a satisfactory level. On average, only 57% of the risk factors flagged on the YLS/CMI: SV were documented in the care plans. As a result, the necessary goals to address those risks/needs could not be developed and noted in the case plans of the clients. Reflective of this, only 25% of the risk factors identified on the YLS/CMI: SV had corresponding goals documented in the care plan.

#### **1.4.6 Adherence to the Program Delivery Model**

Overall, the NYVRP is largely being implemented in line with its program delivery model. The data available indicates that HAWWs have regular contact with the youth and are readily available to the youth whenever the youth need them, including evenings and weekends. According to the program delivery model, there should be a caseload of 15 youth in each community shared among two HAWWs. In 2019-20, the combined caseloads at each site were between 10 to 13 clients, which is slightly below the targeted caseload outlined by the NYVRP program delivery model. When communities (i.e., Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows for first half of the year) had two HAWWs, the average caseload per HAWW was five to six clients, which was



lower than expected. When communities had one HAWW (i.e., Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows for last half of year), the average caseload was 10 to 11 clients, which was higher than expected.

Core Teams were expected to be held monthly. In 2019-20, Deschambault Lake held 83% of the expected number of meetings, while Pelican Narrows held 42% of expected meetings, and Sandy Bay held 75% of expected meetings. The types of agencies that participated in the Core Team varied by each community, as did the participation rates of the agencies, with the RCMP, schools, and corrections being the most consistent attendees across all three communities. After seeing an increase in Core Team attendance in 2018-19, a decrease in attendance occurred among a majority of agencies in 2019-20. In general, the stakeholder interviews suggested that the Core Team was viewed as a valuable component of the NYVRP, as they facilitated information sharing about common clients and possible programming opportunities. The extent to which Core Teams explicitly discussed youth's risks and participated in the development of care plans was unclear; however, it seems these discussions took place informally.

The NYVRP also was expected to work closely with the Creighton Community Corrections office. Several strengths of the partnership were mentioned, such as sharing information about common clients and reinforcing the same messages to the youth. However, there was some friction in the relationship between the NYVRP and Corrections due to organizational issues experienced with meetings and recordkeeping, as well unclear expectations about expected roles and what constitutes a reasonable request for information from either party. Future discussions between the NYVRP and Corrections are required to address these issues.

Throughout the initiative, the NYVRP has been successful in identifying and connecting youth with a vast array of supports and services available in their communities, including those related to education, employment, mental health and addictions, cultural and land-based teachings, personal support and self-development, arts, meeting court-ordered conditions, sports, and other recreational activities. Cultural and land-based teachings, including learning from Elders and Mentors, were identified as some of the most valuable opportunities offered by the NYVRP. Conversely, offering mental health therapy using remote presence technology (RPT) was not considered a valuable component of the program. There were mixed levels of satisfaction with RPT among the few youth participants who used it. Staff perceived that youth were not very engaged by this modality and that it was not worth the cost (it cost approximately \$116,000 over the five years for 6 to 13 youth to use).

## **1.5 Impact Evaluation Findings**

### **1.5.1 Individual-level Intended and Unintended Outcomes Achieved**

Several unintended outcomes were identified by the staff, stakeholder, and youth participants of the evaluation, many of which served as precursors to the main outcome areas of interest to the NYVRP. Specifically, it was perceived that the NYVRP youth had 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. Being able to establish a positive, trusting relationship with the HAWW also reflected an important achievement among the youth as many lacked positive, trusting relationships with others in their lives. A third unintended

outcome of the NYVRP was that it helped the youth meet their basic needs (e.g., NYVRP often provided the youth with snacks/food).

In terms of the program's anticipated outcomes, both stakeholders' and youth's perceptions suggested that the NYVRP led to reduced violence and fewer interactions with the police. There was also evidence that the program helped some youth reduce their involvement with gangs (although not to the extent the program was thought to lead to reductions in violence and police interactions). Results from the Community Stakeholder Survey suggested that NYVRP youth had more positive attitudes towards both the police and school staff. Youth were also expected to develop more prosocial attitudes and interpersonal skills. In line with this outcome area, staff and stakeholders perceived that youth were communicating better, developing compassion, more respectful, and beginning to understand the importance of rules.

There was mixed evidence as to whether the NYVRP led to decreased alcohol and drug use. Some stakeholders did not perceive any changes in this outcomes area whereas other perceived that youth had "slowed down" their use. However, the pre-post analysis suggested that there was a significant reduction in substance use among the youth who completed both the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT. Improved mental health was another goal of the NYVRP and one of the most of notable outcomes identified by NYVRP staff and stakeholders was that there had been no completed suicides among youth enrolled in the NYVRP (despite the high prevalence of suicide in the communities and the youth being high risk). The POSIT pre-post analysis also indicated that mental health was an area where youth demonstrated significant improvements over the course of the program.

With respect to school performance and attendance, youth believed that being in the NYVRP helped them achieve better grades and attend school more. However, stakeholders did not believe the youth were achieving better grades and were mixed as to whether youth were attending school more. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting closure of schools, it was not possible to obtain students' grades and attendance records to determine the extent to which youth and stakeholders' perceptions corresponded with school data. In terms of the youth's employment-related activities, stakeholders generally did not believe that the NYVRP had much impact in this area.

Increased prosocial peer and family activity was considered by youth to be an area of success, with youth believing the program led to more positive friends and stronger relationships with their families. In contrast, stakeholders did not perceive as much change in this area. However, stakeholders did believe that the NYVRP led to greater involvement in prosocial recreational activities. Further, both youth and stakeholders strongly agreed that the NYVRP increased youth's connections to Elders/Mentors and cultural activities.

Differences in youth and stakeholders' perceptions of the youth's success in the NYVRP may be a function of the limited number of youth who completed the participant survey (i.e., only 7 youth participated in the survey and those who completed it may have been those most engaged in the program), while stakeholders may have considered all youth involved in the NYVRP when evaluating the program's success. Conversely, stakeholders may not have been aware of all of the ways the NYVRP has affected youth—they may be most aware of the areas that align with

their own roles—which also could have affected stakeholders’ perceptions of the youth’s success in the program.

The pre-post-analysis found that youth had lower risk scores on the YLS/CMI: SV after the program ended wherein youth were found to be ‘high risk’ upon starting and ‘moderate risk’ upon program completion. Similarly, the youth’s post-program POSIT scores were significantly lower than their first set of scores, with significant decreases occurring in the domains of substance use, mental health, and aggressive behaviour/delinquency. However, the limited number of youth who had pre-post assessments limits the extent to which these findings are generalizable to the program as a whole.

The analysis of court-order data (remand and custody) indicated that 78% of the NYVRP participants have not been in contact with the criminal justice system since they started the program although the vast majority were high risk in their initial risk assessment scores. Further, 12 participants desisted from crime after starting the program; however, 22% of NYVRP participants were taken into custody and/or remanded after they started the program. Overall, the program was successful at preventing recidivism or initial offending for most of the participants.

Finally, the analysis of the de-identified RCMP data revealed that, when the average number of incidents is considered, there was a considerable reduction in the number of police encounters that occurred during the first two years of the program compared to those that occurred the year prior to the NYVRP’s implementation. However, encounters increased during the last year of the program, mostly due to an increase in crimes against persons as crimes against property continued to decrease during this year. Most youth in the sample would have been out of the NYVRP for one to two years during the final year, suggesting that the effects of the program may dissipate over time. Notably, nearly two-thirds of the youth were also victims of crime, which is a higher victimization rate than the general youth victimization rate in the communities.

### **1.5.2 Community-level Outcomes**

Overall, there is some evidence that the NYVRP led to increased capacity for community agencies to work together, as well as to address youth violence and, to a lesser extent, gang involvement. For instance, Community Stakeholder Survey respondents agreed that the NYVRP both increased their interest in collaborating with other agencies, as well as their ability to do so. Stakeholders also suggested that the NYVRP allowed agencies to strengthen their relationships with other agencies involved in the program. Despite some of these positive indicators of increased community capacity, some stakeholders perceived that the NYVRP did not lead to changes in community agencies’ ability to work together. In particular, there was a perceived focus on “talk” rather than “action” when discussing community issues. There also was dissatisfaction with the level of involvement in some of the collaborative activities of the NYVRP (i.e., the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams), with a noted decrease in agency participation over the last three years. Even so, the fact that the NYVRP was able to hold regular Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings suggests an increased capacity to work together, as other inter-agency meetings in the community reportedly have not been able to successfully maintain a regular meeting schedule.

### 1.5.3 Cost Analysis

The average cost of the program per participant was \$29,986 (see Table 2). The cost of the program 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. Overall, the cost analysis of the NYVRP indicated that the program was cost-effective, as the estimated criminal justice costs remained dramatically higher than the program costs (even with the increased cost per participant in the later years of the program).

**Table 2. NYVRP: Costs Per Participant: 2015-2020**

|  | 2017-2018        | 2018-2019          | 2019-2020        | Total              |
|--|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Participants<sup>1</sup></i>        | 57               | 28                 | 12               | 97                 |
| <i>Program Completers<sup>2</sup></i>  | 27               | 13                 | 6                | 46                 |
| <b>Expenses</b>                        |                  |                    |                  |                    |
| Admin Costs                            | \$60,738         | \$64,516           | \$58,465         | \$183,719          |
| Elder Honorariums                      | \$15,825         | \$9,000            | \$8,625          | \$33,450           |
| Equipment                              | \$20,635         | \$70,068           | \$48,502         | \$139,205          |
| Specialized Services                   |                  |                    | \$530            | \$530              |
| Materials and Supplies                 | \$6,674          | \$8,934            | \$6,698          | \$22,306           |
| Personnel                              | \$525,663        | \$541,346          | \$424,655        | \$1,491,664        |
| Program Supplies                       | \$6,192          | \$3,165            | \$2,591          | \$11,947           |
| Rent / Utilities                       | \$35,300         | \$34,688           | \$36,281         | \$106,269          |
| Training and Staff Development         | \$28,329         | \$25,164           | \$9,515          | \$63,008           |
| Transportation                         | \$98,260         | \$131,669          | \$110,563        | \$340,492          |
| Start-up costs <sup>3</sup>            | \$172,014        | \$172,014          | \$172,014        | \$516,043          |
| <b>Total Cost Per Year<sup>4</sup></b> | <b>\$969,631</b> | <b>\$1,060,564</b> | <b>\$878,439</b> | <b>\$2,908,634</b> |
| <b>Cost Per Participant</b>            | <b>\$17,011</b>  | <b>\$37,877</b>    | <b>\$73,203</b>  | <b>\$29,986</b>    |

## 1.6 Lessons Learned

### 1.6.1 Program-related

- Due to the remote location of the communities and limited resources, neither the police nor corrections had the capacity to enact the strict supervision model described in the original YVRP model. Therefore, the NYVRP purposefully focused on support and rehabilitation.
- Program delivery model modifications such as increasing the length of time youth can be enrolled in the program to 18 months and incorporating a ‘Phasing Out’ process were needed to further support the youth in their healing journeys and to ensure that they were able to sustain any changes made upon exiting the program.
- It is only possible to involve parents in the NYVRP to the extent that parents are ready and willing to heal themselves.

- The incorporation of land-based learning, cultural activities, and opportunities to learn from Elders and Mentors were valuable elements of the NYVRP.
- A dedicated core staff has been essential to ensuring the sustainability of the NYVRP throughout the initiative.
- NYVRP staff were hired for their personal qualities and not for their formal education and experience. As a result, some of the HAWWs had poor computer skills and experienced difficulties with completing the administrative components of their positions. Increasing staff's administrative skills is an area that requires additional attention and training.
- Adequate training and support on correctional theories and practices, including follow-up sessions, should be provided to staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to implement the risk assessment protocol and to use the risk assessments to inform the case management process in a meaningful manner. This training should also be provided to community partners who are expected to participate in collaborative case management.
- NYVRP staff are at high risk for burnout. Since the staff both live and work in these small communities, they are never really "off." Staff are also subjected to the effects of colonization on a regular basis, both through their jobs (by constantly hearing the stories of the youth they serve) and in their personal lives. Therefore, the NYVRP needs to provide staff and their families with adequate forms of support and debriefing to ensure that they are able to remain physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy and productive in their positions.
- All program components should be in place at the time program delivery begins, including a program manual, program forms, and a database. If a formal database is not possible, any data tracking sheets that are developed should be "user-friendly" to ensure that accurate, reliable data can be collected.
- It is important to ensure that a program has adequate resources to support program implementation throughout the pilot project period. The NYVRP would have benefited from having an Administrative Assistant throughout the initiative. It also would have benefited from having dedicated, full-time support from the Ministry throughout the initiative to ensure that the Ministry's commitments to provide training, implementation assistance, and quality assurance could be fully realized, especially since the staff and communities had limited experience with implementing corrections, evidence-based models.
- The Oversight Committee was deemed to be a useful component of the governance structure, but the value of the Advisory Committees and monthly management update meetings were unclear. Additional work is required to clarify and enhance the purpose, structure, and organization of these meetings.

- Core Teams were considered a valuable element of the program delivery model as they facilitate information sharing about common clients and opportunities for programming. Some refinements of Core Teams are required to place a greater focus on explicitly developing and refining care plans for youth and to improve the organization of the meetings.
- The program is currently adhering to the “risk” principle of the Risk-Need-Responsivity framework. Additional attention needs to be paid to the “need” and “responsivity” principles by updating clients’ case plans to reflect the risks/needs identified on the risk assessment tools and creating goals to help clients address those risks/needs.
- There is some friction in the relationship between the NYVRP and the Creighton Community Corrections office. Both parties need to engage in open discussions to develop clear expectations of each other and the partnership.
- Criteria that youth must meet in order to move through each phase of the Phasing Out process (i.e., 75%, 50%, 25%), as well as to be considered graduates from the program, need to be developed to offer more transparency to the Phasing Out process.
- A peer mentorship component should be formally adopted by the NYVRP to allow program graduates to become program mentors and maintain their connection to the NYVRP.
- The NYVRP was able to successfully partner with Indigenous Services Canada to deliver mental health services to NYVRP youth using RPT.
- RPT did not seem to be satisfactory approach for providing NYVRP youth with mental health therapy. The equipment and licenses were costly, became obsolete quickly (within five years), and youth did not seem to be very engaged in receiving therapy using this modality. If RPT is used in the future, in-person sessions with the therapist should be interspersed with remote sessions.

### **1.6.2 Evaluation-related**

- It is necessary to have realistic expectations about the type and amount of data the NYVRP is capable of collecting to support the evaluation. While we strove to take a participatory approach in the evaluation, there were times where it was unduly burdensome to the program (e.g., HAWWs, MOPO) to enact this approach. Therefore, the amount of data being collected should be balanced with the available capacity to collect that data.
- The evaluation team should be careful to not overwhelm the HAWWs by asking them to participate in more than one evaluation activity at a time.

- It is important to consider the geographic location of the communities and be realistic about the amount of time the evaluation team can spend on site. Distance and travel conditions may affect the evaluation design possible.
- A formal policy should have been built into the program requiring staff to complete risk assessments with youth at the time they conclude the program, as well as 6-months later. While the importance of completing post-program risk assessments for the evaluation was discussed throughout the initiative, the program did not enact this practice until the last month of programming.
- Participating in NYVRP meetings as much as possible, including sharing evaluation findings and providing regular evaluation updates, helped the evaluation team develop familiarity and credibility with the program's stakeholders.
- Program data should be shared with the evaluation team at least two months in advance of the report deadline to allow adequate time for analysis.
- The RCMP does not share identifiable data. Thus, when entering into a data sharing agreement with this agency, it is important to tailor the data request to one that is likely to be approved.

## 1.7 Recommendations

The NYVRP has had many successes over the duration of the project but has also encountered several challenges and learned many lessons along the way. The following recommendations are offered to continue to enhance and refine the NYVRP should it continue in the future.

### 1.7.1 Program Delivery Recommendations

#### Oversight and Advisory Committees

1. Continue to maintain the Oversight Committee but ensure that the purpose of the Committee is clear and that it is oriented toward problem-solving rather than reporting on program activities.
2. Restructure the Advisory Committee meetings to meet once every three months. Ensure that the purpose and intended composition of the Advisory Committees are clear and that there is a greater focus on problem-solving rather than reporting on program activities.
3. Discontinue the monthly management update phone calls unless there is a need to meet sooner than the scheduled Oversight or Advisory Committee meetings.
4. Ensure that novel information is presented at each Committee to avoid redundant information from being presented across meeting types.

5. Improve the organization of the meetings by ensuring that adequate notice is provided when inviting attendees to meetings, providing as much notice as possible if meetings are cancelled, ensuring teleconference information is available to those attending from afar, and determining in advance who will be moderating the meetings.
6. Continue to develop strategies to engage community partners to increase their participation and attendance rates in Oversight and Advisory Committee meetings. These strategies should focus on stimulating collaboration, including overcoming known barriers to collaboration in the communities. Offering regional workshops (similar to the kick-off workshop in Baker's Narrows) may be one way of stimulating collaboration.

### **NYVRP Program Delivery**

7. Develop a program manual outlining the NYVRP's program delivery model, policies, procedures, and requisite paperwork.
8. Consider the level of trauma experienced by youth when determining the length of time they should be enrolled in the program. Consider extending the program to be 24 to 36 months to allow sufficient time to heal, develop supports, and transition out of the program.
9. Continue to maintain monthly Core Team meetings. Ensure that the meetings are structured (i.e., have an agenda) to avoid off-topic discussions, focused on discussing care plans and identifying solutions to address the youth's needs, and attended only by agency representatives that are directly involved with the youth. Ensure that a teleconference number is provided to attendees attending by phone and that the meeting is facilitated with these participants in mind (e.g., the teleconference is started on time, notice is provided if the meeting is cancelled).
10. Develop a mechanism to allow NYVRP program staff and partners to report confidentiality concerns and breaches to the NYVRP project management team. A policy should also be developed that specifies how staff should address confidentiality breaches, including alerting youth about any breaches that occurred with their information.
11. Offer Core Team members a training session on core correctional theories and practices, including the use of the risk assessments to inform case planning, to enhance their ability to develop care plans that are in line with the risk, need, responsiveness framework
12. Continue completing the YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q with all youth enrolled in the NYVRP.
13. Update the care plans developed for each youth to ensure that each risk factor identified as "high risk" on the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT is identified as a "risk/need" on the care plan. In addition, ensure that each "risk/need" has a corresponding goal/plan to address it. Utilizing the risk assessment information to develop or refine the youth's care plans



would allow for better adherence to the “need” and “responsivity” principles of the RNR model.

14. Establish criteria that youth must meet in order to move through each of the Phasing Out levels (i.e., 75%, 50%, 25%), as well as the criteria that youth must meet to be considered a graduate of the program.
15. Formally establish a peer mentorship component to allow NYVRP graduates to transition into a mentorship role where they can mentor other NYVRP participants.
16. Continue to incorporate cultural activities, land-based learning, and opportunities to learn from Elders/Mentors into the program.
17. Discontinue the use of remote presence technology to offer remote mental health therapy to NYVRP clients. If it is utilized in the future, ensure that in-person sessions are interspersed with remote sessions to increase youth’s level of engagement in the remote therapy sessions.
18. Together with Creighton Community Corrections, develop clear expectations of the partnership between Community Corrections and the NYVRP, including the expected roles of HAWWs and Probation Officers, as well as what constitutes a reasonable request for information.
19. Enhance the program’s organization and recordkeeping to ensure that important documents (e.g., full Corrections referral forms) are not misplaced.
20. Develop a database or redesign the Community Data Collection Tracking Sheet to allow for the collection of useable, reliable data.

### **Staffing and Training**

21. Modify the staffing model to allow staff to better maintain their physical and mental health. This could include: a) having 3 HAWWs in each community who alternate weekly between the roles of offering programming to youth, conducting one-on-one visits, and completing administration duties; or b) hiring more HAWWs in each community, but at part-time hours to lower their caseloads.
22. Match the caseloads of the HAWWs to the trauma levels of the youth on their caseload. Youth enrolled in the program have experienced a lot of trauma and may require a substantial amount of time from the HAWW, which should be accounted for in the caseload levels.
23. Fill the administrative assistant role allocated to the NYVRP to offset some of the administrative duties placed on the MOPO and HAWWs.

24. Provide additional training to staff on core correctional theories and practices (e.g., risk-need-responsivity, social learning theory, cognitive-behavioural theory), including regular follow-up sessions, to help the staff become more adept at applying these principles.
25. Provide staff with training to increase their administrative skills. Staff should be provided with training on organization, recordkeeping (including maintaining casefiles), and confidentiality. In addition, staff with limited computer skills should be provided with training in this area (e.g., training on how to use Microsoft Word and Excel).
26. When hiring staff, hire individuals who are living healthy lifestyles, have a passion for working with youth, and have some administrative skills.
27. Provide HAWWs (and their families) with the supports they require to remain healthy and productive in their positions to avoid staff burnout and further staff turnover, such as family retreats and access to a mental health worker.

### **1.7.2 Evaluation Recommendations**

28. Consider the extent to which NYVRP staff can realistically be involved in evaluation activities and ensure that HAWWs are not asked to participate in multiple evaluation activities simultaneously (e.g., preparing casefiles for review at the same time they are asked to assist with survey administration).
29. Consider the role of geography when planning evaluation activities, including being realistic about the amount of time the evaluators can be present in the communities, and the impact this will have on the evaluation design.
30. Work with the NYVRP project management team to develop a policy to complete the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT at the time a youth concludes the program and 6-months after their program completion date.
31. Continue to share evaluation findings and updates with all stakeholder groups to maintain familiarity with, and credibility among, the program's stakeholders.
32. Consider whether an organization, such as the RCMP, has a policy regarding the sharing of identifiable data prior to drafting a data sharing agreement and tailor the data request to one that they will be able to fulfill.

## **1.8 Conclusions**

The results of the final NYVRP evaluation have been mixed, revealing areas where the program is performing well, as well as areas where challenges have been encountered and improvements are required. Overall, there is evidence that the NYVRP is targeting the appropriate clientele and offering a wide range of supports to their clients. Further, it is clear that, as staff become more

experienced with the program delivery model, they are becoming more adept at adhering to it. Importantly, the impact evaluative components of this evaluation suggested that the NYVRP has helped the youth involved in the program achieve many of the program's intended outcomes, such as reduced violence and police contact, increased involvement in cultural and prosocial activities, and increased mental health. Further, there is preliminary evidence that the program led to lower risk scores among the youth involved (with youth changing from being high risk to moderate risk by the end of the program) and limited contact with the criminal justice system. Moving forward, the program will need to turn its attention to using risk assessments to inform care plans for the youth. It will also need to attend to the issues raised in relation to its Oversight and Advisory Committees, as well as to staffing, especially to ensure that staff have the supports and resources needed to protect their physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) is a five-year initiative (April, 2015 to March, 2020) that involves the delivery of programs and services to youth in three predominantly First Nation communities in Saskatchewan (Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay). The purpose of the initiative is to reduce youth offending and create safer communities. As such, it targets youth who are 12 to 24 years of age, “at risk” or already involved in the criminal justice system, who exhibit violent behaviour, and/or who are gang-involved or at risk of gang involvement.

The NYVRP is an initiative proposed by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice, now called the Ministry of Corrections and Policing, wherein the Ministry was awarded up to \$4.5 million from the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) to implement the project. The three communities of interest are situated in a relatively isolated portion of the province and have large youth populations, high rates of youth violence, and limited resources for addressing violence, gang-related activities and offending among youth. Therefore, the NYVRP emerged out of a desire to reduce violence and gang recruitment in the three communities by increasing community capacity to deliver youth justice services and offer more supports and services for high-risk youth. To guide the initiative and to ensure it is informed by evidence-based and best practices research, the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP) model is the predominant model the NYVRP is founded on, with distinct program adaptations inspired by components of the Re-Entry and Intensive Aftercare model (which is also referred to as the Community Connections Program in Saskatchewan).

It is important to note that there was a significant delay in the program’s implementation as it took approximately one year to fill the position of Project Manager. Following that appointment, recruitment for qualified staff also presented a challenge as the desire to hire locally was highly valued; however, the pool of potential candidates was small reflecting the population levels in each community. Additionally, the NYVRP governance structure dictates that each community formally engages a local agency to oversee that program staff are fulfilling their duties. These agencies are also expected to participate on the local Advisory Committees and provide the NYVRP staff their significant expertise. Again, this selection and engagement process with the local agencies took considerable time, as did the process to secure their long-term commitments.

As with any initiative, a critical component of the NYVRP is an evaluation of its implementation and the extent to which it was able to achieve its intended outcomes. Accordingly, the University of Saskatchewan’s Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies was contracted by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice to complete a formative, process, and impact evaluation of the NYVRP. The current report presents the findings of the final evaluation, which included a(n): a process evaluative component examining program delivery during the final year of the project (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020); and b) impact evaluative component investigating the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended outcomes.

Specifically, the process-related components of the evaluation were intended to help the NYVRP examine how the program functioned, including what worked well, challenges encountered, areas for improvement, satisfaction with the NYVRP, program reach, and any modifications made to the program delivery model. In turn, the impact evaluation considered the extent to which the NYVRP was able to realize its intended outcomes among the youth and communities involved, such as reducing youth violence and increasing community capacity to address violent offending among youth. A quasi-experimental design focused on changes observed in the youth before and after their involvement in the initiative, surveys, and a qualitative design were used to assess the achievement of the program's intermediate and long-term outcomes. Notably, as part of the quasi-experimental design, we had planned to assess changes in school performance, school absenteeism, and school incidents/suspensions/expulsions but, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting closure of schools at the time we were conducting the evaluation, this data was unavailable.

A formative evaluation was previously conducted and spanned the first three years of initiative (April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2018; see Jewell, Mulligan, & Wormith, 2019); it examined the planning and processes required to establish the NYVRP, as well as the initial implementation of the initiative. The findings from the formative evaluation were used to inform and enhance the NYVRP during 2018-19. In addition, a process evaluation was conducted during the fourth year of the initiative (April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019; see Jewell, Akca, Mulligan, & Wormith, 2019). This evaluation helped to further identify the extent to which the program was serving its intended clientele and adhering to the program delivery model; areas where the program was functioning well, as well as those where additional refinements were required; and the extent to which there was evidence of continued need for the program in the three communities.

## 2.1 Need for the Project

Deschambault Lake, Sandy Bay and Pelican Narrows are located in northeast Saskatchewan within the boundary of the Mamawetan Churchill River Regional Health Authority (MCRCHA). In 2015, the MCRCHA region had a population of 22,674 and was forecasted to reach 26,419 (an increase of 16.5%) by 2020. This area has a young population with 32.8% being less than 15 years of age (MCRHR, 2016). More detailed information for each community is provided below.

Deschambault Lake is located 448.5 kilometers northeast of Saskatoon. The population is currently at 1,061 residents and, from 2011 to 2016, the population decreased by 11.1%. Just over half of the residents (610 or 57.5%) are 24 years of age or younger with an overall average age of 24.8 years (Statistics Canada, 2017). There are several services and opportunities tailored to individuals aged 12 to 24 years.<sup>2</sup> These services include a youth centre, five different camps<sup>3</sup>, cultural programming and sports programs. Peer, Elder, and holistic support services are also available, as well as opportunities to follow the example of those living a traditional way of life. Available employment training includes adult education classes to obtain a General Education

<sup>2</sup> Information regarding the services, opportunities, and strengths of each community were derived from the Ages and Stages and the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analyses carried out by the NYVRP project team in each of the communities.

<sup>3</sup> Camps include: youth camps, culture camps, father/son camps, mother/daughter camps, bible camps and vocational day camps.

Diploma (GED) and programming from Northlands College (e.g., carpenter renovation program, safety tickets, Workers Health Industrial Management Information System [WHIMIS] credentials). In addition, recreational activities related to arts, crafts, and cooking are offered. As of 2011, 83.3% of Deschambault Lake residents spoke ᐃᓴᓴᓴᓴ, Nēhiyawēwin (Cree) as their mother tongue and spoke that language most often in the home (Irvine & Quinn, 2016).

The community of Pelican Narrows is located 511.7 kilometers northeast from Saskatoon. In 2016, 630 residents lived in the northern village of Pelican Narrows and 1,869 residents lived in the surrounding Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation (PBCN) community, for a total population of 2,499. From 2011 to 2016, the overall population of Pelican Narrows decreased by 7.5%. Over half of the residents (1,505 or 60%) were 24 years of age or younger with an overall average age of 24.4 years (Statistics Canada, 2017). The youth in Pelican Narrows have access to youth groups, culture camps, and cultural activities. There is a youth outreach and Elders meeting place called Kokom's Corner/The Haven and some youth participate in the Youth Chief and Council. As of 2011, 90.5% of the individuals living in Pelican Narrows spoke ᐃᓴᓴᓴᓴ, Nēhiyawēwin (Cree) as their mother tongue and spoke that language most often in the home (Irvine & Quinn, 2016).

Sandy Bay is located 581.9 kilometers northeast of Saskatoon. As of 2016, there were 697 residents living in the northern village and 481 residents living in the adjacent PBCN community, for a total of 1,178 residents. Taken together, there was a 4.5% decrease in the population of the Sandy Bay area from 2011 to 2016. Further, as of 2016, over half of the population (710 or 60%) were 24 years of age or younger with an overall average age of 25.1 years (Statistics Canada, 2017). Sandy Bay has an Elder's camp with youth, an annual youth conference, a youth cadet program and a youth centre that provides youth programming in the evenings. Community members identified several positive attributes of their youth, including the youth being goal-oriented, intelligent, outgoing, and knowledgeable about their culture, language, customs, and traditions. In 2011, 23.5% of Sandy Bay residents spoke ᐃᓴᓴᓴᓴ, Nēhiyawēwin (Cree) as their mother tongue and spoke it most often in the home (Irvine & Quinn, 2016).

In each community, community health workers support the development of the youth by building their self-esteem and offering addictions education, men's and women's programming, and parenting education (including supports tailored for teen parents). The NYVRP is able to use these programs in each community to foster the development of other positive characteristics among the youth.

While each community is characterized by its own set of strengths that may support or facilitate the implementation of the NYVRP, there are economic and educational disparities that are quite apparent in this area of the province. Individuals in the MCRRHA have lower levels of educational attainment. The most recent statistics are from 2011 where 18% of individuals aged 25 to 64 years had high school diplomas compared to 27.3% in the province; only 7.9% had university degrees, which was almost half of the provincial rate (14.4%; Irvine & Quinn, 2016). Overall, 40.8% of individuals in the MCRRHA had no certificate, diploma, or degree compared to 15.4% in Saskatchewan. Looking specifically at the NYVRP communities, 57.1% of

individuals in Deschambault Lake, 54.8% in Pelican Narrows, and 60.9% in Sandy Bay had less than a high school diploma.

In terms of the employment rate<sup>4</sup>, in 2011, based on individuals aged 15 years and over, the NYVRP communities had some of the lowest employment rates in northern Saskatchewan. The employment rate in Deschambault Lake was 21%; in Pelican Narrows, it was 20.8%; and in Sandy Bay, it was 20.7% (Irvine & Quinn, 2016). Indeed, these employment rates were far below the provincial rate of 65.1%. Relatedly, in 2010, the annual median after-tax income for the population aged 15 and over in the three communities was also well below the provincial median of \$28,792. Here, the median after-tax income in Deschambault Lake was \$7,118, Pelican Narrows was \$6,107, and Sandy Bay was \$11,785.

Notably, the MCRRHA also has the highest injury-related death rates (e.g., suicide, assaults, drownings, accidental poisonings) for individuals under the age of 20 in the province, which was more than double the overall provincial rate (Irvine et al., 2011). From 1995 to 2007, the rate of assault-related hospitalizations in northern Saskatchewan was almost 5.2 times the provincial rate. Indeed, northern Saskatchewan had the highest police-reported crime rate, violent crime rate, and Crime Severity Index (CSI) in Canada's north in 2013 (Allen & Perreault, 2015). In fact, within the province, northern Saskatchewan had over four times the rate of homicides, over nine times the rate of major assault, and 8.6 times the rate of common assault compared to southern Saskatchewan (Allen & Perreault, 2015). Further, the number of *Youth Criminal Justice Act* offences in the north was almost 4.5 times the number in the south. In addition, Saskatchewan had the highest rate of youth gang membership (1.34 per 1000 people) in the country in 2002 (Criminal Intelligence Services Saskatchewan, 2005). While overall there is very little data on gang activities in the province, in 2010, the University of Saskatchewan reported that there were at least 13 known gangs in Saskatchewan and many urban and rural communities in the province were experiencing a steady growth in gang recruitment and gang-related crime (Tanasichuk, Hogg, Simon, Ferguson, & Wormith, 2010).

Specific to the NYVRP communities, in 2011, the crime rates (excluding traffic offences) in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay were 7 to 11 times the provincial rate, while the violent crime rate was 9 to 11 times the provincial rate (Canadian Centre for Justice Studies, as cited by Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice, n. d.). Additionally, Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay had the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> highest crime severity indexes (CSIs) in the province, respectively, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> highest violent CSIs. Overall, these statistics point to exceptionally high levels of crime and violence.

In addition to the educational disparities and high crime rates in these communities, limited services are available to address the various social needs that exist in these locations. For instance, aside from the traditional primary and secondary school systems, there are few educational opportunities for residents available directly within these communities (Jewell et al., 2016). There are, however, employment and training services available at each location to support persons interested in entering the labour market.

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<sup>4</sup> “This refers to the number of persons employed in the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2011, expressed as a percentage of the total population aged 15 years and over.”

Similarly, mental health and addictions services are available in all three communities, but these services tend to be offered by paraprofessionals and supplemented by a mental health therapist who visits the communities once or twice each month (Jewell et al., 2016). Psychological and psychiatric services are generally unavailable in these communities unless they are accessed via telehealth. Moreover, some research has noted that persons living in rural and remote communities may be reluctant to access mental health services directly within their community due concerns about being stigmatized by fellow community members for accessing such services or the confidentiality of the service (Allison & Kyle, 2005; Jewell et al., 2016; Larson & Corrigan, 2010; Martz & Gourley, 2008; Self & Peters, 2005). Thus, a number of factors may limit engagement in the services that do exist in small communities, such as Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay.

In sum, the NYVRP communities are largely comprised of persons who are young, live in poverty, and who have low levels of education and employment. In addition, injuries and crime occur at much higher rates in these communities compared to elsewhere in the province. Further, most supports in the NYVRP communities are offered by the Band, RCMP, health centre, and schools, with some professionals (e.g., mental health workers, child welfare workers, probation officers, and youth workers) external to the community periodically visiting to deliver services. Given the lack of services available directly within these communities, combined with a number of indicators suggesting high levels of social inequities and violent crime, an intervention such as the NYVRP is warranted. The NYVRP is especially appropriate as it draws upon local strengths and supports and other positive opportunities that already exist in the communities.



### 3. NYVRP PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) is a multi-sectoral, collaborative-driven initiative supported by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing to increase community capacity in order to reduce youth violence and recruitment into gangs. Adapted from the proven Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP) and Re-entry and Intensive Aftercare Program (RIAP) models (see Section 4.0 for a detailed discussion of these models), the NYVRP is a culturally competent initiative, suited to the local values, context, and aspirations of the community. The long-term outcomes of the NYVRP are to have reductions in physical violence, violent victimization, and gang involvement and/or gang-related activities.

In total, four local agencies have been contracted to administer the program. These agencies are Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation (PBCN) Pelican Narrows Administration, PBCN Deschambault Lake Administration, the Northern Village of Sandy Bay (NVSb) and PBCN Sandy Bay Administration. PBCN Sandy Bay Administration took over the administration of the NYVRP from the NVSB for the final quarter (January to March 2020) of the project due to unexpected changes related to the program administration structure.

The NYVRP's service delivery model focuses on rehabilitative activities and sustainable community supports that mitigate risk over time. Accordingly, in partnership with the Ministry of Corrections and Policing, each community employs two Health and Wellness Workers (HAWWs) who provide intensive support to referred "at risk" youth and/or referred young offenders and adult offenders between the ages of 12 to 24 years from each community. Initially, youth referred to the program are deemed "at-risk" based upon the referral agency's perception that a young person fits the program's eligibility criteria, including evidence of the youth's involvement in physical/verbal violence (see Section 3.1.1). Youth already involved in the criminal justice system are referred to the program from Corrections or from local community agencies. After youth are referred to the NYVRP, HAWWs complete risk assessments with each youth to verify their risk level.

The HAWWs work closely with the Manager of Program Operations (MOPO; formerly called the Health and Wellness Coordinator [HAWC]), the Core Team, and other affiliated agencies in their communities to ensure participants stay engaged with targeted services and sustainable supports. In addition, NYVRP staff develop a network of community mentors and role models that includes Elders, prosocial peers, and immediate, extended, and/or adopted family members in order to facilitate relationships that support rehabilitation activities and encourage participants to make healthy lifestyle choices. The goal is that the youth will gain sustainable prosocial community supports that will help to manage and reduce their risk to reoffend. The overall objectives of the NYVRP are as follows:

- establish new linkages between the justice system and community-based organizations to develop effective and seamless supports for high-risk youth that offend violently and may be gang involved;
- increase community capacity to deliver youth justice services;
- reduce violent behaviours and/or violent offending;

- decrease youth gang involvement, behaviours and/or activities including tagging and graffiti;
- deliver sufficient targeted services to the program's population so they successfully stay connected to community resources that provide pathways to a productive, healthy lifestyle; and
- build supportive relationships with immediate, extended, or adopted family members, and other community mentors and role models including Elders and prosocial peers that address identified risk factors and strengthen participants' kinship ties and cultural identity.

### 3.1 NYVRP Target Group

The NYVRP targets youth who are 12 to 24 years of age, “at risk” or already involved in the criminal justice system, who exhibit violent behaviour, and/or who are gang-involved or at risk of gang involvement. Any youth enrolled in the program should be “high risk” to (re-)offend. Youth may be referred to the program by the Community Corrections Reintegration Program, the RCMP, or an affiliated community-based agency (e.g., the local school or health centre). It is important to note that participation in the program is non-mandatory and the participant and/or family must show some willingness to accept assistance from the program.

#### 3.1.1 NYVRP Eligibility Criteria

Two sets of eligibility criteria have been developed for the NYVRP, one for each referral source. For the **corrections-based referrals**, youth must meet the following two criteria:

- must be between the ages of 12-24 years at the time of the referral
- must be a sentenced offender under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice and have a minimum of 5 months remaining on the sentence at the time of the referral

The youth must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- his/her most recent charge(s) or recent history of charges (within the last 12 months) are for violent offense(s) (excluding domestic violence between adults or sexual violence-related offenses)
- has current charges, or a recent history of offense(s), related to gang involvement or gang activities
- is obsessed with or glorifies street gang culture
- is gang-involved according to personal disclosure and/or reports from a reliable source (i.e., school rep, RCMP, guardian)
- associates with antisocial peers
- displays antisocial or pro-criminal behaviours

For the **community-based referrals**, the youth must meet the following two criteria:

- must be between the ages of 12-24 years at the time of the referral; and
- has incident reports for physical or verbal (threats of) violence, including extreme bullying/intimidation, and/or involved with gang-related activities.

In addition, the youth must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- is obsessed with or glorifies street gang culture
- is gang-involved according to personal disclosure and/or reports from a reliable source (i.e., school rep, RCMP, guardian)
- engages in gang-related activities (e.g., tagging, graffiti)
- associates with antisocial peers
- displays antisocial or pro-criminal behaviours

A NYVRP Referral Form is provided to the MOPO or Core Team at the time of referral for each participant, which is signed by the Custody Supervision and Rehabilitative Services (CSRS) Supervisor (for offenders) or an affiliated agency Supervisor (for at-risk youth). Once the consent forms are signed and acceptance into the program by the youth (and family for those under 16 years of age) is gained, a risk assessment is completed. The assessments are used to ensure that participants are eligible to participate in the initiative and to assist in forming each individual's case plan.

### **3.1.2 Risk Assessment Tools**

#### ***Original Risk Assessment Protocol***

The risk assessment tools and processes employed by the NYVRP have changed over time. Initially, it was intended that adjudicated NYVRP participants referred by Corrections would be assessed by Corrections using the *Level of Service Inventory–Saskatchewan Youth Edition* (LSI-SK) or the *Saskatchewan Primary Risk Assessment* (SPRA; an adult risk assessment tool). The LSI-SK is a structured risk assessment tool based on the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory developed by Hoge and Andrews (2002), is comprised of 45 items, and is designed for use with youth who are between the ages of 12 to 17 years. The SPRA is also a structured risk assessment measure; it is comprised of fifteen items and is used with persons who are 18 years or older (Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety, and Policing, 2009). Both tools are based on the principles of risk, need, and responsivity (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990; see Section 4.3) and place individuals on a continuum of risk ranging from low to high. Further, both measure the presence of static and dynamic risks factors, such as criminal history, employment/education, substance use, family relationships, companions, pro-criminal attitudes, and antisocial behaviour; however, there are minor differences in the risk factors assessed by these tools (e.g., the LSI-SK measures leisure and recreation activities and the SPRA measures housing stability and self-management). The LSI-SK or SPRA (whichever is the appropriate tool given the youth's age) were to be completed by Corrections staff and the results shared with the youth's HAWW.

For “at risk”/non-adjudicated NYVRP participants referred from a community agency, the *Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory 2.0* (YLS/CMI) was to be administered. The original YLS/CMI was developed by Hoge and Andrews (2002) and was updated in 2011. It was derived from the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) and designed specifically for adolescents (Andrews & Bonta, 1995). It is comprised of 42 items grouped into eight sections, that correspond with the Central Eight risk factors (i.e., eight criminogenic needs that are

considered to be the most important to address to decrease the likelihood of future delinquency or antisocial behaviour; Andrews & Bonta, 2010). It is intended for use with youth who are between the ages of 12 to 18 years to predict their risk of recidivism.

### ***Revised Risk Assessment Protocol***

Throughout the first year of program delivery, the NYVRP encountered numerous challenges with completing risk assessments for both the corrections- and community-referred youth (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019). At the community level, staff's level of education and comprehension of the YLS/CMI (due, in part, to language barriers) were identified as significant obstacles in completing assessments. For Corrections, high staff turnover, high caseloads, and a backlog of assessments made it difficult for probation officers to complete assessments in a timely manner. As a result, very few youth were assessed for risk during the first year of the program, let alone at the time of referral. Given these findings, and based on recommendations from the formative evaluation, it was decided that NYVRP staff would complete a Screening Version of the YLS/CMI (i.e., the YLS/CMI: SV; Hoge & Andrews, 2013) for all youth upon referral to the program. This would allow for preliminary information about the risk level of all referrals to be obtained to inform whether the youth meets the eligibility criteria of being high risk. It would also eliminate the need for both Corrections and NYVRP staff to complete a full assessment on the youth in a short-time frame. However, this procedure was enacted with the expectation that Corrections would still share any completed risk assessments with the NYVRP and the NYVRP would complete full YLS/CMI assessments for youth whose risk levels warranted further clarification (e.g., youth screened as moderate risk).

The YLS/CMI: SV is an 8-item scale that is derived from the 42-item YLS/CMI (Hoge & Andrews, 2013). The eight items correspond to the Central Eight, including: a) history of conduct disorder; b) current school or employment problems; c) criminal friends; d) alcohol and drug problems; e) leisure/recreation; f) personality/behaviour; g) family circumstances/parenting; and h) attitudes/orientation. Scores on the scale may range from 0 to 8, and recent research (Campbell et al., 2014; Chu, Yu, Lee, & Zeng, 2014) suggests using the following score cut-offs to determine risk ratings: scores of 0 to 2 = low risk; scores of 3 to 5 = moderate risk; and scores of 6 to 8 = high risk. Further, Campbell et al. (2014) assessed the validity of the YLS/CMI: SV with a large sample of juvenile offenders ( $n=558$ ) and found that the short version is a valid indicator of risk for offending. Both the original and shortened version of the YLS/CMI significantly predicted 2-year recidivism for juvenile offenders.

In addition to completing the YLS/CMI: SV upon referral, it was also decided that all youth in the program (i.e., both corrections and community referrals) would be administered the Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT). During the first year of program delivery, use of the POSIT was optional; however, given the uptake of this instrument among HAWWs and general ease of administration, it was recommended in the formative evaluation that it be completed with all youth. The POSIT is designed for youth between the ages of 12 to 19 years and consists of 139 yes/no questions. It identifies problems and potential treatment or service needs in ten areas, including substance abuse, mental health, physical health, family relations, peer relations, aggressive behaviour and delinquency, educational status, vocational status, social skills, and leisure and recreation (Rahdert, 1991; Sullivan & Fleming, 1997). The POSIT does

not require specialized training to administer and can be scored using a computer program<sup>5</sup>. Further, the validity and reliability of the POSIT has been well documented in the literature (Knight, Goodman, Pulerwitz, & DuRant, 2001).

Finally, following the first year of program delivery, it was decided that a third tool would be introduced into the suite of assessments completed with youth upon referral: the Center for Youth Wellness Adverse Childhood Experience – Questionnaire (CYW ACE-Q) – Teen version (Harris & Renschler, 2015). It was observed by the NYVRP project management team that youth enrolled in the program have experienced a considerable amount of trauma and that a tool such as the ACE-Q would be helpful in documenting these experiences. Following a review of existing ACE instruments (Bethell et al., 2017; Oh et al., 2018) completed by the evaluation team, together with the NYVRP project management team, it was decided that the CYW ACE-Q would be slightly modified for use with the NYVRP (i.e., instructions specific to NYVRP staff were included directly on the form and the formatting was changed slightly).

The ACE-Q consists of 19 items covering three types of adverse childhood experiences including: 1) abuse (physical emotional, and sexual); 2) neglect (physical and emotional); and 3) household dysfunction (mental illness, incarcerated relative, mother treated violently, substance abuse, and divorce). The first set of 10 items of the scale reflect what is considered the 10 traditional ACEs, while the second set of 9 items constitute additional early life stressors that may be experienced by children or youth. Individuals with scores  $\geq 4$  should be referred to appropriate treatment for their symptoms/history. Notably, studies on young offenders use ACE scores of six and higher as an indicator of being at higher risk of offending (Baglivio et al., 2015).

### ***Role of the Evaluation Team***

The evaluation team has supported the NYVRP project team with the risk assessment process throughout the initiative. For instance, both the YLS/CMI and POSIT, and later the YLS/CMI: SV, were adopted for use in the program upon the recommendation of the Principal Evaluation Investigator. The evaluation team also supported the selection of the specific ACE tool used in the NYVRP. Finally, the evaluation team has been available for consultation to discuss and address issues that have emerged in relation to using the risk assessments. In fact, the evaluation team has played an active role in developing strategies for increasing the use of risk assessments in the NYVRP.

## **3.2 NYVRP Management**

As per the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and the *Canada Criminal Code*, Community Corrections is responsible for the overall case management of offenders. To provide effective seamless services, it is imperative that the HAWWs and Ministry staff work closely in supporting case plans and goals. Case management for “at risk” youth is the responsibility of the MOPO. The Core Team further clarifies or establishes the referral, intake, and discharge process for both “at risk” youth referrals and referrals for young offenders and adult offenders.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://positpc.com/>

The following points provide background into the roles and responsibilities of the key members required to fulfil the goals of the NYVRP.

1. **Agency:** is responsible for ensuring the Program is suitably staffed and workers are fulfilling their duties. The Agency Supervisor and the NYVRP Project Manager share the responsibility of supervising the HAWWs. The Agency Supervisor and Project Manager coordinate regular staff meetings. The Agency Supervisor also participates in Advisory Committee meetings as often as possible to stay updated on program and staff activities.
2. **Ministry of Corrections and Policing:** is responsible for overseeing and supporting the NYVRP initiative. The Manager, Community-Partner Services or other Ministry designate provides direct support as needed to the Agency for the successful delivery of the Program, provides advice and assistance in hiring program staff (if requested), and is responsible for providing core orientation and training to deliver the Program in all three communities.
3. **Oversight Committee:** provides general direction and support in the roll out and ongoing delivery of the NYVRP in the communities of Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows, and Deschambault Lake. The committee is responsible for “bigger picture” actions, issues and barriers that affect NYVRP service delivery, and provides expertise and uses authority to help resolve challenges and barriers that affect all three NYVRP sites. The Oversight Committee is integral to promoting collaboration among participating agency stakeholders.
4. **Advisory Committees:** are responsible for providing guidance and direction to the staff in each community. The Advisory Committees serve as a bridge to the community in promoting the program and helping to solicit support for program staff, clients, and families. The Committees provide direction and input to staff around service delivery, which includes developing/recommending/approving local protocols and policies. The Project Manager and then the MOPO (following the Project Manager’s departure) were initially responsible for leading the Advisory Committees. This leadership role slowly transitioned over to the Lead HAWW in each community during the last year of the program.
5. **NYVRP Project Manager:** manages program development and delivery in the NYVRP-served communities. The Project Manager develops, communicates and ensures adherence to protocols, procedures and guidelines relating to NYVRP service delivery. She also provides functional supervision to the HAWWs on behalf of, and in conjunction with, the Agency supervisor. In addition, she is responsible for coordinating Advisory and Oversight Committee meetings and liaising between NYVRP affiliated agencies. The Project Manager position became vacant in February 2019 and the program chose not to fill the position for the remainder of the initiative.
6. **Core Teams:** assess and prioritize referrals to be worked on in each community. Participating agencies share relevant information about referred clients and family to help inform case planning and interventions. The teams review the status (degree of

participation, progress) of participants currently enrolled in the program to adjust case plans as needed. They identify each participating worker's roles and responsibilities in supporting the case plan and discuss emergent concerns relating to client or case planning issues, or communication/cooperation challenges, and explores solutions. The Core Team makes the final decision to disengage/discontinue services to participants.

7. **NYVRP Manager of Program Operations (MOPO; formerly called the Health and Wellness Coordinator):** collects community referrals for assessment by the Core Team and may participate in initial intake meetings with Community Corrections. The MOPO is responsible for maintaining, collecting, and ensuring program administration documents are completed accurately and in a timely manner by Program staff. She coordinates mental health assessments, therapy and follow-up for clients. She also provides educational supervision and support to HAWWs around program integrity and quality assurance standards. In addition, the MOPO is responsible for conducting program file audits and implementing/adjusting service standards as needed based on data analysis. Following January 2019, the MOPO also took on some of the roles of the Project Manager (e.g., coordinating Advisory and Oversight Committee meetings and liaising between NYVRP affiliated agencies; developing, communicating, and ensuring adherence to protocols, procedures, and guidelines relating to NYVRP service delivery).
8. **Health and Wellness Workers (HAWWs):** are responsible for providing intensive support to referred participants. HAWWs may participate in initial intake meetings with Community Corrections. They are responsible for ensuring participants are working towards identified goals and for planning day-to-day activities with participants, affiliated agencies, and resource persons. HAWWs report back to the Core Team on various aspects of the client's progress. They may also report to the Advisory Committee from time to time on general program activities, successes, and challenges.

### 3.3 NYVRP Program Activities

Program staff participate in a collaborative case management committee known as the program's Core Team. All referrals are vetted through the Core Team to assess program eligibility, to discuss the reason for referral, personal and familial circumstances, assessment information, and possible rehabilitative interventions and sentencing conditions impacting program supports. The MOPO (or other program delegate when required) assigns a HAWW to each participant. The HAWWs provide intensive support to ensure participants are following through with rehabilitation activities as identified by the Core Team and are adhering to court-ordered conditions (for corrections-based referrals). Referrals for at-risk youth follow a similar intake and case management process. The HAWWs carry out three primary activities:

1. **Prepare the youth for re/connection with the community by:**
  - engaging the participant through one-on-one contact (beginning while the participant is in custody, where applicable, or early into the sentence, or early into the referral for "at risk" youth) to establish a relationship;
  - discussing with the participant his/her identified risk factors and possible supports;

- assisting the participant to identify strengths/interests, and internal and external resources, including potential support persons; and
  - supporting the participants' relapse prevention activities.
- 2. Prepare community supports for re/connection with the youth by:**
- establishing and enlisting assistance from organizations and individuals that can address known risk factors; and
  - engaging with potential support persons through one-to-one contact to establish a relationship.
- 3. Monitor and support the youth's ongoing re/engagement with the community by:**
- supervising the participant's transition to, and stabilization in, the community through frequent personal contact with the participant, as well as the organizations and individuals (including the Ministry) enlisted to address known risk factors;
  - holding the youth accountable for his/her own choices and actions by appropriately challenging antisocial or pro-criminal behaviours and encouraging personal responsibility; and
  - responding to emergent challenges faced by the participant and/or those enlisted to support the youth in the community; this includes providing assistance during evenings and weekends.

All youth also have access to assessments and treatment provided by professional counsellors and therapists, including mental health therapists available through Indigenous Services Canada via remote presence technology.<sup>6</sup>

### 3.3.1 NYVRP Service Delivery Standards

The HAWWs and the Agency are responsible for carrying out the following standards:

- Depending on the level of involvement of each participant, the two HAWWs in each community will maintain an active, combined caseload of 10-15 clients at all times;
- Participate in all Core Team meetings, as required;
- Program staff will communicate at least weekly on participants' status with Community Corrections in addition to participating in Core Team meetings;
- Meet with participants a minimum of 3 times per week or more (for at least one hour) depending on participant needs and level of engagement, which includes developing and arranging pro-social relationships and activities to fill high risk hours;
- Regularly work non-traditional hours, including evenings and weekends;
- Work with clients for a period of up to 12 months;

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<sup>6</sup> Remote presence technology allows for face-to-face communication through a 'robot' controlled remotely by a specialist (Agarwal et al., 2007; Allen, 2015). Remote presence technology uses ordinary cell phone or Internet wireless connections to video-link specialists with clients to perform real-time diagnosis and monitoring. Specialists can remotely control a robot and interact via video-link with a patient using either their laptops or a smartphone (Allen, 2015; Mendez, Jong, Keays-White, & Turner, 2013).



- Complete and maintain the appropriate client paper and electronic reports and files for each participant consistently and accurately;
- Create and update participants' individual Action Plans each month to support positive development;
- Establish and maintain community visibility and credibility at youth hangouts, recreation centres, social events, and schools;
- Unless otherwise worked out with their HAWW co-worker or the MOPO, be on call to respond to crisis situations involving participants. The Agency will ensure potential staff and volunteers have completed and submitted documentation including: Criminal Record Check, Vulnerable Person's check, and personal and professional record checks;
- Communicate at least twice a week with the MOPO or as established, at least weekly with the Project Manager, and as required by the Agency Supervisor; and
- Remain in contact with NYVRP youth who are incarcerated by calling or visiting them.

### **3.3.2 Referral, Consent, Intake, and Assessment Procedures**

It is expected that consent will be obtained from clients within three weeks of receiving a community referral and within six weeks for referrals received from corrections. Corrections referrals were originally provided a longer engagement period to provide the Corrections Worker with additional time to complete a risk assessment (i.e., LSI-SK or SPRA) of the youth. During the engagement period, NYVRP staff are expected to make contact with the youth 3 to 4 times a week, describe the program to them, and attend activities with them. If youth are not willing to provide consent within the three or six week period, the referral is marked as inactive, and NYVRP staff may periodically check in with the youth to determine if their interest in participating in the program has changed.

For corrections-referred youth, once Corrections is notified that the youth has consented to participate in the NYVRP, a completed NYVRP Corrections Referral Form is provided to the HAWW. At this point, the HAWW is able to begin the NYVRP intake and case planning process with the youth and is to convene the Core Team. The goal is for HAWWs to complete all intake and risk assessments (i.e., YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, ACE-Q) within 14 days following consent. Information gathered during the engagement process may facilitate the completion of these forms/processes.

For both corrections- and community-referred clients, the HAWWs are expected to discuss each consented youth at the next scheduled Core meeting and discuss each youth at every monthly Core meeting thereafter. Initially, HAWWs were expected to schedule a Core Intake Meeting 7 to 10 days after the intake and assessment process were completed, with follow-up meetings occurring every 7 to 10 days. However, this schedule was deemed too burdensome by the participating agencies and it was decided soon after program delivery began that meetings would be scheduled on a monthly basis (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019).

### **3.3.3 Staff Expectations**

To ensure adherence to the service delivery standards outlined above, staff are expected to participate in weekly or bi-weekly conference calls with the Project Manager, MOPO, and

HAWWs from all three sites. In these calls, staff are provided with support to ensure standardization of the NYVRP service delivery model and discuss the number of referrals staff have received, their case loads, Core team meetings, completion of assessments, follow through on case plans, inclusion of Elders/Mentors, upcoming community activities and events, and any concerns staff may have about clients or the program.

In addition, the NYVRP Project Manager (with support from the Ministry of Corrections and Policing Manager) completes Performance Monitoring and Assessment (PMA) reports that capture aggregated data for all three communities. The report is divided into three key areas with differing reporting schedules. In part one, the planned activities are tracked and accomplishments are recorded. This section of the report is submitted on a quarterly basis<sup>7</sup>. Part two of the report is intended to describe participant characteristics, such as risk factors and their levels of participation in the program. Finally, part three focusses on the production of informational materials to aid in the knowledge dissemination of the NYVRP and is also used to track information on all project partners, in particular who they are and their levels of participation. Parts two and three of the PMA report are delivered on a bi-annual basis throughout the duration of the project.<sup>8</sup>

Lastly, an Information Management System database was supposed to be developed through the leadership of the Ministry of Corrections and Policing. The database was intended to collect all project and evaluation data gathered by the program and to have a corresponding data dictionary. The Ministry intended to use its existing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database structure to create a database specific to the NYVRP and, consequently, purchased licenses during the first year of funding and arranged for a data analyst to build the NYVRP CRM database. Due to upgrades being made to the database, it was decided that work would not be completed on the database until after April 1, 2016. In September 2016, the province decided to discontinue the CRM database and ceased any plans to use the database. The Ministry sought special permission to continue using the database with the NYVRP, since licences for the database had already been purchased, and permission was granted to use the CRM database in February 2017. By this time, however, personnel arranged to support the development of the database were re-directed to other projects or positions leaving the NYVRP without Ministry support and IT human resources to build the database. Thus, it was then decided that the database would be built by a small working group led by the Ministry Manager of the NYVRP, which included support from the Strategic Systems and Innovations' CRM specialist. Due to a lack of human resources to build the database, competing priorities to attend to more immediate program operations issues, and ensuing technical difficulties in developing the database (e.g., finding a test site), the program was not able to build a database by the end of the initiative.

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<sup>7</sup> For part one of the PMA, the quarterly reporting periods are April 1st-June 30th, July 1st -September 30th, October 1st- to December 31st and January 1st-March 31st for the duration of the NYVRP program.

<sup>8</sup> For part two of the PMA, the bi-annual reporting periods are due April 1st-September 30th and October 1st-March 31st for the duration of the NYVRP program.

## 4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS UNDERLYING THE NYVRP

The NYVRP is based on the Philadelphia Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP) model; with some of its adaptations based on the Re-Entry and Intensive Aftercare Program (RIAP) model. It is also informed by the Risk-Need-Responsivity [RNR] model. Each model provides an evidence-based foundation for the NYVRP and is described below. Given the unique context in which the NYVRP is being implemented (i.e., in rural, largely First Nation communities), some modification of the original models was required; these adaptations are also discussed.

### 4.1 Theoretical Framework: Youth Violence Reduction Partnership Model

The YVRP was first implemented in Philadelphia in 1999 (McClanahan, 2004). The program model is based on the principle that risk reduction through rehabilitation reduces offending behaviour and was designed to reduce homicide rates and facilitate prosocial change in violent young offenders. Although the YVRP is a secular initiative, it was originally based on the Boston Miracle program, which was a faith-based coalition that included intense supervision of high-risk youth by police and parole officers with support from outreach workers. Given the Boston program's success in reducing homicides, a number of youth-serving organizations and criminal justice agencies in Philadelphia partnered to create the YVRP. The program was initially implemented in two city districts and was later expanded to four additional districts (McClanahan et al., 2012).

The YVRP targets youth aged 14-24 years who are on active probation and deemed at high risk of being involved in a homicide (McClanahan et al., 2012). Participants, known as youth partners, live in the most violent neighbourhoods in the city where guns and drugs, economic and educational deprivation, and unstable family lives are pervasive. A number of eligibility criteria are used to identify youth for the program, including arrests for drug offences, a history of gun-related charges, convictions for other violent crimes, a history of incarceration, age at first arrest, family history of abuse and neglect, and sibling involvement in the justice system (Jucovy & McClanahan, 2008). Youth participants are predominantly male (95%) and of African American (63%) or Hispanic (31%) descent (McClanahan et al., 2012). The average length of time that youth partners remain in the program is a little more than two years (McClanahan et al., 2012).

#### 4.1.1 Description of the YVRP Model

The YVRP model has two key components. First, emotional and practical supports are provided by paraprofessionals known as *street workers*. These supports help to address some of the root causes of crime, such as a lack of education, lack of connection to meaningful employment, poor housing conditions, abuse or neglect, negative peers, lack of access to services, and a lack of prosocial adult guidance (McClanahan et al., 2012).

Street workers have the most contact with participants, with standards ranging from 16 times per month for the highest-risk youth (8 home contacts and 8 in the community) to at least 6 times for the lowest-risk youth (4 home visits and 2 in the community; McClanahan et al., 2012). On average, however, they have six successful visits per month. Street workers often connect youth partners to supports such as job interviews or leisure activities. They may also help participants'

parents find employment or housing to provide more stable family lives. These workers often live or have lived in the YVRP neighbourhoods and, therefore, understand the community culture and have more credibility with the youth (McClanahan, 2004). As such, they build trusting relationships with youth partners and play an important positive role in the youth's lives. Street workers know and reinforce the probation conditions, but also act as a trusted confidante for youth. As of 2004, the YVRP employed one street worker for every 15 participants. Most of these street workers are fairly young (they are generally in their late 20s or early 30s) and are of similar ethnic descent as YVRP youth partners (i.e., the majority of workers are African American, although some are Hispanic or Caucasian). They also may have struggled with similar problems to the youth partners earlier in their lives (e.g., drugs, crime, violence). Street workers are often paired with a specific probation officer; regular communication between these two individuals is encouraged.

Secondly, there is the goal of reducing the opportunity to engage in criminal behaviour through increased supervision from probation officers and police. This model is unique in that the level of collaboration between the probation officers (POs), police officers, and street workers allows for an increase in support and supervision (McClanahan, 2004).

POs enforce the conditions of the youth partners' sentences through a high level of monitoring (McClanahan et al., 2012). Beyond the weekly formal meetings at the probation office, POs also visit youth and their families at their homes, workplaces, or schools. On average, they have three successful in-person contacts per month, although the aim is to have more contact. They also determine the youth partners' needs and make efforts to meet such needs. Smaller caseloads allow the POs to perform this intensive supervision (Jucovy & McClanahan, 2008).

Additionally, police officers and POs complete targeted joint patrols to check known drug corners for youth and gain general intelligence on the community (McClanahan et al., 2012). These patrols are also designed to present a unified front between law enforcement and the justice system (McClanahan, 2004). Police officers make efforts to see each participant four times per month on these patrols. Further, when the YVRP program was implemented, there also was an intention that police officers would get to know families in the community outside of the context of crisis or crime (McClanahan, 2004).

#### **4.1.2 Key Elements of the YVRP's Successful Implementation**

Jucovy and McClanahan (2008) identified seven elements of the YVRP model that are essential for successfully planning, operating, maintaining and strengthening the program. These elements include:

1. a partnership between public agencies and community organizations;
2. a champion who advocates for the YVRP;
3. a willingness among agencies to make changes to their approaches;
4. a commitment to having the work take place in the communities;
5. a combination of strict supervision and consistent support;
6. a commitment to using data for monitoring and decision-making; and
7. communication and accountability at all levels.

Accountability is achieved through face-to-face meetings of staff from all agencies, carefully collected data to help guide the implementation, and operational protocols to ensure the project is implemented according to the model (McClanahan, 2004).

#### 4.1.3 Research on the YVRP Model

McClanahan et al. (2012) conducted a multi-year evaluation of the YVRP that was designed to assess the impact on neighbourhood homicides and individual participants. The evaluation used two quasi-experimental designs. First, the authors examined homicide rates (i.e., average number of youth homicides per quarter) in five police districts before and after the YVRP was implemented (i.e., from 1994 to 2010), as a decline in the homicide rate after YVRP implementation would suggest the program may have had a positive neighbourhood-level effect. A significant decline in homicides was only found for one of the districts. Additionally, the evaluators compared youth homicide trends in the five YVRP districts after program implementation with the homicide trends for the city as a whole. If the youth homicide trends in the YVRP districts declined more rapidly or increased more slowly compared to the city overall, the results would suggest the program may be effective in reducing homicides. Results indicated that the youth homicide rates declined relative to the city-wide rates in two of the districts (i.e., - 12% and -8%), while the rates increased compared to the city-wide rates in the other three districts (i.e., +8%, +6%, +9%). Overall, the evaluators concluded that the program was associated with a reduction of youth homicides in the first two districts where the YVRP was implemented, but not in the districts in which it was later replicated.

McClanahan et al. (2012) suggested that the mixed results at the neighbourhood level of analyses (i.e., youth homicide rates) may have been due to a variety of factors. For example, the YVRP experienced challenges as it expanded to additional districts, such as not increasing staff as the program grew. Additionally, the use of data to inform YVRP decisions declined over time. The roles of the frontline staff also changed, as street workers increasingly focused on connecting youth with jobs and education, and provided less emotional support, spent less time connecting youth with positive leisure activities, and offered less assistance for participants' families. Further, the targeted police patrols, which were originally conducted by officers who were interested in community policing, later were available to all police officers as an overtime option. McClanahan et al. (2012) also noted that the results did not suggest that differences between neighbourhoods or participants (e.g., socioeconomic status, demographic characteristics, prevalence of drug hotspots) accounted for the discrepant results; the observed differences seemed to be more strongly related to divergence from the YVRP's program delivery model. Thus, it appears that the YVRP has the potential to lead to community-level changes (such as reduced homicide rates) *if* it is implemented with strong fidelity to its program delivery model. These findings also speak to the difficulty associated with successfully replicating a given program delivery model in additional communities.

The second method used in the evaluation was a comparison between 150 YVRP youth partners and 211 non-YVRP youth probationers on rearrests and reconvictions for violent crime over an 18-month period (McClanahan et al., 2012). Of note, YVRP youth were not randomly assigned to the program. Results indicated that YVRP youth had lower rates of violent crime arrests

(15.5%) and convictions (13.6%) than the non-YVRP youth (25.5% and 24.1%, respectively). However, only the difference for arrests was statistically significant. Results also demonstrated that youth who had more contacts with their street workers were significantly less likely to have been arrested for a violent crime. Overall, this study suggests that the YVRP may lead to a reduction in violence at the individual-level.

#### **4.1.4 Adapting the YVRP Model**

The NYVRP is using the YVRP model as its basis and has adapted it to fit the particular context in which it is being implemented. Specifically, rather than being implemented in an urban, predominantly African American and Hispanic environment, the NYVRP is being implemented in three rural/remote, predominantly First Nation communities. Despite these differences, the two settings share a number of characteristics, including marginalized populations, high levels of poverty, low education and employment rates, and disproportionately high crime rates (Irvine & Quinn, 2016; Irvine et al., 2011; McClanahan, 2004).

The first difference in how the model is being implemented in Saskatchewan is that the NYVRP has been expanded beyond the three YVRP professionals (i.e., probation officers, police, and street workers) to include partnerships with community members and other human service professionals. Local community-based organizations (CBOs) have been engaged to provide supports and services to the youth participants in each location. In this sense, the NYVRP appears to be more comprehensive than the YVRP. In addition, a CBO in each community has entered into a service agreement with the Ministry of Corrections and Policing to supervise and house the local NYVRP staff. NYVRP staff follow their local organization's administrative policies and procedures. They also receive substantive supervision from their NYVRP supervisors (e.g., the NYVRP Project Manager and MOPO).

Second, in each community, there are two support workers (i.e., Health and Wellness Workers) who fill the role of the street workers from the original YVRP model. There is a ratio of two support workers for fifteen participants, which is smaller than the one to fifteen ratio from the original program.

Third, the NYVRP differs from the YVRP in that the NYVRP's main role is to support rehabilitation. Staff do not outright supervise conditions but do monitor them. If they see someone breaking conditions, they will decide how to address it (e.g., support a pause for the youth in the programming, by discussing with the PO the circumstances and why the youth would benefit from the temporary discontinuation). Further, police in the communities do not offer strict supervision—instead, they adopt a friendly supervision model, as it is necessary, given the size of the communities, to maintain a positive relationship with community members rather than an adversarial relationship.

A fourth difference is that the majority of staff training and support is offered by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections and Policing to develop the skills necessary for successful program implementation, including the use of individualized criminogenic risk assessment tools, the development of case plans, and the delivery of services and support activities to address the risk/needs factors unique to each youth.

Finally, when the YVRP was initially implemented, no risk assessment tools were used to determine whether a given probationer should be enrolled in the program; staff generally used their professional judgment to make such risk-related decisions (McClanahan, 2012). Although juvenile probation in Philadelphia continues to use this subjective method, in 2009, adult probation started to employ a statistical risk assessment tool that examines probationers' criminal histories and other individual and neighbourhood characteristics to predict the likelihood of violent crime. Only probationers that were assessed as high risk were enrolled in the program. In the NYVRP, validated assessment tools, such as the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory: Screening Version (Hoge & Andrews, 2013), are to be used to determine risk level and criminogenic risks and needs (including dynamic risks such as employment/education, substance use, family circumstances, pro-criminal companions and attitudes, and mental health issues linked to offending) of all youth in the program, regardless of their age. These assessments are then to be used to identify youth who are eligible for programming and guide the development of individual case plans to target the identified criminogenic factors for each project participant.

## **4.2 Theoretical Framework: Re-entry and Intensive Aftercare Program Model**

In 1987, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the United States implemented a research and development demonstration project to design, test, and disseminate information on what is to be known as the Re-entry and Intensive Aftercare Program (RIAP). Directed towards serious chronic juvenile offenders who were released from secure confinement, this program was a response to escalating juvenile crimes rates, increasing costs to the system, the rising number of youth entering secure care, and the overall ineffectiveness of the juvenile correctional system in reducing or controlling delinquent behaviour among this aftercare population. The sites for the initial program took place in Nevada, Colorado, New Jersey and Virginia and was guided by the following principles:

- preparing juveniles for progressively increased responsibility and freedom into the community;
- facilitating action and involvement between juveniles and community;
- working with offenders and targeted community support systems that support the offenders' reintegration into community;
- developing new resources and support services as needed; and
- monitoring and testing the capacity of the offender to receive supports and the ability of the community to provide those services (Wiebush, McNulty, & Le, 2000).

### **4.2.1 Key Elements of the RIAP Model**

Within this theory-driven and empirically-based framework, supervision and surveillance controls are gradually reduced, while social controls are gradually increased through community involvement and prosocial bonding. This procedure is designed to successfully transition young offenders from a highly regimented institutional environment to an often unstructured life in the community (Altschuler & Armstrong, 2004). There are five key elements of the program (Altschuler & Armstrong, 2004):

1. the model uses risk-needs assessments to classify participants (e.g., as high risk for reoffending), determine eligibility for the program, and match clients with appropriate services;
2. the use of individual case planning that incorporates a family and community perspective. Information from the risk assessment is used to provide a comprehensive plan for youth during and following incarceration that tailors interventions to the individual's problems in order to meet specific outcomes. Assessment and case planning is an ongoing process, with new information incorporated on a continual basis;
3. a mix of intensive surveillance and treatment/service provision (Altschuler & Armstrong, 2004). Services should target criminogenic needs that are related to risk and are informed by the individual assessments. The high level of monitoring in the program is not merely designed to deter antisocial behaviour, but to allow staff to recognize negative and positive behaviour or situations and respond accordingly;
4. a balance of incentives and graduated consequences with realistic, enforceable conditions. These reinforcement strategies should be swift, certain, and demonstrated to be effective; and
5. recognition that youths' social networks may be utilized both as a target of intervention (e.g., antisocial peers) and a partner in service provision (e.g., family support).

#### **4.2.2 Research on the RIAP Model**

A process evaluation by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency identified a number of program factors that aided the implementation process of the RIAP model at pilot sites (Wiebush, McNulty, & Le, 2000):

1. high-risk youth were identified for the program using empirically-based risk instruments;
2. case management was provided by staff with small caseloads of program participants (i.e., 15 to 20 youth);
3. substantial coordination and continuity in case planning and management existed across institutional and aftercare phases using a team approach;
4. frequent interactions occurred between institutional and community staff;
5. planning for aftercare occurred shortly after the youth's incarceration began;
6. formal structures existed to facilitate institution-community transition (e.g., transitional facilities, service delivery during and post-incarceration by the same treatment providers);
7. specialized services for youth (e.g., life skills training, anger management training, family counselling) were provided in institutional and aftercare phases;
8. aftercare services included a mix of control measures and interventions; and
9. positive incentives and graduated sanction systems were used in the institutional and parole phases.



### 4.2.3 Adapting the RIAP Model

The NYVRP uses the five principles of the RIAP model outlined above. As these components are noted to be general in nature, they allow for a reasonable degree of flexibility in how the components are implemented in a given setting (Altschuler & Armstrong, 2004). Importantly, although the model is intended for youth returning from custody, most youth involved in the NYVRP will *not* have a custody sentence. In fact, some youth may not even be involved in the criminal justice system. Thus, the aspects of the model that take place in an institution may not be relevant for NYVRP participants; however, the aspects of the model focused on community reintegration are applied to all participants.

It should also be noted that there is much overlap between the YVRP and RIAP models. For instance, both place an emphasis on connecting youth with the community supports and resources required to address their criminogenic needs. In addition, both encourage the surveillance and monitoring of the youth through frequent contact. However, the RIAP model formalizes or adds additional structure to the YVRP. For instance, risk assessment is not a mandatory component of the YVRP, but is one of the key elements of the RIAP model. Further, the RIAP model advocates for individual case planning on an ongoing basis, which will provide more structured direction for providing interventions to the youth.

## 4.3 Theoretical Framework: Risk-Need-Responsivity

A final theoretical framework that informs the NYVRP is the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews et al., 1990). These principles guide practitioners in determining the amount of treatment an individual requires, the specific areas in which treatment is needed, and considerations for ensuring that treatment is delivered effectively. Specifically, the risk principle states that treatment intensity should match an individual's risk level. That is, if individuals score as high risk on a risk assessment tool, they should receive high intensity treatment, whereas individuals scoring as low risk should receive low intensity treatment. The need principle posits that treatment should be focused on addressing criminogenic needs, such as static and dynamic risk factors. In particular, eight criminogenic needs have been identified as being the most important to address to reduce future delinquent or antisocial behaviour: the Big Four (i.e., antisocial cognition, antisocial associates, antisocial personality pattern, and history of antisocial behaviour) and the Moderate Four (i.e., family/marital, school/work, leisure/recreation, and substance abuse; Andrews & Bonta, 2010). Finally, the responsivity principle denotes that treatment should be delivered in a way that best matches an individual's ability and learning style.

### 4.3.1 Adapting the RNR Principles

The risk assessments employed in the NYVRP are informed by the RNR principles (Andrews et al., 1990). The NYVRP utilizes risk assessment tools (see Section 3.1.2 for a detailed discussion) to allow the HAWWs and MOPO to determine: a) youth's level of risk; b) the specific need/risk areas that should be targeted by the NYVRP; and c) important responsivity factors that should be considered in tailoring any interventions offered to the youth to meet their unique needs. Accordingly, the risk tools are used to determine whether a youth is high risk and whether an

intensive intervention approach, such as the one offered through the NYVRP, is warranted. Further, the risk tools are intended to help the HAWWs and MOPO apply the RNR principles in their work with the youth by guiding the development of individual case plans to target the identified criminogenic needs of each participant. Importantly, all risk assessment tools employed in the NYVRP are only predictive of general recidivism; that is, they are not intended to predict the likelihood of a violent offense (Andrews & Bonta, 1995; Patrick, Orton, & Wormith, 2013).

#### 4.4 NYVRP Theory of Change

In line with the original YVRP model, the theory of change for the NYVRP is to reduce physical violence, violence victimization, and gang-related activities in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay. It is assumed that, through supervision, rehabilitation, and reintegration, it will be possible to reduce the risk factors of youth who participate in the NYVRP and reduce their likelihood of (re)offending. Specifically, it is assumed that there will be a reduction in violent or gang-related behaviour through the: a) provision of supports and interventions targeting the youth's criminogenic needs via dedicated HAWWs; b) use of "external controls," such as conditions imposed by the courts, supervision by youth workers/probation officers or their designates; and c) general surveillance by the community and natural supports within the community. In addition, it is assumed that, through the building of strong partnerships in each community, local capacity will be increased to address and reduce future potential violence and gang related activities.

#### 4.5 Program Logic Model

Program logic models (PLMs) outline the intended inputs, activities, outputs, intermediate, and long-term outcomes of an initiative and enhance stakeholders' understanding of how a program will unfold, based upon the program theory. The NYVRP program logic model was developed in consultation with the Advisory Committees in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay. It was determined that the logic model would have two components: an organizational level (Figure 1) and a client/case management level (Figure 2).

Most of the outcomes included in the PLM reflect outcomes the NYVRP originally intended to achieve. However, through the current impact evaluation, a number of additional client-level outcomes were identified and included in the PLM. Specifically, the following were deemed to be important outcomes of youth who participated in the program:

- established a positive, trusting relationship with the HAWW
- better able to meet basic needs (i.e., food, clothing shelter)
- enhanced self-esteem and confidence
- improved communication skills
- more openness with feelings and emotions
- greater optimism about the future




All of these newly identified outcomes can be considered intermediate outcomes. In fact, many can be seen as precursors to the original "intermediate" outcomes included in PLM.

In addition to outlining the NYVRP's intended inputs, outputs, and outcomes, the PLM also served as a guide for the various evaluation activities undertaken throughout the course of the initiative. The outputs at both the organizational- and client-level were assessed and monitored in all three evaluations completed for the NYVRP: the 2018 formative evaluation (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019); the 2019 annual process evaluation (Jewell, Akca, et al., 2019), and the current 2020 final evaluation. The evaluation reports were cumulative (i.e., information about the number of outputs achieved built upon the previous year's outputs) and the final evaluation report provides the total number of outputs achieved by the NYVRP.




A unique component of the current final evaluation is that it also included an impact-evaluation component. Indeed, this was the only program year in which evaluation activities were conducted to assess the NYVRP's outcomes. Specifically, the final evaluation examined the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended intermediate- and long-term outcomes at the organizational level. At the client level, the final impact evaluation primarily focused on the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intermediate outcomes; however, elements of the evaluation did consider the extent to which the NYVRP led to reduced recidivism (a long-term outcome). For the purposes of this evaluation, a broad definition of recidivism was employed and any (new) involvement in the criminal justice system after joining the NYVRP was considered to be reflective of recidivism (i.e., this could include initial offending if youth had not previously had contact with the criminal justice system prior to program involvement or those who came into contact with the system again after joining the program). While this approach provides insight into the full extent to which participants' involvement in the criminal justice system changed as a result of participating in the NYVRP, a limitation is that it could result in a more conservative evaluation of the NYVRP given the program's explicit focus on reducing violent and gang-related behaviour, as well as gang involvement. That is, our broad definition of recidivism allows for other types of crimes/criminal activities to be included in the evaluation, such as property crime, which the NYVRP does not directly target and may be less likely to influence. It also does not allow us to specifically examine administrative offenses which the NYVRP may be more likely to influence given that youth are likely to have greater support in meeting their court-ordered conditions.

A detailed description of the PLM can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 1: Logic Model at the Organizational Level

| NYVRP Logic Model: Organizational Level  |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Inputs/Resources   | Activities  | Outputs   | Intermediate outcomes  | Long-term outcomes  |
|  |   | Process Evaluation: Years 2017-2020   | Impact Evaluation: Year 2020   | Impact Evaluation: Year 2020  |
|  |    |   |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NYVRP Staff</li> <li>• NYVRP Project Manager</li> <li>• Ministry of Corrections and Policing: Community Safety and Well-being Staff and Custody Supervision and Rehabilitative Services</li> <li>• RCMP</li> <li>• PBCN Pelican Narrows Administration</li> <li>• PBCN Deschambault Lake Admin</li> <li>• PBCN Sandy Bay</li> <li>• Northern Village of Sandy Bay (municipal)</li> <li>• Local stakeholders</li> <li>• NCPC Funding and Support</li> <li>• Local Radio</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff training and support</li> <li>• Develop MOU between Agencies</li> <li>• Info sharing agreements signed</li> <li>• Develop/maintain quarterly Oversight Committee</li> <li>• Develop and Maintain Local Advisory Committees</li> <li>• Develop and Maintain Core Teams</li> <li>• Public recognition of NYVRP mentors and community role models</li> <li>• Public service announcements for developing mentors</li> <li>• NYVRP staff complete asset mapping in communities</li> <li>• Staff and Cross Training Opportunities</li> <li>• Radio Announcements for NYVRP</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of staff trained in Core Training</li> <li>• Rate of operational standards adhered to for worker/client safety, effective case management</li> <li>• Info sharing Agreements signed between stakeholders</li> <li>• Number of Core meetings involving RCMP and Corrections</li> <li>• Number of Core Meeting participants on a weekly basis</li> <li>• Number of Oversight meetings held</li> <li>• Number of regional stakeholders represented at quarterly Oversight Meetings.</li> <li>• Number of community stakeholders represented at monthly Advisory Meetings</li> <li>• Number of volunteers involved w/ programs / clients i.e. Elders, extended family, community</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff satisfaction w/ jobs</li> <li>• Increase in formal service integration</li> <li>• Increase in community cooperation w/ policing</li> <li>• Increase in perception of safety</li> <li>• Increase community involvement/mentorship to address gangs and violence</li> <li>• Increase in volunteerism and natural community resources re: Language retention, traditional customs and lifestyles, addressing risk/needs</li> <li>• Increase in family participation in community activities</li> <li>• Community is sharing “personal gifts” with youth</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff retention</li> <li>• Sustained agency collaboration</li> <li>• Community capacity to deal with youth violence and gangs</li> <li>• Sustained linkages between community agencies, RCMP and Corrections</li> <li>• Sense of belonging as community members</li> <li>• Community empowerment</li> <li>• Effective/successful NYVRP services</li> </ul> |

**Figure 2: Logic Model at the Client/Case Management Level**

| 1. NYVRP Logic Model Client Level / Case Management Level   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Inputs/Resources  | Activities   | Outputs   | Intermediate outcomes  | Long-term outcomes  |
|   |  | Process Evaluation: Years 2017-2020   | Impact Evaluation: Year 2020   | Impact Evaluation: Year 2020  |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NYVRP Wellness Workers (6)</li> <li>• Manager of Program Operations (1)</li> <li>• Ministry of Corrections and Policing: Community Safety and Well-being Staff and Custody Supervision and Rehabilitative Services</li> <li>• RCMP</li> <li>• Remote Presence Technology</li> <li>• Core Teams</li> <li>• Risk Assessment Tools</li> <li>• Community Programs and Services</li> <li>• Cultural Resources: Elders, Trappers, Hunters, Fisherman, Cree Language Mentors and others</li> <li>• Community mentors (volunteers)</li> <li>• Database and records management tools</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referral Process/ Intake Meetings</li> <li>• Relentless Outreach/Addressing immediate/basic needs</li> <li>• Assess criminogenic risk factors: Risk Assessment tools</li> <li>• Family input/participation</li> <li>• Core Team creates integrated case plans</li> <li>• Identify other responsivity: strengths/ interests</li> <li>• Health and Wellness Workers providing one-on-one supports</li> <li>• Corrections and RCMP supervise and enforce abstinence and other probation conditions in person and via RPT further preventing pro-criminal behaviors</li> <li>• NYVRP Staff use cog/behavioral skills and MI training to elicit positive behavior change/challenge pro-criminal, anti-social behaviors</li> <li>• Teach conflict resolution and problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Utilize cultural mentors and Elders to teach language, kinship, and other Wood land Cree Culture</li> <li>• Utilize local/external mental health supports via Remote Presence Technology</li> <li>• Utilize data base and Performance Assessment Measure Reports for record keeping</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of youth referred</li> <li>• Number of youth who consent to program</li> <li>• Number of clients with completed assessments</li> <li>• Number of clients with integrated case plan based on risk factors</li> <li>• Number of contact requirements being met by Health and Wellness Workers</li> <li>• Number of core team agencies addressing client needs based on assessment and integrated case plan</li> <li>• Number of targeted services connected to youth</li> <li>• Number of clients who are connected to community supports/mentors who help to further address identified risk factors</li> <li>• Number of clients connected to pro-social kinship (responsivity)</li> <li>• Number of clients with possible mental health concerns who are assessed through Remote Presence Technology</li> <li>• Number of clients' mental health concerns who are provided therapy via Remote Presence Technology</li> <li>• Number clients connecting to Culture</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish positive, trusting relationship with HAWW;</li> <li>• Increase in ability to meet basic needs;</li> <li>• Increase in self-esteem;</li> <li>• Improved communication skills;</li> <li>• Greater openness with emotions;</li> <li>• Greater optimism about the future;</li> <li>• Increase in prosocial attitudes and interpersonal skills;</li> <li>• Increase in clients remaining in school/alternative school;</li> <li>• Increase in employment related activities;</li> <li>• Decrease in alcohol and drug use;</li> <li>• Decrease in bullying, aggressive and violent behaviour;</li> <li>• Increase in prosocial attitudes towards authority figures;</li> <li>• Increase in kinship ties;</li> <li>• Increase in prosocial peer and family activities;</li> <li>• Participating in prosocial community events and activities;</li> <li>• Increased mental/holistic health: clients have an increased understanding of psycho-social conditions, and better coping skills; and</li> <li>• Engaged with Elders and Cultural Mentors, cultural activities.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower incarceration rates;</li> <li>• Reduced recidivism;</li> <li>• Reduced Violence and victimization;</li> <li>• Decrease in gangs and gang related activities;</li> <li>• Employability skills gained/sustained employment;</li> <li>• Educational goals attained;</li> <li>• Family reintegration/Healing;</li> <li>• Holistic Wellness, positive cultural identity;</li> <li>• Physical health improvements, lack of substance and alcohol misuse; and</li> <li>• Young adults are positive mentors for their children.</li> </ul> |

## 5. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation of the NYVRP took place in three phases. First, a formative evaluation was conducted to evaluate the start-up and initial implementation of the NYVRP with the goal of using those findings to refine and enhance program delivery during the remaining years of the initiative. The information gathered for the formative evaluation spanned the first three years of the initiative (April 2015 to March 2018) and was completed in March 2019 (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019).

Second, a process evaluation was conducted during the fourth year of the initiative (April 2018 to March 2019) to continue monitoring the delivery of the NYVRP. This report was completed in November 2019 (Jewell, Akca, Mulligan, & Wormith, 2019) and provided further insight into the characteristics of the NYVRP participants, additional adaptations made to the NYVRP program delivery model, strengths and barriers faced by the NYVRP, and the continued need for the program in the communities where it is offered.

Third, a final evaluation was carried out where the primary focus was to conduct a theory-based impact, or outcome, evaluation to determine the extent to which the NYVRP program theory and logic model were able to lead to the intended outcomes among the youth and communities involved in the initiative as per the Program Logic Model. The impact evaluation focused on the period of time in which program delivery occurred (March 2017 to March 2020). In addition, the final evaluation included a final process evaluation component to further inform our understanding of how the NYVRP was delivered, especially as it relates to the outcomes observed. Given that the previous evaluations also examined the NYVRP's program delivery, we considered this aspect of the evaluation to be cumulative and, therefore, only focused on gathering new information emerging in the final year of the initiative (April 2019 to March 2020). The current report presents the findings from the final evaluation.

An evaluation matrix which provides information on the areas of inquiry, associated performance indicators and methods of data collection for all three phases of the evaluation is in Appendix B.

### 5.1 Formative Evaluation

The formative evaluation examined the initial implementation of the NYVRP with the objective of using the obtained findings to inform and refine program functioning (Hodges & Videto, 2005). The purpose of the formative evaluation was twofold. First, the planning and processes required to establish the NYVRP were documented (April 2015 to March 2017). An emphasis was placed on understanding the processes and strategies that facilitated or hindered the start-up of the NYVRP. Specifically, the answers to the following evaluation questions were sought:

1. Who were the major stakeholders involved in the start-up of the NYVRP? What were the roles and responsibilities of each group? Who else should have been involved?
2. How were communities and stakeholders engaged? Was there a sufficient level of engagement?

3. How were the needs of the communities and their readiness assessed? What factors were considered to underlie youth violence in the communities?
4. What governance structures were established for the NYVRP? Is the governance structure effective?
5. How were decisions made about program delivery? What programming criteria were established? How collaborative was the process?

Second, the formative evaluation documented the initial implementation of the NYVRP over its first year of operation (approximately March 2017 to March 2018). The focus here was on understanding how the program was being delivered, the areas where the program was functioning well, and areas where improvements were required. For instance, the extent to which the services and activities provided by the NYVRP aligns with the theoretical models upon which it was based; the effectiveness of its protocols and procedures; and any unanticipated challenges and possible solutions were considered. Recommendations based on these findings were developed with the intention that they would be implemented in the remaining years of the initiative. Evaluation questions guiding this component of the evaluation were:

6. How were the YVRP and Re-entry and Intensive Aftercare models adapted to allow for their implementation in Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows, and Deschambault Lake?
7. How well does the NYVRP adhere to the principles of risk, need, and responsivity?
8. What eligibility criteria were used to select program participants? Have appropriate eligibility criteria been established?
9. What programs and services were delivered through the NYVRP? Have appropriate services been established? Are additional services or program activities required?
10. What community strengths facilitate the implementation of the NYVRP? What community barriers hinder the implementation of the NYVRP?
11. What challenges existed in hiring qualified staff? Were adequate levels of staffing in place? What training did individuals involved in project delivery receive? How effective was the training provided?
12. How can the delivery of programming through the NYVRP be refined or enhanced?

## **5.2 Process Evaluation**

The process evaluation focused on monitoring program processes annually over the last two years of the NYVRP. As is standard for most process evaluations, it examined whether the NYVRP is being implemented as intended, assessed whether activities and operations were functioning effectively, and identified areas where challenges were emerging (Hodges & Videto, 2005; Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). In addition, the annual achievement of program



outputs (i.e., number and characteristics of program participants, number of programs accessed by participants, number and type of program partners), program reach (i.e., extent to which the participant group corresponds with the target group), and satisfaction with the NYVRP was assessed. Such data is instrumental in understanding why the NYVRP is or is not achieving its intended goals and its fidelity to the intended service delivery model. It also offers insight into how the program can be refined or its effectiveness can be enhanced. Evaluation questions addressed by the process evaluation included:

1. To what extent was the model implemented as intended? What changes, if any, occurred and why?
2. How does the governance structure support or impede the project? How well do project delivery staff work with community partners?
3. Are the necessary staffing and resources in place to implement the NYVRP? What training did staff receive? How effective was it? What challenges exist with staffing?
4. Did the Ministry of Corrections and Policing offer an adequate level of support to the NYVRP?
5. How well does the NYVRP adhere to the principles of risk, need, and responsivity?
6. How many youth participated in the NYVRP? What were their characteristics? To what extent do the participants correspond with the intended target group?
7. What programs are available to participants? To what extent do available resources match their service delivery needs?
8. How often did participants access programming identified in their case management plans? What facilitated their access to programming? What barriers prevented their access to programming? What, if anything, would have improved their completion rate?
9. What factors assist in the implementation of the program activities? What factors serve as barriers? What gaps in service delivery exist?
10. How satisfied are the youth, staff, and other stakeholders with the NYVRP?

### 5.3 Impact Evaluation

The impact evaluation examined the extent to which the NYVRP was able to achieve its (intended and unintended) intermediate and long-term outcomes among the participating youth and communities within the initiative, such as reducing youth offending, risk of gang involvement, and gang related activities, as well as increasing community capacity to address violent offending among youth. To measure outcomes achieved among the youth participants, a quasi-experimental pre-post design was utilized where the outcomes were measured on the same participants before program participation and then again after a sufficiently long participation



period for effects to occur (Rossi et al., 2004). In particular, the youth completed pre-risk assessment measures (i.e., YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT) upon entry into the program and the same post-risk assessment measures upon exiting the program. By comparing the two sets of measurements, a determination of the program effects, in part, was made.

In addition, qualitative data was obtained from youth participants and stakeholders to more fully understand the nature of the outcomes that occurred in the program, the features of the program that contributed to those outcomes, and the sustainability of any gains made. Similarly, surveys were conducted with stakeholders and youth participants to measure their perceptions of the extent to which individual- and community-level outcomes were achieved by the program. Evaluation questions that the impact evaluation addressed included:

1. Did the program produce the intended outcomes in the intermediate and long-term?
2. What unintended outcomes, both positive and negative, did the NYVRP produce?
3. Did the NYVRP prevent recidivism and reduce contact with the criminal justice system?
4. What were the particular features of the NYVRP that made a difference?
5. What was the quality of programming between sites?
6. Did the NYVRP work in conjunction with other interventions, programs or services in the community?
7. Were there sustained linkages between community agencies?
8. What plans are in place to sustain or expand the NYVRP?
9. Have the youth demonstrated a decrease in bullying, aggressive, and violent behaviour?
10. Have the youth demonstrated a decrease in their abuse of alcohol and drugs?
11. Have the youth demonstrated an increase in their school attendance and improved school performance?
12. Have the youth demonstrated an increase in their involvement in prosocial activities and peers?
13. Is there greater involvement in employment-related activities by the youth?
14. Is there greater attachment to prosocial support systems, including their familial and service provider supports as demonstrated by the youth?
15. Are the positive impacts experienced by youth sustainable?

## 6. METHODOLOGY

### 6.1 Evaluation Design

The NYVRP evaluation was embedded in a utilization-focused evaluation design (Patton, 2012; 2015). That is, the evaluation was focused on providing data that could be used to inform the future delivery of the NYVRP and presenting this information in a manner that was easily accessible to those who may be in a position to implement any recommendations derived from the evaluations. In short, “the focus in utilization-focused evaluation is on intended use by intended users” (Patton, 2015, p. 211).

To ensure that useful information was collected through the evaluation, it was necessary for the evaluation design and methods to be adaptive and responsive throughout the five-year initiative. Indeed, in order to facilitate stakeholders’ engagement in the evaluations, they have been consulted regularly about the evaluation process and findings. In general, the same methods and protocols proposed in the Evaluation Plan (submitted in February 2018) were employed in the evaluation.

The evaluation process also employed a participatory evaluation design framework. The evaluation team was cognizant that the evaluation was taking place in predominantly First Nation communities and that it was necessary to incorporate an evaluation design that was respectful of these cultural groups. When engaging in research or evaluation with First Nation peoples, it is necessary to acknowledge the historical injustices to which they have been subjected, including their history of being colonized and forced attendance at residential schools, as well as the power imbalances and social and economic conditions that have resulted from these practices (Chouinard & Cousins, 2007; Stewart & Yellowknife Dene, 2009). Many First Nations are in a state of healing and working toward autonomy and self-determination. Consequently, it has been strongly advocated, and recommended, that any research or evaluations conducted with First Nations be participatory in nature (Chouinard & Cousins, 2007; First Nations and Information Governance Centre [FNIGC], 2007; Stewart & Yellowknife Dene, 2009). Several reviews (Chouinard & Cousins, 2007; Stevenson, 2009) reinforce that First Nations must be given the opportunity to decide the research priorities for their communities, set research agendas, and determine critical areas to be examined. In fact, Stewart and the Yellowknife Dene (2009) claim that, in order for research with First Nations to be ethical, it must be participatory. Further, LaFrance and Nichols (2010) state that evaluation has a responsibility to support Nation building.

Participatory approaches, with their focus on working directly with the individuals or groups who have a stake in a given study’s outcomes, help ensure that First Nations are active participants in the evaluation process (Springett & Wallerstein, 2008). By involving people “on the ground,” participatory evaluations tend to be situated in the local cultural context and designed to examine what is important to a specific community (Chouinard & Cousins, 2007; FNIGC, 2007; Springett & Wallerstein, 2008). It is particularly important to contextualize an evaluation when working with First Nations, because each Nation is unique in how it interprets and enacts its culture; thus, it is not possible to apply a generalized approach to either engaging First Nations in evaluation or applying findings from one community to another (Chouinard &

Cousins, 2007). Moreover, participatory approaches help ensure shared power and decision-making and that an evaluation project will proceed in a manner that is culturally sensitive, respectful, and responsive. Consequently, it increases the ability of communities to own, control, access, and possess their data, which is a set of principles commonly referred to as OCAP (FNIGC, 2007). In fact, according to the FNIGC (2007), feedback, input, participation in analysis and interpretation, and communication should always characterize the relationship between evaluators and First Nations.

As such, we employed, as much as possible, a participatory evaluation approach (Springett & Wallerstein, 2008). In doing so, we invited the three NYVRP communities to be as involved in the evaluation as they chose. We also sought their feedback and participation in planning the evaluation, data collection and data analysis, and disseminating the findings. For instance, while planning the formative evaluation, we asked the Evaluation Advisory Committee (which is comprised of representatives from the communities and Ministry of Corrections and Policing, including Community Corrections) for guidance about the specific evaluation questions that should be asked in their communities; who should be asked to participate; and appropriate protocols to follow and methods to use. We also shared the evaluation findings with the Oversight and Advisory Committees and integrated their interpretations of the results into the final version of the report.

In planning the process evaluation, we also took direction from the NYVRP's project stakeholders, including representatives on the local Advisory Committees, the Oversight Committee, and the Evaluation Advisory Committee. For instance, program stakeholders requested that a community youth survey be completed to gauge the level of need for the NYVRP in the three communities more generally. In addition, community stakeholders specifically requested a parent survey be conducted to explore parents' perceptions of the program. As a result, we integrated both of these surveys into our data collection strategy. Further, we worked closely with the NYVRP project management team when developing all surveys employed in the evaluation to ensure that the questions included were of relevance to the communities (and culturally sensitive). Finally, we included the HAWWs in the data collection process, as we recognized that First Nation communities are relational and that HAWWs have the relationships with the youth and parents we hoped to reach with the surveys.

With respect to the final evaluation, we continued to work closely with the NYVRP's stakeholders, especially those participating in the Evaluation Advisory Committee, the project management team, and the staff, to ensure relevant evaluation questions and methodologies were incorporated into the evaluation. For instance, it was deemed important for the evaluation to find ways to include qualitative information about how the program has affected the youth involved and what it was like to deliver the NYVRP in the communities where it was offered. In order to meet those objectives, we partnered closely with staff. Specifically, to incorporate youth's voices into the evaluation, we decided to employ a photo-elicitation method to prompt youth to share their experiences about the program for which staff generously shared photos they had taken at previous NYVRP events and encouraged youth to participate in the session by virtue of having a pre-established relationship with them. To capture the lived realities of delivering the NYVRP, staff were candid and open about the challenges they faced in their personal and professional lives in a focus group-type session prompted by the staff rather than the evaluation team. The

project stakeholders also provided advice on who should be invited to participate in the final evaluation activities and the types of issues that should be focused on in the community stakeholder survey. By working in partnership with the program, we hope that the findings obtained through the evaluation are accurate, rich, relevant, and of value to the communities.

### **6.1.1 Formative Evaluation Design**

The formative evaluation employed a mixed method design, with a heavy emphasis on qualitative data collection. Qualitative designs are particularly well-suited for examining programs with emergent processes and for developing deep understandings of the complexities of a program (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 2015). The primary objectives of this phase of the evaluation were to: a) explore the factors that facilitated and hindered the start-up of the NYVRP; b) document the key components of the NYVRP's service delivery model; and c) understand how well the NYVRP was functioning following its initial implementation. Four methods were used in the formative evaluation: interviews with key stakeholders; a document review; a casefile and database review; and observation, including attending relevant meetings and observing program delivery. Detailed methods for this evaluation can be found in the formative evaluation report (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019).

### **6.1.2 Process Evaluation Design**

The process evaluation also employed a mixed-methods design, involving a combination of qualitative and quantitative data. The primary objective of the process evaluation was to understand how the NYVRP was functioning on an annual basis to identify aspects of the program that were operating well and areas that could be improved. In the 2018-19 process evaluation, three surveys were developed to assess the need for the NYVRP and satisfaction with the program, including a) community youth survey; b) NYVRP participant survey; and c) parent survey. However, we were only able to collect data from the community youth survey in time for inclusion in the report; data from the participant surveys was included in the current evaluation report. Unfortunately, we were not able to collect data from parents. Observation, a document review, and a casefile/database review were also employed as data collection methods. In the final process evaluation (2019-20), the following data collection methods were employed: a) interviews with key stakeholders (e.g., program staff and project partners); b) community stakeholder survey; c) document and casefile/database review; and d) observation.

### **6.1.3 Impact Evaluation Design**

The main objective of the impact evaluation was to assess whether the intermediate and long-term outcomes identified within the logic model were achieved by the NYVRP by the conclusion of the initiative. A mixed methods design was used where the emphasis was more equally placed on qualitative and quantitative data collection. To obtain qualitative information about the perceived impacts of the program, a photo-elicitation method with youth was used. In addition, questions about the outcomes perceived to be achieved by the program were embedded in two of the methods used in the process evaluative component of the final evaluations: a) interviews with key stakeholders; and b) the community stakeholder survey.

Perceptions of both individual- and community-level outcomes were examined using these methods.

To assess the achievement of outcomes in a quantitative manner, a quasi-experimental pre-post-program design was conducted to determine whether participants' risk of offending decreased following their participation in the NYVRP. Specifically, their risk assessment scores on the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT upon program entry were compared to their scores upon conclusion of the program. Further, corrections data on the court orders of the NYVRP youth participants before and after their entry into the NYVRP were examined to determine the custody and remand rates of the participants prior to and after joining the program. In addition, desistance from crime among the participants was assessed. Finally, a de-identified dataset was obtained from the RCMP to determine if there was a decrease in the frequency of encounters that participants had with the police following the implementation of the NYVRP. We had also intended to assess changes in school performance, school absenteeism, and school incidents/suspensions/ expulsions; however, we were unable to access this data due to the required closure of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 6.2 Participants

### 6.2.1 Process Evaluation Participants

#### *Community Stakeholder Survey*

All stakeholders ( $N=56$ )<sup>9</sup> who belonged to the NYVRP's Core Teams, Advisory Committees, and/or Oversight Committee in all three communities and who had a functioning email address were invited to participate in the online Community Stakeholder Survey. Of these, 25 respondents completed the survey, reflecting a response rate of 45%, which is deemed above average for an online survey (Fluid Surveys, 2014). The respondents reflected the range of sectors involved in the NYVRP, including Corrections, Education, Policing, Health, Administration, Social Services, and Chief & Council (see Table 1). However, there were differences in the response rates from each sector. Notably, all stakeholders from Community Corrections and 80% of RCMP stakeholders invited to complete the survey did so. The lowest response rates came from Health (13%), Social Services (20%), and Chief and Council (25%). As a result, the perspectives of stakeholders working in these three sectors may be underrepresented by the survey data. Even so, as later sections of this report indicate, Community Corrections and the RCMP were most engaged in the NYVRP, while Health, Social Services and Chief and Council were the least engaged, suggesting that the sectors' level of participation in the survey is consistent with their level of participation in the program.

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<sup>9</sup> Email addresses were unavailable for an additional seven individuals.

**Table 1: Survey Respondents' Sector of Employment**

| Sector                | Respondents Invited from Each Sector (n) | Respondents Who Completed Survey by Sector (n) | Response Rate by Sector (%) | Response Rate by Total Surveys Completed* |
|-----------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Community Corrections | 7  | 7  | 100%                        | 28%                                       |
| Education             | 17                                       | 6  | 35%                         | 24%                                       |
| Policing              | 5  | 4  | 80%                         | 16%                                       |
| Administration        | 5  | 2  | 40%                         | 8%  |
| Chief & Council       | 4  | 1  | 25%                         | 4%  |
| Health                | 8  | 1  | 13%                         | 4%  |
| Social Services       | 5  | 1  | 20%                         | 4%  |
| Other/Did Not Specify | 5  | 3  | 60%                         | 12%                                       |

\*A total of 25 respondents completed the survey.

The majority of respondents ( $n=15$ ; 60%) served a single NYVRP community, while a minority ( $n=5$ ; 20%) served all three communities. Five respondents (20%) did not indicate the community they serve. Table 2 presents the number of respondents involved in delivering services in each NYVRP community. Approximately equal numbers of respondents delivered services in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay, suggesting that the perceptions shared in the survey should be equally reflective of all three communities.

**Table 2: Communities Served by Survey Respondents (N=25)**

| Sector            | n  | %   |
|-------------------|----|-----|
| Deschambault Lake | 9  | 36% |
| Pelican Narrows   | 8  | 32% |
| Sandy Bay         | 11 | 44% |
| Did not specify   | 5  | 20% |

### *Interviews with Staff and Key Stakeholders*

A purposive sample of key stakeholders who were most involved in the NYVRP during the 2019-20 program year were invited to participate in an interview. In total, 13<sup>10</sup> interviews were completed with four stakeholder groups: NYVRP management and staff, NYVRP Advisory and Core team members, NYVRP Oversight Committee<sup>11</sup>, and Community Corrections (see Table 3). From a community perspective, there was approximately equal representation in terms of the number of interviewees affiliated with each community: Deschambault Lake ( $n=3$ ), Pelican Narrows ( $n=3$ ), and Sandy Bay ( $n=5$ ). Two interviewees were not affiliated with any particular

<sup>10</sup> A total of 20 individuals were invited to participate in an interview. Of these, 13 participated in an interview, one declined due to limited involvement in the program over the last year, one declined due to time constraints, and five did not respond to the interview invitation. However, all five of these individuals worked for agencies (schools, health centres, RCMP) directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and likely had other priorities at the time.

<sup>11</sup> Two of the interviewees sat on the Oversight Committee, but were categorized according to their primary affiliation in Table 3.

community. Data collection occurred during March and April 2020 and all interviews were conducted by telephone due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 3: Summary of Interview Participants (N=13)**

| Stakeholder Group   | N |
|---|---|
| <b>NYVRP Management and Staff</b>   | 6 |
| <b>NVRYP Advisory and Core Team Members</b>   | 3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCMP (<i>n</i>=1)</li> <li>• Community programs—mental health, addictions, justice (<i>n</i>=1)</li> <li>• Schools (<i>n</i>=1)</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Community Corrections</b>  | 4 |

### *NYVRP Participant Survey*

NYVRP participant surveys were completed by 7 youth from Deschambault Lake: 6 were actively enrolled in the program during the 2019-20 program year, while 1 youth had previously graduated from the program. All of the youth were male.

Surveys were completed during a site visit to Deschambault Lake in February 2020. We intended to collect additional participant surveys during site visits to Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay planned for March 2020, but those were cancelled due to travel restrictions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### *Casefile and Database Review*

A casefile and database review was conducted to gather information about the NYVRP clients. Limited information about 151 youth was available in the Community Data Collection Tracking Sheet (i.e., the program's temporary database). Casefiles were available for 97 clients.

## **6.2.2 Impact Evaluation Participants**

### *Photo-elicitation with NYVRP Youth Participants*

A photo-elicitation study was conducted with 6 youth from Deschambault Lake. All participants were male. Five youth were actively enrolled in the program during the 2019-20 program year, while 1 youth had previously graduated from the program. A convenience sampling approach was utilized wherein all youth who were actively working (or in contact) with the HAWW were invited to participate—six out of 10 invited youth were available at the time of the photo-elicitation session and willing to participate.

The photo-elicitation activity was completed during a site visit to Deschambault Lake in February 2020. We intended to conduct additional photo-elicitation activities during site visits to Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay planned for March 2020, but those were cancelled due to travel restrictions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### ***Pre-Post Risk Assessment Analysis***

Pre-post YLS/CMI: SV scores were available for 6 youth, while pre-post POSIT scores were available for 5 youth. Only one youth had completed a pre-post YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT. Five of the youth who had pre-post YLS/CMI: SV scores were from Pelican Narrows; the remaining participant was from Sandy Bay. One was female. Four of the youth who had pre-post POSIT scores were from Sandy Bay; the remaining participant was from Pelican Narrows. Three were female

### ***Recidivism and Desistance Analysis (Remand and Custody)***

Criminal Justice Information Management System (CJIMS) data was provided by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing, which included the dates and types of court orders issued for the NYVRP participants. Out of the 97 consented participants, there were court orders for 57 youth. Forty of these participants were involved in the program in 2017-18 and 17 were involved in 2018-19. There were no court orders for those who involved in the program in 2019-20.

### ***De-identified RCMP Data Analysis***

De-identified RCMP data was obtained for 82 youth who had consented to participate in the NYVRP at least six months before the program ended (i.e., before September 30, 2019) and for whom consent forms were available<sup>12</sup>. Youth participants from all three communities were included in the dataset. Data was available for each youth included in the dataset for one year before they entered the NYVRP, their time while participating in the program, and up to two years after they exited the program. The dataset included 1,943 incidents where the youth came into contact with the police between March 2016 and March 2020. In 1,510 of these cases, the youth were the suspect or subject of the crime. In 116 of the cases, they were victims and, in 188 cases, they were the witness of the crime. In 129 cases, the role of the youth was not given in the data.

## **6.3 Data Collection Methods**

The data collection methods used in the final evaluation are described in detail below. Methods related to the formative evaluation are described in detail in the formative evaluation report (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019), while methods related to the 2018-19 process evaluation are described the second annual report (see Jewell, Akca, et al. 2019).

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<sup>12</sup> Consent forms for seven youth were not included in the casefiles provided to the evaluation team and were not provided separately to the evaluation team following several requests; eight youth consented to participate in the NYVRP after September 30, 2019.



### 6.3.1 Process Evaluation Methods

#### *Community Stakeholder Survey*

The Community Stakeholder Survey was conducted to explore stakeholders' perceptions of, and experiences with, the NYVRP. Specifically, this online survey, which was hosted on SurveyMonkey, consisted of 26 self-report questions that examined the following topics:

- Level of involvement in the NYVRP
- Involvement in the NYVRP's Core Teams, Advisory Committees, and Oversight Committee, with a focus on understanding factors that prevented stakeholders from attending meetings to better understand waning attendance rates
- Perceived impact of the NYVRP on the youth involved
- Perceived impact of the NYVRP in their community

The survey concluded with two demographic questions about the sector and community with which the respondent was affiliated and an open-ended question asking the respondent to provide any additional thoughts about the NYVRP (see Appendix C).

A personalized invitation with a weblink to the survey was sent to each individual in the sample frame by email on March 2, 2020. A personalized reminder email was sent to respondents who had not yet completed the survey on March 11, 2020. A final personalized email was sent to remaining respondents on March 23, 2020 (see Appendix D for communication materials). Survey data collection closed on March 31, 2020.

The survey was designed and administered according to the best practices outlined by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014). For instance, we strived to develop survey questions that were clear, contained a single topic, and had response formats that were appropriate to the question asked. We also minimized the number of questions that appeared on the screen at a given time and used skip patterns to ensure that respondents were only asked questions relevant to them. In addition, we limited the number of open-ended questions included in the survey to reduce the burden on the respondent and did not require responses to any questions to ensure that respondents could skip any question they did not wish to answer (thereby ensuring that their participation in the survey was fully voluntary). With respect to the administration of the survey, we purposefully personalized email invitations and reminders, spaced contact attempts to be 1.5 weeks apart, and varied the content of the message in each contact to encourage responding to the survey. In each contact attempt, we also highlighted the benefits of completing the survey and sent the email from the member of the evaluation team (LMJ) with whom respondents were most likely to be familiar. All of these factors have been associated with increased response rates (Dillman et al., 2014).

The quantitative survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, means, standard deviations). Conversely, thematic analysis was used to analyze any qualitative survey data. That is, the survey responses were analyzed for recurring themes and patterns (Boyatzis, 1998); the results of these analyses were then summarized in tables.

### *Interviews with NYVRP Staff and Stakeholders*

Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with NYVRP staff and stakeholders to examine the NYVRP's program delivery and to assess stakeholders' perceptions of the outcomes they observed among the youth and communities involved in the program. Semi-structured interviews ensure that the same types of questions are asked of each participant, while allowing for the flexibility to explore additional topics that emerge (Patton, 2015; see Appendix E and F for copies of the staff and stakeholder interview guides, respectively). The interviews were intended to be complementary to the Community Stakeholder Survey and, in part, explored the issues that were raised on the survey in more depth. Further, the interviews were conducted by telephone to facilitate the need to work remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. In all likelihood, most interviews would have been completed by telephone regardless of the pandemic due to the geographic distance of the communities from the University of Saskatchewan.

An invitation letter, study information sheet, and consent form (see Appendix G, H, and I, respectively) were emailed to potential participants to invite them to participate in an interview. The consent form was reviewed with each participant prior to starting the interview and verbal consent was solicited. Interviews ranged in length from 30 to 120 minutes, with most interviews taking approximately 60 minutes. During the interviews, detailed notes that were as close to verbatim as possible were taken by the evaluator.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis involves the systematic identification of recurring themes and patterns in text (Boyatzis, 1998), which emerge when similar words or content is expressed within and across data sources. Themes which represent the underlying concepts which describe and organize the data or offer an interpretation of it are presented in the results. An inductive analytic approach was taken wherein themes were derived from the data (i.e., using a 'bottom up' process; Braun & Clarke, 2006). There were no a priori themes guiding the process. Themes were included in the presentation of results if they: a) were expressed by more than one individual; or b) offered important insight into the NYVRP's processes and outcomes (even if the theme was derived from a single individual's perspective). Underlying this approach to analysis is the assumption that the number of times a theme appears in a dataset is not necessarily commensurate with the importance or 'keyness' of a theme (Braun & Clark, 2006). Even so, terms such as "the majority," "most," "often," "several," "few," "a handful" or "one" (listed here in descending order of frequency) were used to describe the number of participants who expressed a given theme to provide the reader with some context as to how frequently themes occurred in the dataset. Further, themes emerging both within and across participants, as well as within and across NYVRP sites were identified. A copy of the coding frame is provided in Appendix J.

It should be noted that efforts were made to include interview extracts/individual stories that exemplified the themes presented in the subsequent results and the diversity of perspectives included in the evaluation (e.g., NYVRP project management team and staff, community stakeholders, and Corrections stakeholders). As recommended in Indigenous evaluation frameworks, an emphasis was placed on including individual perspectives or stories that provided the greatest insight about the NYVRP in relation to its overall functioning and the

outcomes it achieved, as well as the community context in which it is situated, including how the impacts of colonialism have affected the program (Bremner, Johnston, Rowe, & Sasakamoose, 2020; LaFrance & Nichols, 2010). We also strived to frame the results presented as opportunities for learning, as our intention was not to convey judgement but to help support the continual evolution of the program to best meet the needs of the youth and other stakeholders in the community (Bremner et al., 2020; LaFrance & Nichols, 2010). Ultimately, we wanted to contribute to developing a local understanding of what works in terms of implementing the NYVRP. Finally, we attempted to draw attention to the unique strengths and successes of the program that do not necessarily reflect the program's material successes (LaFrance & Nichols, 2010).

### ***Document Review***

A document review was completed to identify the key events that occurred in establishing the NYVRP, as well as the key program components. Some of the key documents that were reviewed were:

- Performance Monitoring and Assessment (PMA) reports
- Meeting minutes (e.g., from Advisory, Oversight, and Evaluation meetings)
- Financial reports
- Program forms and templates
- Reports about events NYVRP has been involved in or arranged for youth
- Staff training/orientation materials

Where possible, this data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

### ***Database and Casefile Review***

Participant-level data was analyzed through a database and casefile review. Paper casefiles were provided to the evaluation team, and these files were analyzed in detail to determine the extent to which the various program components and protocols were being followed. In addition, the program's Community Data Collection (CDC) Tracking Excel Spreadsheet, which contains basic information about each participant, was analyzed. Where possible, this data was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

### ***Observation***

In order to supplement the data obtained from the interviews and document review, observation was employed as a third method in the evaluation. Specifically, the evaluation team attended key meetings to directly observe the decisions being made about the program, the extent to which stakeholders were willing and able to collaborate, and the context in which the NYVRP was being implemented. Where possible, this data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

### ***NYVRP Participant Survey***

The NYVRP Participant Survey was designed to explore the NYVRP youth's satisfaction with the program. It was a paper-based survey that consisted of 17 questions asking about different elements of the program. Specifically, it asked youth:

- Why they joined the program
- How much they like the NYVRP
- What they like the most and the least about the NYVRP
- How the NYVRP has helped them
- What community programs they have been connected with through the NYVRP
- Their satisfaction with receiving mental health services by remote presence technology
- Whether they have been connected with a mentor or Elder
- How many supports they have in their life
- What they need to feel ready to graduate from the NYVRP
- How the NYVRP can be improved

The survey was tailored to each community. No incentive was offered for the completion of this survey.

It was intended that the HAWWs would hand out the surveys to each of their clients during the month of August 2019, but the HAWWs were not able to due to feeling overwhelmed with their other responsibilities. Instead, we planned to complete the surveys during site visits to each community in February and March 2020; however, due to the travel restrictions implemented in March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were only able to complete a site visit to Deschambault Lake. Consequently, only youth in attendance at the Deschambault Lake site visit were surveyed. The resulting quantitative survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the qualitative survey data was analyzed using thematic analysis. See Appendix K for a sample survey.

### **6.3.2 Impact Evaluation Methods**

#### ***Photo-elicitation with NYVRP Youth Participants***

A photo-elicitation study was used to facilitate the inclusion of NYVRP participants' voices into the evaluation. Photo-elicitation entails the use of images (e.g., photographs) to prompt and guide discussion during an in-depth interview or focus group (Mandleco, 2013; Phelan & Kinsella, 2011). The photographs can be created by the participants, researcher, or drawn from media (Phelan & Kinsella, 2011) and the discussions tend to focus on understanding the meaning the photographs hold for the participants. Photo-elicitation has been identified as a useful method for engaging children and adolescents in research, as it provides an opportunity for children to "show" rather than "tell" their lived realities and can allow for the discussion of complex social issues in a way that children may otherwise be unable to articulate (Phelan & Kinsella, 2011). That is, the photograph provides a concrete focal point for discussion and can help avoid putting children in situations where they are being asked to discuss abstract ideas that they may not have the skills or ability to discuss.

Given that the youth enrolled in the program are high risk and often reluctant to share their thoughts and opinions with persons with whom they do not have an established relationship, an interactive photo-elicitation method was deemed an appropriate approach to learn about the youth's experiences with the NYVRP. In the version of photo-elicitation we employed, we used photographs that had previously been taken by the local HAWW at various NYVRP events, including a hunting trip, cultural camp, and youth conference, to facilitate a focus group-type discussion with six youth enrolled in the NYVRP. The HAWW shared the photos with the evaluation team for use in the photo-elicitation activity. Notably, we were only able to conduct the photo-elicitation study in Deschambault Lake as we were unable to travel to the other two communities due to travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Accordingly, the photo-elicitation activity occurred during a site visit to Deschambault Lake and took place in the Board Room at the Band Administration building. In order to build a sense of community, the evaluation team provided lunch for the youth participating in the event. We also set-up a photo display on one of the tables where approximately 30 photographs (size 5x7) were spread out around a sheet of paper posing our primary research question: What difference has the NYVRP made in your life?

Once the youth had finished eating, we went through the consent form verbally; the youth also provided their written, informed consent (see Appendix L). In addition, the youth were provided with a \$10 honorarium for participating. The honorarium was purposefully provided to the youth prior to starting the photo-elicitation activity to limit feelings of coercion to participate.

To begin the photo-elicitation activity, all youth were asked to select a photo that they were drawn to from the display. They were then asked to complete a short photo information sheet that had three questions about their photo that were intended to stimulate discussion: 1) What is this photo about?; 2) What does this photo mean to you? Why did you pick this photo?; and 3) What does this photo show about the NYVRP? (see Appendix M). We numbered all of the photos prior to creating the display to allow us to identify and, subsequently, project each photo selected during the focus group discussion onto a screen visible to all participants. Thus, while the youth were completing the information sheet, the evaluator walked around the room and wrote down the number of each photo that had been selected. Once the youth completed the photo information sheet, the focus group aspect of the session started. We first asked for a volunteer to describe his photo and the selected photo was displayed on the screen for all to see. We then asked the youth additional questions to better understand the photo and what it meant in terms of his involvement in the NYVRP (see Appendix N for a copy of the interview guide that guided this discussion). Other youth were encouraged to provide comments about the photo and to respond to the questions as well.

Following the first two volunteers, the others were reluctant to discuss their photos. Therefore, we agreed to project the remaining photos that had been selected one by one and to discuss them as a group. Once we went through each photograph, two final questions were posed to the group: 1) What do you like best about the NYVRP? and 2) What is the greatest lesson you learned from the NYVRP? The youth were encouraged to take their selected photo home; all remaining photos were left with the HAWW. In total, the photo-elicitation session lasted two hours. It should be

noted that the procedures we followed generally mapped onto the guidelines developed by Bugos et al. (2014).

Several types of data resulted from the photo-elicitation study: 1) the pictures selected by the participants; 2) the participants' written descriptions of the photos and what the photos meant to them; and 3) the focus group transcript capturing the discussion of the photos. Thematic analysis was used to independently analyze each of these sources of data. Following this independent analysis, themes that emerged across all three sources were identified and an integrated analysis of the results is presented in Section 10.1.

### ***Pre-Post Risk Assessment Analysis***

A quasi-experimental pre-post design was utilized to determine whether participants had reduced risk scores following their participation in the NYVRP. It was intended that two risk assessments, the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT, would be completed with participants soon after they consented to participate in the program. This was the case for participants who started the program in 2019-20; however, for the clients who were active in the program in 2018-19, their initial risk assessments were completed between January to April 2019 when the new risk assessment protocol was introduced. Very few POSITs and no YLS/CMI: SVs were completed in 2017-18. Post-program risk assessments were completed with the participants between March and April 2020 when the program concluded. As such, the first risk assessment on file for a participant was considered their "pre-program" risk assessment score regardless of when it was completed, while their second assessment was considered their "post-program" risk assessment score. The total scores of the pre-post YLS/CMI: SVs were compared for the same participants using a paired-samples *t*-test to determine if any significant changes in their risk scores occurred. In addition, pre-post changes in each of the eight items comprising the YLS/CMI: SV were assessed. Similarly, the total scores of the pre-post POSITs were compared for the same participants using a paired-samples *t*-test to determine if any significant changes in the total scores occurred. In addition, pre-post changes in each of the ten subscales comprising the POSIT were examined.

Beyond the paired-sample *t*-tests used to compare participants' pre-post risk assessment scores, independent sample *t*-tests were used to determine whether there were any group differences on the ACE-Q and YLS/CMI: SV between youth who had previously been arrested/incarcerated and those who had not been. Correlational analyses (i.e., Pearson correlations) were also conducted to examine any associations between the ACE-Q and YLS/CMI: SV.

We had also planned to collect 6- and 12-month follow-up risk assessment measures after the youth exited the program. This time series method of evaluation was chosen due to the absence of a control or comparison group as the communities have small populations and it is unethical to withhold treatment from the youth present in the communities to create a control or comparison group. However, it was not possible to obtain follow-up measures for any of the participants.

### ***Recidivism and Desistance Analysis***

To analyze the recidivism rates within the sample, custody and remand orders were retrieved from the Ministry of Corrections and Policing's Criminal Justice Information Management System (CJIMS) for each NYVRP participant before and after they started the program. The frequencies of custody and remand orders before and after starting the program were compared to determine whether attendance in the program led to reduced levels of recidivism or initial offending. A descriptive analysis was conducted to identify the days spent by the participants in the program and the number of days passed since they started the program until the first custody or remand court order issued for them. To identify the number of participants who desisted from crime, those who were issued a custody and/or remand order before the program but were not issued an order after starting the program were identified.

### ***De-identified RCMP Data Analysis***

The de-identified data obtained from the RCMP included anonymized information about the youth's encounters with the police, specifically the dates and types of the incidents (i.e., persons or property) and the role of the youth in the incidents (i.e., suspect, subject, witness, or victim). Descriptive data analyses were conducted on the data to identify changes in the number and frequency of police-youth contacts throughout the years, the types of incidents, and the role of the youth in the incidents. Because the data provided by RCMP were anonymized, an analysis of pre- and post-program police-youth interactions could not be conducted. Instead, the data was categorized into four different time frames: (1) pre-program: March 2016 – March 2017, Year 1: April 2017 – March 2018, Year 2: April 2018 – March 2019, Year 3: April 2019 – March 2020. An aggregate level analysis was conducted based on these time categories and by comparing the average number of police encounters that occurred each year. The average number of incidents was found by dividing the number of incidents by the number of youth for whom the data included corresponding police encounter information.

Based on when youth consented to the NYVRP, data from 42 youth were included within the pre-program 2016-17 period, 76 youth were included within the 2017-18 period, and 82 youth were included in both the 2018-19 and 2019-20 periods. Data for the 2016-17 period reflected pre-program encounters only. Data for the 2017-18 period included data for youth who were enrolled in the NYVRP in 2017-18, as well as pre-program data for youth who consented in 2018-19. Data for the 2018-19 period included data for youth who were enrolled in 2018-19, pre-program data for youth who consented in 2019-20, and post-program data for youth who were no longer active in the program past 2017-18. Data for the 2019-20 period included data for youth who were enrolled in 2019-20 and post-program data for youth who were no longer active in the NYVRP past 2017-18 or 2018-19. It is important to note that the aggregate level analysis of the data did not allow us to identify the frequency of police encounters at the individual level as well as whether these encounters happened before or after the youth was involved in the program.

## **6.4 Data Analytic Approach**

Initially, data collected through each method was analyzed independently. For instance, all data obtained through the interviews was analyzed independently of any data obtained from the

surveys, photo-elicitation study, document review, casefile/database review, and observation. Following this independent analysis, themes that converged or diverged across the various data sources were then integrated and presented together in response to the specific Evaluation Question they answered, as all data sources attended to similar issues and themes.

#### **6.4.1 Data Trustworthiness and Rigour**

To ensure the trustworthiness and rigour (i.e., reliability and validity) of the qualitative findings, the evaluation team engaged in a peer review process where a second team member reviewed and confirmed the interpretation of the team member primarily responsible for analyzing the data (Patton, 2015; Tobin & Begley, 2004). In addition, key stakeholders (e.g., Ministry of Corrections and Policing representatives, NYVRP program staff, and Evaluation Advisory Committee members) were asked to reflect upon the results, which also enhances the validity of the findings (Patton, 2015). Finally, triangulation in the themes that emerged from each data collection method (i.e., surveys, document review, casefile review, and observation) allow for additional confidence in the conclusions drawn from the evaluation (Patton, 2015).

### **6.5 Project Ethics**

The three phases of the NYVRP evaluation have been exempted from formal ethical review by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Ethics Review Board on the grounds that it is a program evaluation project (see Appendix O and P). This is in keeping with Article 2.5 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (CIHR, NSERC, & SSHRC, 2010; see Appendices M and N for the exemption letters). Regardless of this exemption, the evaluation still adheres to the ethical guidelines laid out in the Tri-Council Policy Statement. In addition, an Ethics application was submitted to the National Crime Prevention Strategy of Canada as per their requirements for impact evaluations. Ethics approval was received from Public Safety Canada on February 4, 2018.

To ensure our respectful and ethical engagement with the communities and participants involved in this evaluation, we have incorporated several processes into our procedures. For instance, when seeking permission from community leadership to implement the NYVRP, the project management team also sought permission for an evaluation to be completed as part of the program implementation process and for community members to participate in the evaluation. In addition, a detailed overview of the proposed evaluation activities was presented at each of the Advisory Committees in September 2016 to ensure that these oversight bodies were aware of the nature of the activities that would occur through the evaluation and were willing to allow these activities to occur in their communities. Informed consent was also obtained from individual participants prior to their involvement in the evaluation. The literature strongly supports a dual consent process in Aboriginal communities that takes into account both collective consent, on behalf of the community at large, and individual consent (First Nations Centre, 2007; Harding et al., 2012; Patterson, Jackson, & Edwards, 2006; Piquemal, 2001; Ruttan, 2004; Stevenson, 2009; World Health Organization, 2010). The rationale for this approach is that the community itself must be protected in addition to the specific individuals participating. Therefore, by working together with the project management team, we were able to follow this recommended practice by: a) ensuring that community-level permission for the



evaluation was provided by various community representatives (e.g., Chief and Council, Advisory Committee members); and b) seeking individual-level consent for specific evaluation activities in which individual community members were asked to participate.

Following data collection, opportunities were provided to community representatives (i.e., NYVRP project management team, Evaluation Advisory Committee members, Oversight Committee members, and Advisory Committee members) to review the evaluation findings for accuracy and, where appropriate, provide a cultural interpretation of the results. Specifically, following the formative and process evaluations, a presentation highlighting the major evaluation findings was given to each stakeholder group in which the findings were presented and discussed in detail. For the final evaluation, a fact sheet summarizing the key evaluation findings was developed as we were advised by the NYVRP project management team that it would be difficult to bring these stakeholder groups together for a (virtual) presentation during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the full evaluation reports were reviewed by the NYVRP project management team. A final copy of any reports and presentations that are prepared will be made accessible to the NYVRP communities. This practice is recommended by the FNIGC (2007) to facilitate adherence to OCAP. According to Stewart and the Yellowknife Dene (2007) and the FNIGC (2007), it is part of the researcher's ethical responsibility to provide First Nation communities with data throughout and upon completion of the study.

## 6.6 Methodological Limitations

A number of limitations need to be taken into account when reviewing the findings presented in this report. One important limitation is that the majority of data collection activities coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most notably, we were scheduled to conduct site visits to Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay on March 24 to 26, 2020; however, travel restrictions were mandated by the province and the university which prevented us from completing those visits. As a result, we were unable to complete photo-elicitation sessions or NYVRP participant surveys with youth in those community, leaving us with a small sample of program participants who were able to participate in these program evaluation activities (6 youth participated in the photo-elicitation study and 7 completed participant surveys). We also believe that the lower rate of stakeholders agreeing to participate in stakeholder interviews (65% compared to almost 100% in the formative evaluation) was, in part, due to the new and unexpected priorities that emerged for these individuals related to the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic also affected activities we had planned for the impact evaluation. We had intended to include school data in our pre-post analysis of the NYVRP youth participants to determine if there were any changes in their school attendance or performance (including their grades, incidents, and suspensions/expulsions). However, due to the closure of the schools, neither the NLSD in Sandy Bay nor PBCN Education in Deschambault Lake were able to provide the data they had agreed to share in the data sharing agreements signed with them, as the data we were seeking was held at the school level. If the school pre-post data analysis aspect of the evaluation had been able to proceed, it should be noted that we were unable to enter into a data sharing agreement with PBCN Education in Pelican Narrows to access data for the NYVRP youth enrolled at that site. Between August 2018 and February 2020, we contacted (by email and

phone) a number of individuals who may be able to provide permission for us to access the school data; however, our contact attempts largely went unacknowledged. There seemed to be a lack of interest among education stakeholders at that site to contribute to the evaluation.

In addition to the limitations associated with the pandemic, there are other limitations that should be kept in mind when reviewing the findings from the evaluation. For instance, the responses provided by stakeholders in the interviews and Community Stakeholder Survey may have been affected by a social desirability bias. Given that this was a pilot project, many of the stakeholders spoke of wishing for the NYVRP's continuation and, as a result, may have emphasized the positive aspects of the program (including the outcomes it achieved) to encourage its continuation.

Further, the casefile and database review was compromised by missing data. For instance, referral forms were unavailable for 20 youth. Therefore, for these youth, data from the CDC Tracking Sheet had to be relied upon and could not be verified against the original source materials. Some errors were detected in the CDC sheet for youth who had casefiles; therefore, it is unknown the extent to which the CDC data was accurate for these 20 youth. Further, the level of detail contained in the casefiles (including chronological notes) varied by HAWW and, as a result, they do not contain consistent data, which limits the extent to which they can be used as a data source in the evaluation.

For the document review, it was not possible to obtain meeting minutes for Advisory Committee meetings that occurred in 2018-19 or 2019-20. In addition, we were not able to locate a copy of the PMA report covering January 1 to March 31, 2019, April 1 to June 30, 2019, July 1 to September 30, 2019, and January 1 to March 31, 2020.

A limitation of the photo-elicitation study is that we relied on photographs that had been taken by the HAWW. Our reasons for doing so related to the geographic distance of the communities from the University of Saskatchewan (five to seven hours driving time), the limited amenities in those communities (e.g., no hotels), the potential for poor travel conditions (e.g., winter roads, cold temperatures, limited/no cell service), and the resulting logistical difficulties associated with visiting the communities. Ideally, we would have liked the youth to take their own pictures of what the NYVRP meant to them to further empower them to share their perspectives of the program and to reduce power imbalances between the youth and the evaluation team. However, doing so would have required multiple visits to the communities, which we were not able to arrange. Another limitation of the photo-elicitation study is that we were not able to obtain permission from all individuals in some of the group pictures selected for inclusion in the report.

A major limitation of the pre-post risk assessment analysis was the small sample of participants for which pre- and post-risk assessment scores were available. Only 6 youth had pre-post YLS/CMI: SV scores, and 5 youth had pre-post POSIT scores, reflecting a very small proportion of the total number of consented NYVRP participants ( $N=97$ ). Therefore, there is a need to be cautious when generalizing these results. Another limitation of the pre-post risk assessment analysis is that many of the youth had been in the program for several months at the time the risk assessments were completed with them in 2018-19. Therefore, the analysis may not reflect the full amount of change experienced by the youth, as they have already changed in some risk areas

by the time the risk assessment was completed with them. Further, among the youth who had completed pre- and post- YLS/CMI: SVs, two of the youth were considered “graduates” at the conclusion of the program, while three of the youth with pre-post-POSIT scores were considered program graduates. Given the small number of youth deemed program graduates by staff, these two subsamples seem to be comprised youth who may have been more successful than the average NYVRP youth. Moreover, it was not possible to collect follow-up data at 6- and/or 12-month intervals, which would have constituted a strong quasi-experimental design given that it was not possible to have a control or comparison group. As a result, we were unable to determine how long the participants were able to sustain any gains made while in the program.

Despite the limited sample size for both the photo-elicitation study and pre-post analysis, it is important to recognize that we ultimately received outcome-related information from all three communities. The photo-elicitation study and participant youth survey were completed by Deschambault Lake participants, pre-post YLS/CMI: SV scores were primarily available for Pelican Narrows participants, and POSIT scores were mostly completed with Sandy Bay participants. Thus, any similar trends identified through the various data sources and analyses provides some assurance that the program affected youth similarly at all three sites.

A final limitation of the study was that the de-identified data obtained from the RCMP did not allow us to conduct a pre-post analysis of participants’ encounters with the police at the individual level and to fully determine the extent to which participants’ encounters with the police changed following their participation in the program. Instead, we had to rely on trends by program year to infer whether the NYVRP led to decreased encounters with police wherein data for each program year included data for youth actively participating in the program, pre-program data for youth who consented to participate in the subsequent year and, for the last two years, post-program data for participants who had exited the program the previous year(s). Thus, the inclusion of these various types of data somewhat obscured the trends observed in the data and the specificity of the findings. The de-identified data also prevented us from examining nuances with respect to the program’s impact, such as whether the length of time participants were involved in the program, gender, or age were related to the youth’s encounters with the police pre-post participation in the NYVRP, as well as how long any reductions in police encounters were sustained by participants.

## 7. FORMATIVE EVALUATION FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION: 2015-2018

The formative evaluation spanned the first three years of the initiative, and examined the initial start-up of the NYVRP, as well as the first year of program delivery. Some of the key areas assessed by the evaluation were the:

- Effectiveness of the stakeholder and community engagement process employed
- Effectiveness of the governance structure
- Adaptations made to the YVRP and RIAP models for the NYVRP
- Extent to which the NYVRP adheres to the principles of risk, need, and responsiveness
- Degree of adherence to the program delivery model
- Characteristics of NYVRP participants and whether they matched the target population
- Adequacy of staffing levels and training for staff

Data collection methods employed in the formative evaluation included:

- 26 interviews with program stakeholders
- Document review of meeting minutes, as well as program forms and materials
- Database review (i.e., Community Data Collection tracking sheet) of 82 individuals
- Casefile review of 54 individuals
- Observation

A summary of the key findings derived from this formative evaluation are included in this section. Detailed findings are available in the formative evaluation report (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019).

### 7.1 Formative Evaluation Findings

#### 7.1.1 Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The NYVRP engaged a comprehensive network of federal, provincial, and community stakeholders to establish the NYVRP, particularly at the community-level. A respectful engagement approach was used wherein provincial stakeholders and community leadership were consulted first, followed by directors and managers, and then frontline workers. Several stakeholders perceived this to be a successful strategy as it resulted in widespread community support for the NYVRP and a belief that the program was community-based.

#### 7.1.2 Governance Structure

Overall, the governance structure (i.e., an overarching Oversight Committee and local Advisory Committees) seemed adequate and comprehensive as it allowed for local community representatives to provide input and direction into the NYVRP, while also providing a mechanism for higher level decisions makers to be involved in the program and to resolve issues (e.g., policy conflicts) that cannot be addressed at the local level. However, both committees were affected by a lack of commitment and inconsistent participation by some partner agencies. In addition, neither committee was used to their fullest potential and the frequency of meetings for both committees had to be reduced.

### **7.1.3 Adapting the YVRP and RIAP Models**

In addition to the planned adaptations of the YVRP and RIAP models (e.g., implementing the YVRP model in a rural setting, having smaller caseloads of 15 youth per every two HAWWs, using risk assessments to determine the youth's risk level, being a voluntary program, and extending the eligibility criteria to 12 to 24 years), a number of other adaptations emerged in consultation with the Advisory Committees and Corrections. Specifically, it was necessary to incorporate a cultural component to help youth build stronger connections to their culture, focus less on strict supervision and surveillance by police and probation officers in favour of a friendly supervision model, reduce the expected level of contact between probation officers and youth, and help youth seek treatment for any mental health and cognitive needs they have.

### **7.1.4 Adherence to Risk, Need, Responsivity Principles**

The completion of risk assessments was a significant challenge for the program (for both community- and corrections-referred youth). For the 57 consented clients participating in the NYVRP during the first year of program delivery, only 14 POSITs, 2 YLS/CMIs, and 1 SPRA were available. At the community level, staff's level of education and comprehension of the YLS/CMI were identified as significant obstacles in completing assessments. For Corrections, high staff turnover, high caseloads, and a backlog of assessments made it difficult for probation officers to complete assessments in a timely manner.

### **7.1.5 Adherence to the Program Delivery Model**

Overall, the NYVRP was largely being implemented in line with its program delivery model. The data available indicated that HAWWs had between one to three contacts with the youth each week and that contacts tended to be substantive (i.e., more than just a simple check-in). The HAWWs were also readily available to the youth whenever needed, including on evenings and weekends. Further, the NYVRP was successful in identifying and connecting youth with a vast array of supports and services available in their communities, including those related to education, employment, mental health and addictions, cultural and land-based teachings, personal support and self-development, meeting court-ordered conditions, arts, sports, and other recreational activities. Youth's families were involved in the program (when they are willing to participate), as well as Mentors and Elders. Moreover, an individualized, strengths-based approach was taken to developing and implementing care plans for youth.

One of the difficulties encountered in delivering the NYVRP was that, because few risk assessments have been completed, care plans were not necessarily informed by an empirical risk assessment and approximately 30% of the youth did not seem to have a care plan. In addition, Core Team meetings suffered from a lack of participation and poor attendance rates, primarily in Pelican Narrows and Deschambault Lake, and the frequency of meetings had to be reduced from weekly to monthly. It was also suggested that the Core Team meetings could be restructured to be more effective. Finally, it was challenging for staff to complete the requisite paperwork and the casefiles were not as comprehensive and accurate as they could be.

### **7.1.6 Community Strengths and Obstacles**

The communities involved in the NYVRP were able to facilitate the implementation of the NYVRP in four main ways by: 1) participating on Oversight and Advisory Committees, as well Core teams; 2) granting the program funds required to implement various program activities; 3)

inviting NYVRP staff to participate in training opportunities; and 4) allowing youth from all three communities to access available programming. Perhaps the most significant community-level barrier that affected the NYVRP was a diminishing interest to participate in the NYVRP's Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams. Another community-level barrier was the general lack of mental health and addictions services available in the north.

### **7.1.7 Staffing and Training**

Staffing the NYVRP was one of the most significant challenges the program faced. It was challenging to find qualified individuals who were willing to live in the communities for both the project manager and HAWC positions. In addition, it was difficult to find service agreement holders who were willing to house and administer the NYVRP due to limited physical space in the communities. It also was difficult for the program to fill HAWW positions following staff turnover. That being said, one of the greatest strengths of the NYVRP was the focus on hiring local community members to fill all program positions, ranging from the project manager to the HAWC and HAWWs. In addition, the NYVRP's focus on hiring HAWWs who had positive personal attributes (e.g., living a healthy lifestyle, passion for working with youth) served the program well. However, to compensate for a lack of formal education and experience, the NYVRP needed to take a more comprehensive approach to training, including providing HAWWs with core training as soon as possible after being hired and integrating follow-up/coaching sessions to help them apply newly learned skills.

## **7.2 Formative Evaluation Limitations**

Key limitations characterizing the formative evaluation were that the first wave of stakeholder interviews was completed approximately six months prior to the second wave of interviews and the program may have evolved since the initial set of data was collected. Second, when the first wave of interviews were completed, there was a death in Deschambault Lake, which limited the number of stakeholders from this community available to participate in the evaluation. Third, the casefile and database review were compromised by missing data. Finally, the information contained in the CDC Tracking Sheet was unreliable, as many of the data points did not match the raw data sources contained in the casefiles.

## **7.3 Lessons Learned from the Formative Evaluation**

### **7.3.1 Program**

- A comprehensive, respectful engagement process was an effective approach for establishing the NYVRP, but this type of approach takes a substantial amount of time, which needs to be accurately budgeted for in the program implementation timelines.
- It is important to have realistic expectations about the amount of time partner agencies have available to support the NYVRP and to establish meeting schedules for the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams accordingly.
- It is necessary to take the local context into account when adapting the YVRP model. Modifications necessary to make the model viable for implementation in northeast

Saskatchewan included reducing the emphasis placed on surveillance and law enforcement, decreasing the expected level of contact with probation officers, lowering anticipated caseloads, and integrating a cultural component.

- Risk assessments, such as the YLS/CMI, were challenging for the HAWWs to complete, due to issues such as not fully comprehending the instrument and being intimidated by it. Thus, it may be unrealistic to expect HAWWs to complete the YLS/CMI.
- It may be unrealistic to expect Corrections to complete risk assessments in timely manner due to high caseloads and a backlog of risk assessments.
- A regional approach to implementing the NYVRP has been helpful in garnering support for the NYVRP across all three communities, which has allowed youth to access services in other communities not available (or not satisfactory) in their own.
- Elders and mentors are valuable supports to incorporate into the NYVRP, but Elders may be offended at being asked to obtain a Criminal Record Check.
- Physical space is at a premium in the communities and it was difficult to find service agreement holders who had space available to allocate to the NYVRP.
- It can be challenging to find qualified staff who are willing to live in the communities. As a result, lengthy staffing processes should be expected and may delay program implementation. It may also be necessary to relax the desired qualifications for a position and to make up for any areas that are lacking with additional training.
- Management-level staff, including the program manager and HAWC, should be hired as soon as possible. In particular, the NYVRP learned that they should have hired the HAWC position much earlier, so that this person could have helped develop policies and protocols, program forms, and a program manual.
- HAWWs are at high risk of burnout because of the nature of the communities in which they work and live.
- Training needs to be approached in a comprehensive, systematic fashion to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills needed to implement the program delivery model.

### **7.3.2 Evaluation**

- It is necessary to have realistic expectations about the type and amount of data the NYVRP is capable of collecting, particularly with respect to risk assessments. It may be easier to focus on official data sources (e.g., schools, police) for the impact evaluation than rely on program-derived data (e.g., risk assessments, care plans, chronological notes).

- The evaluation team should have assisted with developing program forms that could serve as valuable data sources for the evaluation (such as intake forms, involvement summary forms, referral forms, and the CDC tracking sheet) earlier in the program development process.
- The evaluation team should have suggested a solution to the challenges staff were experiencing with risk assessments earlier, such as using the YLS/CMI: SV in lieu of the YLS/CMI and encouraging them to focus on the POSIT.

## 7.4 Recommendations from the Formative Evaluation

The following recommendations were offered to the NYVRP to guide the initiative in the future. The recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) were implemented in 2018-19 or 2019-20. An explanation of why some recommendations were not implemented is provided in italics—in many cases, the recommendation may have been implemented, but there is a lack of evidence speaking to the extent to which it was done so in a full and systematic manner.

### Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams

1. Engage in outreach with community partners to increase participation and attendance rates for the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams and to identify and mitigate issues underlying their low participation and attendance rates. To accomplish this, consider holding: a) one-on-one meetings with each of the agencies represented on these committees\*; and b) another regional workshop (similar to the kick-off workshop in Baker's Narrows) to revitalize the project and regenerate excitement. *There was interest in organizing a regional event, but one ultimately was not scheduled (limited finances and logistics with scheduling such an event across three sites were contributing factors).*
2. Ensure that Oversight and Advisory Committees are used to their fullest potential by focusing on resolving issues that emerge and making decisions about the program rather than on reporting program activities. *The NYVRP project management team attempted to work towards this goal of focusing on problem-solving at various times, yet the focus of these meetings generally remained on reporting.*
3. Modify the structure of Core Team meetings to reduce their length and increase their effectiveness.\* Specifically, discuss the youth that have the most agencies involved first and allow agencies to leave the meeting once they no longer have anything to contribute. *There was some evidence that agencies left the Core Team meetings once their clients were discussed, but more evidence is needed to confirm that this occurred on a regular basis.*
4. Circulate a formal update/progress report at Core Team meetings for each youth summarizing the types of appointments/activities he/she has attended and how much programming he/she has received in the last month to help partner agencies maintain accurate files of their own. To support this activity, a Core Team progress report template



should be developed. *Based on available evidence, it is unclear that this recommendation was implemented in a systematic manner (the NYVRP may have provided Corrections with monthly summaries at times, but there is no evidence that monthly reports were disseminated at meetings). The challenges some NYVRP staff experienced with administrative tasks may have been a contributing factor.*

## **Program Delivery**

5. Modify referral forms to require referring agencies to indicate the specific referral criteria youth meet on the referral forms. This would help provide additional information about the characteristics of the population the NYVRP is targeting. *Agencies were inconsistent with respect to indicating the specific referral criteria youth met; however, this information was tracked by HAWWs in the NYVRP intake form once it was introduced.*
6. Discontinue requiring the HAWWs to complete the YLS/CMI with youth who are referred to the NYVRP by community sources. Instead, have the HAWWs complete the YLS/CMI: SV for all youth enrolled in the program (regardless of whether they are referred from the community or corrections) as soon as possible after they consent to participate in the NYVRP.\*
7. Administer the POSIT to all youth enrolled in the NYVRP (regardless of whether they are referred from the community or corrections) as soon as possible after they consent to participate in the program. The POSIT can then be used to inform the development of a care plan, as it identifies their risk level in 10 areas. It should be easier for the staff to administer the POSIT because it is comprised of 139 yes/no questions, does not require an open-ended interview with the youth, and specialized training is not needed to administer it.\*
8. Consider whether it is appropriate for the NYVRP to be serving both high risk and moderate risk youth as, based on the available data, it is likely that at least some of the youth enrolled in the program are moderate risk. *All youth were identified as high risk on at least one of the risk assessments used by the NYVRP (even if they were assessed to be moderate risk on other assessments).*
9. Extend the length of program duration from 12 to 18 months and base decisions to wean a client from the program on his/her level of readiness to exit the program. In cases of HAWW staff turnover, keep youth enrolled in the program until they have received the equivalent of at least 12 months of programming.\*

## **Staffing and Training**

10. Develop a program manual to ensure that new and existing staff have a clear document outlining the program delivery model to guide their work. *A program manual was not developed due to a lack of capacity in terms of not fully understanding how to develop, a manual, staff turnover causing the task to be re-assigned to another team member, and*

*remaining staff having insufficient time to complete the manual in the face of competing demands.*

11. Use Sandy Bay as a model to teach staff in other communities about the most effective way to implement the NYVRP, as this community has the most effective Core Teams as well as the most systematic approach to connecting youth with services and completing program documentation. *There is evidence that NYVRP staff did visit Sandy Bay to informally observe meetings and approaches to programming; however, it is unclear whether this recommendation was implemented in a systematic manner.*
12. Fill the administrative assistant role allocated to the NYVRP to offset some of the administrative duties placed on the HAWC. *\*This position was filled in 2018-19; it was vacant again in 2019-20. A lack of suitable candidates and a lack of priority on filling this position were contributing factors to the vacancy in 2019-20.*

## Evaluation

13. Work with the NYVRP project management team to develop a protocol outlining the type of information that needs to be collected at program completion, 6-month, and 12-month follow-ups to support the impact evaluation. *\*This was attempted on several occasions, but was not successful, in part, due to a lack of capacity among the NYVRP staff to complete follow-up risk assessments with participants at program completion, 6-month, and 12-month intervals.*
14. Work with the NYVRP project management team to improve the reliability of the Community Data Tracking sheet until the database is ready to be implemented.\*
15. Enter into data sharing agreements with the RCMP, PBCN Education, and Northern Lights School Division to acquire police and school data that can form the basis of the impact evaluation, as it is not possible to rely on program data or risk assessment data.\* *partially. It was possible to enter into data sharing agreements with PBCN Education (Deschambault Lake) and Northern Lights School Division. It was not possible to enter into an agreement with PBCN Education (Pelican Narrows) due to a lack of interest in engaging with the evaluators. The RCMP shared police data with the evaluation team in December 2020 and did not require a formal data sharing agreement to do so due to the de-identified nature of the dataset.*

## 7.5 Conclusions

The results of the formative evaluation of the NYVRP were mixed, revealing areas where the program was performing well, as well as areas where challenges were encountered and improvements were required. While it took much longer than anticipated to establish the NYVRP, the community engagement strategy employed by the NYVRP to solicit support for the initiative in the three communities of Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay was perceived to be effective by many of the stakeholders involved. Perhaps the greatest indicator of its success was the perception that the program is community-driven, which is a significant

achievement for a government-funded program. With respect to program delivery, overall, the NYVRP has fared quite well in terms of maintaining fidelity to its program delivery model. While there have been some notable challenges (e.g., with the limited use of risk assessments, limited participation in committees, staff turnover), the staff seem to understand the model, enact it to the best of their ability given the constraints they face, and have a strong passion for their clientele.

## 8. PROCESS EVALUATION FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION: 2018-19

The process evaluation focused on the fourth year of the initiative (April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019) and examined various aspects of program delivery, as well as the continued need for the program. Some of the key areas assessed by the evaluation were the:

- Adaptations made to the YVRP and RIAP models for the NYVRP in 2018-19
- Functioning of the governance structure
- Adequacy of staffing levels and training for staff
- Extent to which the NYVRP adheres to the principles of risk, need, and responsiveness
- Characteristics of NYVRP participants
- Degree of adherence to the program delivery model
- Need for the program in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay

Data collection methods employed in the formative evaluation included:

- Document review of Performance Monitoring and Assessment reports (PMAs), meeting minutes, as well as program forms and materials
- Database review (i.e., Community Data Collection tracking sheet) of 133 individuals
- Casefile review of 73 individuals
- Observation
- Community Youth Survey with 100 participants across the three communities

A summary of the key findings derived from the process evaluation are included in this section. Detailed findings are available in the process evaluation report (Jewell, Akca, et al., 2019).

### 8.1 Process Evaluation Findings

#### 8.1.1 Adapting the YVRP and RIAP Models

Overall, in 2018-19, the NYVRP continued to follow the basic structure of the YVRP and RIAP models. A handful of additional modifications were introduced to the NYVRP to enhance its functioning, including extending the length which youth can be involved in the program to at least 18 months, introducing a “phasing out” process to help youth slowly transition out of the program, using an intake form, and changing the risk assessment process wherein HAWWs were expected to administer the YLS/CMI: Screening Version, POSIT, and ACE-Q with all youth referred to the program. Previously HAWWs had been instructed to complete the full version of the YLS/CMI with all community-referred youth and Corrections had been asked to complete the LSI-SK or SPRA with all corrections-referred youth; however, this approach proved to be unsuccessful. All of the changes introduced in 2018-19 served to enhance the NYVRP’s ability to adhere to the overarching principles of the RIAP model. In particular, this model places value on support and rehabilitation, recommends that youth are progressively given more freedom and responsibility, and encourages the use of empirical risk assessments to determine risk level.

#### 8.1.2 Governance Structure

A two-tiered governance structure was maintained by the NYVRP in 2018-19 (i.e., an overarching Oversight committee and local Advisory Committees). Overall, the governance

structure seemed adequate and comprehensive as it allowed for local community representatives to provide input and direction into the NYVRP, while also providing a mechanism for higher level decisions makers to be involved in the program and to resolve issues (e.g., policy conflicts) that cannot be addressed at the local level. However, both committees have been affected by waning attendance at committee meetings. The NYVRP project management team attempted to increase engagement in these committees by holding one-one-agency meetings between October to January 2019.

### **8.1.3 Staffing and Training**

A few changes were introduced to the staffing model in 2018-19. Following the departure of the Program Manager in January 2019, it was decided that this position would not be filled. For a brief period, a part-time Administrative Assistant also had been hired; however, this position has since become vacant. Therefore, there are currently only seven staff positions affiliated with the NYVRP: the Manager of Program Operations (formerly the Health and Wellness Coordinator) and 6 Health and Wellness Workers (HAWWs). In addition, a Lead HAWW was identified at each site to help guide and offer ‘soft’ supervision to new hires.

During 2018-19, staffing continued to be both an area of strength and challenge for the NYVRP. One of the strengths of the program was its ability to retain a contingent of four staff (the MOPO and 1 HAWW in each community) who had been with the program since the beginning. Maintaining these core staff has been vital in ensuring continuity and consistency in program delivery, especially in the face of staff turnover at each site and a limited pool of suitable candidates to fill vacant positions. The frequent staff turnover experienced across all sites also revealed a need for staff coverage. To address this need, the NYVRP engaged its Mentors/Elders to conduct check-ins with youth when HAWWs were unavailable.

Another strength of the NYVRP’s staffing model (as documented in the formative evaluation) was that staff were chosen for their personal qualities. However, a lack of computer skills among some of the staff became more noticeable in 2018-19 as affecting their ability to perform the administrative aspects of their jobs (e.g., completing reports correctly). That being said, there is evidence that the staff who have been with the program for the last two years have more comprehension of the program delivery model and are more adept with certain aspects of the program (e.g., conducting risk assessments) than they were in the previous year.

Perhaps the most significant concern that has emerged over the last year with respect to staffing is the toll that working for the NYVRP has had on the staff’s physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. Staff are beginning to experience symptoms of burnout and have expressed that their jobs are detrimentally affecting their children and families.

### **8.1.4 Adherence to Risk, Need, Responsivity Principles**

A new risk assessment process was introduced in January 2019 and has led to a remarkable increase in the number of risk assessments completed for NYVRP participants. YLS/CMI: SVs and ACE-Qs were completed with 91% of clients ( $n=44$ ) who were active between January to March 2019; POSITs were completed with 89% of clients. In comparison, only 2 YLS/CMIs and 14 POSITs were completed by program staff in 2017-8. The high risk assessment completion rates in 2018-19 are an important achievement in the delivery of the program.

Further, results from the risk assessments revealed that all, but one, youth scored as high risk on the YLS/CMI: SV, indicating that the NYVRP is targeting high risk youth. Personality/behaviour problems, delinquent peer networks, anti-social attitudes, poor educational and vocational status were among the most common risk factors that contributed to their high risk scores. Further, the ACE-Q revealed that the NYVRP youth have experienced a large amount of trauma during their lives. All of the youth met the ACE-Q's criteria for referral for mental health counselling.

Beyond providing a risk score to determine program eligibility, the risk tools employed in the NYVRP were intended to inform care plans for the youth. Based on an analysis of the care plans, the adherence of the program to the 'need' and 'responsivity' principles were not at a satisfactory level. On average, only 57% of the risk factors flagged on the YLS/CMI: SV were documented in the care plans. As a result, the necessary goals to address those risks/needs could not be developed and noted in the case plans of the clients. Reflective of this, only 25% of the risk factors identified on the YLS/CMI: SV had corresponding goals documented in the care plan.

### 8.1.5 NYVRP Participant Characteristics

By the end of 2018-19, 133 youth had been referred to the NYVRP and 84 consented to participate. Based on the data available, at least 83% of these youth met the program eligibility criteria. More youth may have met the criteria, but data was unavailable to verify their eligibility. Demographic characteristics of the youth enrolled in the NYVRP are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Demographic Profile of NYVRP Consented Participants (N=84)**

| Referrals              | Total<br>n(%)         |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Referral Source</b> |                       |
| Community              | 24 (28.6%)            |
| Corrections            | 23 (27.4%)            |
| RCMP                   | 37 (44.0%)            |
| <b>Gender</b>          |                       |
| Male                   | 57 (67.9%)            |
| Female                 | 27 (32.1%)            |
| <b>Age<sup>1</sup></b> |                       |
| 12-14 years            | 19 (24.1%)            |
| 15-17 years            | 39 (49.4%)            |
| 18-20 years            | 14 (17.7%)            |
| 21-24 years            | 6 (7.6%)              |
| 25+ years              | 1 <sup>2</sup> (1.3%) |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>       |                       |
| First Nation           | 81 (96.4%)            |
| Métis                  | 3 (3.6%)              |

<sup>1</sup>Consent and/or birthdates are missing for 5 participants. <sup>2</sup>This youth was 24 years old upon referral.

### **8.1.6 Adherence to the Program Delivery Model**

Overall, the NYVRP is largely being implemented in line with its program delivery model. The data available indicates that HAWWs have regular contact with the youth and are readily available to the youth whenever the youth need them, including evenings and weekends. According to the program delivery model, there should be a caseload of 15 youth in each community shared among two HAWWs. In 2018-19, the combined caseloads at each site were between 13 to 15 clients, with all HAWWs having an average of six or more clients on the individual caseloads. Thus, it seems that the program is either operating at, or just under, its intended maximum capacity across the three sites.

In 2018-19, Core Teams were expected to be held monthly. Deschambault Lake held 50% of the expected number of meetings, while Pelican Narrows held 75% of expected meetings, and Sandy Bay held 83% of expected meetings. The types of agencies that participated in the Core Team varied by each community, as did the participation rates of the agencies. That being said, the majority of the agencies increased their attendance at Core meetings in 2018-19 compared to the previous year.

Over the past year, the NYVRP continued to be successful in identifying and connecting youth with vast array of supports and services available in their communities, including those related to education, employment, mental health and addictions, cultural and land-based teachings, personal support and self-development, arts, meeting court-ordered conditions, sports, and other recreational activities. In fact, the Community Youth Survey indicated that NYVRP clients had more involvement in these types of activities than the other youth who responded to the survey, which is another indicator that the NYVRP has been successful in connecting youth with prosocial activities.

### **8.1.7 Need for the Program**

A Community Youth Survey was conducted with 100 youth and included an approximately equal number of youth from each community. In general, the survey results revealed that there is a continued need for programs like the NYVRP to address the high level of youth violence and gang-involvement in these communities. The self-reported delinquency rate among the survey respondents was more than six times higher than the national police-reported crime rates (5.4%) and more than twice as high as the provincial rates (17.1%; Statistics Canada, 2016). Gang involvement rates among the youth, their peer networks, and family members, as well as their victimization rates, were also at concerning levels. The domestic violence problems that the youth have to deal with, their low level of school attendance and success, lack of parental supervision, lack of opportunities for prosocial activities, and mistrust to police are some of the major risk factors behind their delinquent behaviours.

## **8.2 Lessons Learned**

### **8.2.1 Program-related**

- Program delivery model modifications such as increasing the length of time youth can be enrolled in the program to 18 months and incorporating a 'Phasing Out' process were

needed to further support the youth in their healing journeys and to ensure that they were able to sustain any changes made upon exiting the program.

- It has been difficult to sustain the engagement and participation of community partners in the Oversight and Advisory Committees. The program has had to develop strategies, such as one-on-one agency meetings, to try to increase participation in these Committees.
- A dedicated core staff has been essential to ensuring the sustainability of the NYVRP over the past two years. A Lead HAWW has been appointed at each site to offer guidance and soft supervision to new staff.
- NYVRP staff were hired for their personal qualities and not for their formal education and experience. As a result, some of the HAWWs have poor computer skills and experience difficulties with completing the administrative components of their positions (e.g., completing paperwork, filling in the CDC tracking sheet). Increasing staff's administrative skills is an area that requires additional attention and training.
- It is difficult to rehire positions when there is staff turnover. The NYVRP would be well served by ensuring that its core staff are satisfied with their positions and are offered incentives to remain with the program until the end of the pilot project. It may also consider re-investing the salary dollars originally committed to the Project Manager position to hire administrative support in all three communities.
- Some form of staff coverage is needed when HAWWs are unavailable to meet with their clients. Relying on the program's network of Mentors and Elders has proven to be an effective strategy for providing this coverage.
- NYVRP staff are at high risk for burnout. Since the staff both live and work in these small communities, they are never really "off." Staff are also subjected to the effects of colonization on a regular basis, both through their jobs (by constantly hearing the stories of the youth they serve) and in their personal lives. Therefore, the NYVRP needs to provide staff and their families with adequate forms of support and debriefing to ensure that they are able to remain physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy and productive in their positions.
- A simplified risk assessment protocol relying on three easy-to-administer risk assessments (i.e., the YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q) has proven to be much more successful than the original risk assessment strategy wherein HAWWs were expected to complete the full version of the YLS/CMI with youth.
- The program is currently adhering to the "risk" principle of the Risk-Need-Responsivity framework. Additional attention needs to be paid to the "need" and "responsivity" principles by updating clients' case plans to reflect the risks/needs identified on the risk assessment tools and creating goals to help clients address those risks/needs.



- Overall, Core Teams have seen greater participation in Core meetings over the past year, suggesting that: a) a monthly meeting schedule is working well; and b) community agencies are finding some value in participating in the Core Team.
- Results from the Community Youth Survey, which included a small sample of NYVRP participants, suggested that the NYVRP has been successful with connecting its clients to cultural and prosocial activities, as NYVRP youth had greater involvement in these types of activities compared to the non-NYVRP survey respondents.
- The Community Youth Survey revealed a continued need for programs, such as the NYVRP, and suggested that there are more youth living in the community that may benefit from the program.
- Indigenous Services Canada has proven to be a promising agency to partner with to deliver mental health services to NYVRP youth using remote presence technology.
- The development of the NYVRP program database continues to be delayed and may not be finished in time to implement it prior to the end of the initiative.

### **8.2.2 Evaluation-related**

- It is necessary to have realistic expectations about the type and amount of data the NYVRP is capable of collecting to support the evaluation. While we strive to take a participatory approach in the evaluation, there are times where it may be unduly burdensome to the program (e.g., HAWWs, MOPO) to enact this approach. Therefore, the amount of data being collecting should be balanced with the available capacity to collect that data.
- The evaluation team should be careful to not overwhelm the HAWWs by asking them to participate in more than one evaluation activity at a time. We had asked the HAWWs to hand out NYVRP Participant and Parent surveys, as they had pre-existing relationships with these groups; however, this occurred at the same time staff were preparing their casefiles for review. Thus, they did not have enough time to assist with both activities.
- The risk assessment data being collected is not necessarily suited for pre-/post-test analysis. In 2018-19, many of the youth had been in the program for several months at the time that the risk assessments were completed with them. Further, many of the YLS/CMI: SVs and POSITs were not dated; therefore, we cannot tell when these assessments were completed in relation to a youth's tenure in the program.
- Entering into data sharing agreements with the RCMP, PBCN Education—Pelican Narrows, and Northern Lights School Division has proven to be more difficult than we had anticipated. The RCMP and the University have different philosophies about whether the two parities should be entering into a legally binding agreement. In addition, the RCMP has indicated that it is necessary to seek permission from the Court before data will be shared with the evaluation team. With respect to entering into agreements with

PBCN Education—Pelican Narrows and Northern Light School Division, it has been difficult to make contact with the individuals identified as having authority to discuss (and sign) the agreements drafted by the university.

### 8.3 Recommendations

The NYVRP has had many successes over the first four years of the project, but has also encountered several challenges and learned many lessons along the way. The following recommendations were offered to continue to enhance and refine the NYVRP during the final year of the initiative. The recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) were implemented in 2019-20. An explanation of why some recommendations were not implemented is provided in italics—in many cases, the recommendation may have been implemented, but there is a lack of evidence speaking to the extent to which it was done so in a full and systematic manner.

#### 8.3.1 Program Delivery Recommendations

##### Oversight and Advisory Committees

1. Continue to develop strategies to engage community partners to increase their participation and attendance rates in Oversight and Advisory Committee meetings. Offering another regional workshop (similar to the kick-off workshop in Baker's Narrows) may be one way of generating excitement for the NYVRP. *There was interest in organizing a regional event, but one ultimately was not scheduled (limited finances and logistics with scheduling such an event across three sites were contributing factors). A regional honour supper had been planned for the end of March 2020, but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

##### NYVRP Program Delivery

2. Continue completing the YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q with all youth enrolled in the NYVRP.\* Offer staff a brief training session on how to score the YLS/CMI: SV, as some staff were not scoring this instrument correctly. In addition, encourage staff to document the date each assessment is completed to ensure it is possible to determine how long the youth were in the program at the time the assessment was conducted. *There were improvements in scoring and dating the instruments in 2019-20, but some challenges were still observed in this area.*
3. Update the care plans developed for each youth to ensure that each risk factor identified as “high risk” on the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT is identified as a risk/need on the care plan. In addition, ensure that each risk/need has a corresponding goal/plan to address it. Utilizing the risk assessment information to develop or refine the youth's care plans would allow for better adherence to the “need” and “responsivity” principles of the RNR model. *There was no evidence that the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT results were used to update youth's care plans.*

## Staffing and Training

4. Develop a program manual to ensure that new and existing staff have a clear document outlining the program delivery model to guide their work. *A program manual was not developed due to a lack of capacity in terms of not fully understanding how to develop, a manual, staff turnover causing the task to be re-assigned to another team member, and remaining staff having insufficient time to complete the manual in the face of competing demands.*
5. Fill the administrative assistant position allocated to the NYVRP to offset some of the administrative duties placed on the MOPO and HAWWs. Consider reallocating some of the salary dollars originally budgeted for the Project Manager position to hire administrative support in each of the communities to offset staff's workload in this area. *Filling the administrative assistant position or hiring administrative support in each community was not prioritized in 2019-20.*
6. Create specific shifts for HAWWs wherein they oscillate between working directly with the youth and completing their administrative duties. This would help prevent HAWWs from falling behind on their administrative work. *It was unclear whether specific shifts were created. There was some evidence that, when required, HAWWs set aside time to complete their administrative duties.*
7. Provide staff with limited computer skills with training in this area (e.g., training on how to type, how to use Microsoft Word and Excel). *This training was not offered to staff who required it; other staff would assist and mentor staff who struggled in this area.*
8. Continue to invite Mentors and Elders to provide staff coverage and conduct check-ins with the youth when HAWWs are unavailable.\*
9. Continue to provide HAWWs (and their families) with the supports they require to remain healthy and productive in their positions to avoid staff burnout and further staff turnover.\*
10. Consider offering NYVRP staff an incentive to remain with the program until the end of March 2020 to ensure the continuity of services up until the end of the pilot project.\*

### 8.3.2 Evaluation Recommendations

11. Reconsider the extent to which HAWWs can realistically be involved in evaluation activities and ensure that HAWWs are not asked to participate in multiple evaluation activities simultaneously (e.g., preparing casefiles for review at the same time they are asked to assist with survey administration).\* *For the final evaluation, staff were only asked to complete post-program risk assessments with youth. They also had to prepare their casefiles for review, but the effort put into this task was primarily related to the program concluding (and needing to close each file) rather than for the evaluation.*

12. Devise a strategy for disseminating the NYVRP Participant and Parent Survey that limits the amount of time HAWWs are involved in this activity to avoid unduly burdening them.\* *partially. We decided to administer these surveys during site visits to each community but, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were only able to conduct a site visit to Deschambault Lake. The parent survey was not completed due to a lack of time during the site visit.*
13. Develop a strategy to ensure that evaluation data for the 2019-20 year is provided to the evaluation team before the NYVRP ends on March 31, 2019. This includes relevant program documents and meeting minutes, casefiles, and cost information for the cost analysis. *Due to a lack of administrative capacity, and the unexpected restrictions put in place by the COVID-19 pandemic that (a) limited the extent to which staff could work in their offices to prepare their casefiles and (b) made it difficult to transport the files, the evaluation team did not receive the casefile data until June 2020.*
14. Enter into data sharing agreements with the RCMP, PBCN Education—Pelican Narrows, and Northern Lights School Division\* to acquire police and school data for the impact evaluation. Contact more senior-level representatives in PBCN Education—Pelican Narrows and the Northern Lights School Division to discuss the data sharing agreements. *partially. It was possible to enter into data sharing agreements with PBCN Education (Deschambault Lake) and Northern Lights School Division. It was not possible to enter into an agreement with PBCN Education (Pelican Narrows) due to a lack of interest in engaging with the evaluators. The RCMP shared police data with the evaluation team in December 2020 and did not require a formal data sharing agreement to do so due to the de-identified nature of the dataset.*

## 8.4 Conclusions

The results of the 2018-19 NYVRP process evaluation have been mixed, revealing areas where the program is performing well, as well as areas where challenges have been encountered and improvements are required. Overall, there is evidence that the NYVRP is targeting the appropriate clientele and offering a wide range of supports to their clients. Further, it is clear that, as staff become more experienced with the program delivery model, they are also becoming more adept at adhering to it. In particular, the increased number of risk assessments in 2018-19 reflect one of the program's greatest accomplishments over the year. Moving forward, the program will need to turn its attention to using those risk assessments to inform care plans for the youth. It will also need to continue to work on increasing engagement in its Oversight and Advisory Committees and attending to issues related to staffing, especially to ensure that staff have the supports and resources needed to protect their physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing.

## 9. FINAL EVALUATION: PROCESS FINDINGS

### 9.1 Adapting the YVRP and RIAP models

#### 9.1.1 Evaluation Questions

- What changes, if any, were made to the NYVRP program delivery model and why?

#### 9.1.2 Indicators

- # and type of elements from the YVRP and RIAP models adapted for the NYVRP's program delivery model
- Reasons for adaptations made to the YVRP and RIAP models
- # and type of elements adapted in the NYVRP program delivery model in each program delivery year
- Reasons for adaptations made to the NYVRP program delivery model

#### 9.1.3 Data Sources

- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Document Review
- Observation

#### 9.1.4 Results

Many of the adaptations made to the YVRP and RIAP models are captured in the Introduction of this report (see Sections 4.1.4 and 4.2.3) and were decided upon at the time the funding proposal for the NYVRP was submitted to NCPS. These planned adaptations of the YVRP model, which were carried out as intended, included:

- Implementing the NYVRP in Indigenous communities located in a rural and remote setting rather than the inner city.
- Focusing on youth at risk of violence and gang involvement rather than at risk of perpetrating or being the victim of a homicide.
- Engaging local community-based organizations, as well as probation officers (POs), police, and street workers, through Core Teams to offer supports to youth in the program and allow for integrated case management.
- Having a smaller caseload wherein two HAWWs would be responsible for a combined caseload of 15 participants rather than having one street worker be responsible for 15 participants.
- A greater focus on supporting rehabilitation rather than on strictly supervising conditions.
- Using risk assessment tools to determine the risk level of youth and develop individualized case plans to address their identified risks/needs.
- Employing a consent-based approach to participation in the NYVRP rather than the court-mandated approach used in the YVRP.
- Extending the eligible age criteria to 12 to 24 years old (from 14 to 24 years in the YVRP model).

In terms of the RIAP model, the most significant deviation from this model is that most youth involved in the NYVRP will not have a custody sentence; therefore, the aspects of the model that occur in custody are largely irrelevant to the NYVRP. Otherwise, the RIAP model largely served to refine or enhance the YVRP model by:

- Placing an explicit focus on violent offending, reducing gang-like behaviours (e.g., vandalism, tagging), establishing new linkages between the justice system and the community, delivering targeted services and supports, and increasing community capacity to deliver justice services.
- Including an empirically-based method for assessing risk.
- Focusing on support and rehabilitation in addition to supervision and control.
- Incorporating integrated, multi-dimensional, comprehensive supports, including a focus on the family.
- Engaging the communities and developing strong partnerships (e.g., through the Core team, Advisory Committees, and Oversight Committee)

In addition to these planned adaptations, several adaptations were made to the NYVRP following the first year of program delivery in 2018-19. Briefly, these adaptations included:

- **Extending the length which youth can be enrolled in the NYVRP from 12 months to a least 18 months.** According to the program staff, the amount of time it takes for healing to occur is different for each individual and, as a result, it was difficult for some youth to heal and complete the program within the original 12-month timeframe. The speed at which youth are able to complete the NYVRP depends on a number of factors, such as their ability to identify natural supports and the involvement of agencies, frontline workers, and parents in assisting the youth work towards continued positive growth. Further, the program recognized that some youth enrolled in the NYVRP have been affected by HAWW positions that experienced turnover. In these situations, it was believed that youth should stay in the program for longer than 12 months as they did not receive the full level of programming that youth with a consistent HAWW received.
- **Introducing a “phasing out” process** to help the youth maintain the positive changes that occurred through their involvement in the program and to prevent relapse once they start transitioning out of the program. The phasing out process occurs in three steps wherein supports are slowly withdrawn from the youth to allow them to get used to functioning without the program: 1) At the 75% level, HAWWs visit the clients twice a week (a one-on-one visit and a group based activity); 2) At the 50% level, there are two visits per week (a check-in and a one-on-one visit); and 3) At the 25% level, there is only a one-on-one visit. After this, it is expected that youth will be ready to completely transition out of the program; however, they are able to contact the HAWWs in the future should they so desire.
- **Introducing an intake form** to gather additional information about clients at intake (in part, to compensate for the length of time it was taking for HAWWs and corrections staff to complete risk assessments with clients). The intake form is comprised of 11 sections

which captures basic information about a client and explores his/her strengths and needs, including: contact information; referral information; education and training; employment and essential skills; life skills; spiritual and cultural connections; financial, identification, and legal; housing; family and social connections; physical and mental health management; and sports and recreation. The intake form is completed by the HAWW with the client through a one-on-one interview (i.e., all information on the form is self-reported by the client).

- **Changing the risk assessment tools and protocols.** As outlined in the section 3.1.2, many barriers to implementing the risk assessment protocol, as it was originally designed, were encountered during the first year of program delivery, which resulted in very few YLS/CMI and LSI-SKs/SPRAs being completed with community-referred and corrections-referred youth, respectively. At the community level, staff's level of education and comprehension of the YLS/CMI (due, in part, to language barriers) were identified as significant obstacles in completing assessments. For Corrections, high staff turnover, high caseloads, and a backlog of assessments made it difficult for probation officers to complete assessments in a timely manner. Due to these difficulties, and based on recommendations from the formative evaluation, it was decided that the YLS/CMI: Screening Version (YLS/CMI: SV) would be used with all youth referred to the program, regardless of their referral source, to assess their risk level. However, it was still expected that Corrections would share any LSI-SKs or SPRAs they complete for NYVRP youth with the program and that the NYVRP would complete full YLS/CMI assessments for youth whose risk levels warranted further clarification (e.g., youth screened as moderate risk).

In addition, it was decided that the Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT) would be conducted with all youth enrolled in the NYVRP due to its ease of administration (it is 139 yes/no questions) and its positive uptake in 2017-18. The evaluation team also identified a computer program (i.e., POSIT PC2) staff could use to score the POSITs; this computer program was successfully adopted by HAWWs.

Finally, the Center for Youth Wellness Adverse Childhood Experience – Questionnaire (CYW ACE-Q) – Teen version (Harris & Renschler, 2015) was introduced to the risk assessment protocol. The NYVRP project management team recognized that the youth enrolled in the NYVRP all have histories of trauma that would be helpful to document in a standardized manner to inform programming. Upon the evaluation and NYVRP project management teams' review of existing instruments designed to measure adverse childhood experiences (ACEs; Bethell et al., 2017; Oh et al., 2018), it was decided that the CYW ACE-Q – Teen version (Harris & Renschler, 2015) would be slightly modified for use with the NYVRP (i.e., instructions specific to NYVRP staff were included directly on the form and the formatting was changed slightly).

- **Modifying the staffing model.** Four significant changes were introduced to the staffing model. First, the Health and Wellness Coordinator (HAWC) who was primarily responsible for providing clinical oversight, became the Manager of Program Operations (MOPO). Second, following the departure of the Program Manager in January 2019, it

was decided that this position would not be filled, leaving only seven staff positions affiliated with the NYVRP: the MOPO and 6 HAWWs. Third, the concept of having a “Lead HAWW” at each site was introduced, wherein this person helped guide and offered ‘soft’ supervision to new hires. Fourth, it was decided that HAWWs who are young adults themselves will only be allowed to work with youth 18 years of age and younger to ensure that they will not be working with youth from their own peer group.

In 2019-20, there were no additional modifications made to the NYVRP’s program delivery model. However, through the stakeholder interviews and community stakeholder survey, additional reflections were provided about some of the modifications that had been made.

### ***Reflections on the NYVRP Program Delivery Model and Adaptations***

**Strict supervision.** Throughout the program, there has been an intentional focus on support and rehabilitation of the youth rather than on strict supervision. The remote geographic location of the communities played a significant role in the focus on support and rehabilitation provided by program staff rather than on a combination of support and strict supervision jointly provided by program staff, policing, and corrections (as described by the YVRP model). Focusing first on the RCMP, the detachments in the three communities were restricted by limited personnel, which prevented them from being able to strictly supervise the NYVRP youth in the communities. One RCMP member commented, “*we just don’t have the people or the time to do that.*” This is not to say that the RCMP were uninvolved with the youth enrolled in the NYVRP; their interactions with youth tended to be more casual. According to one officer, “*I would often stop, like if they were either on a call or just driving around, certain kids I would stop and chat with them.*” The RCMP also sponsored clinics or hosted activities intended to provide youth with the opportunity to learn life skills or participate in prosocial activities (e.g., life jacket safety clinics, Community Cadet Corps). In the formative evaluation, it was suggested that the police had adopted a friendly supervision model in terms of their role in the NYVRP and that this was a unique adaptation of the NYVRP; however, RCMP stakeholders suggested that this “friendly policing” approach is fundamental to all policing. Thus, it is likely the limited resources that affected the approach to policing supervision taken in the NYVRP rather than a particular policing model or orientation.

*Every place I’ve been in uniform that good relationship, that how are you doing today, that little chat, that’s policing at the core, it’s policing 101....It just naturally occurs with NYVRP, we didn’t have to push anything. Not every member is not as open and comfortable but a lot are...and if you make those friendly relationships, that type of stuff helps you solve crime. (RCMP)*

With respect to the amount of supervision Probation Officers were able to provide the youth enrolled in the NYVRP, they are largely limited by geography. The Creighton Corrections office (which serves the three NYVRP communities) is located approximately 1.5 hours from Deschambault Lake and Pelican Narrows, and 2.5 hours from Sandy Bay. Thus, by the time the Probation Officers travel to and from the communities, the amount of time they are able to devote to supervision beyond their regular check-ins with the youth is limited. As a result of this



distance, it also was unrealistic for probation officers to conduct curfew checks in these communities on a regular basis (as would be expected in the original YVRP model).

**Program length.** Program length remained a point of discussion in the final evaluation. While the length of time youth could remain in the NYVRP was increased from 12 to 18 months in 2018-19, some stakeholders still questioned whether this was an appropriate length of time for the youth given the amount of trauma most had experienced in their lives, largely stemming from the effects of colonization and intergenerational trauma. According to one NYVRP staff member, “*we knew the time that was given to work with the youth wasn’t going to be sufficient*”. The exceptionally high scores of the youth on the ACE-Q (all 49 youth with a completed ACE-Q had experienced a minimum of eight ACEs; the minimum number of ACEs where referral for treatment is recommended is four; see Section 9.5) underscores the level of trauma of the youth enrolled in the NYVRP had experienced.

Further, another stakeholder suggested that the limited time the program delivery model dictated that a youth could be enrolled in the NYVRP and pre-establishing a target of having 150 youth participate in the program over the five-year initiative set the program up for failure.

*Even though we were given a five year project with limited time for each young person, to hit the 150 mark...it still wasn’t enough time. From the get go, the project was set up for failure; it did not provide enough time to make an impact. It wasn’t until after Year 1 that I realised ‘wow, we don’t have enough time to work with these kids.’ And just seeing how all of the SES issues, seeing just how entrenched the community was in terms of the problems that were within the families themselves and the overall communities, I thought, oh my goodness and hearing it from the staff really, just how the intergenerational problems are just coming out in these young people and how can we leave them already. That was something that should have been thought of before we actually stepped into delivering services, is how are we going to affect, it could have a negative impact on these people by just being there for a small amount of time and then having to let them go back into the same environment, hopefully with some supports developed, but you never know depending on how the rest of the community is. (NYVRP Project Management Team [PMT]/Staff)*

This stakeholder also raised the concern that, by releasing youth from the NYVRP too early (before they have healed sufficiently and/or identified an adequate number of supports), it could actually have a negative impact on them. Observations from the RCMP about youth involvement in criminal activity during a Christmas break when HAWWs were unavailable to the youth provides supporting evidence that the youth may not be able to sustain progress made under the guidance of the HAWW when supports are withdrawn too early.

*For a lot of these clients we were having limited to no involvement with them prior to Christmas break when NYVRP was in constant communication and reaching out to them. During Christmas and New Years break it was clear that these clients had no support and ended up becoming involved with the RCMP. This goes to show that these youths are heavily reliant on the support, positive engagement and constant communication that this program provides. When this support or constant communication ceases to exist or the*

*clients feel the support is not available they instantly revert back to their old behaviours and end up involved with RCMP in one way or another. (RCMP)*

In fact, several stakeholders commented that the HAWWs may be the only positive support that youth have in their lives. Thus, it can be difficult for the youth to sustain changes made in the NYVRP, as when they return to their homes, they may be surrounded by negative conditions and influences (e.g., poverty, addictions in the home, lack of parental support).

*If they don't have that role model at home, the HAWW can only be with them for so long. And it might be all good and well when she's with them, but the minute she leaves, its just doom and gloom for them...when she's with them, they're doing all these things, and then they're not there, and then there's nothing. (Corrections)*

*When the kids are done here, they don't want to go home because the parents are the ones that are actually doing the damage to their children and their youth. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*We're there for mostly a lot of emotional support. Just to have that person there to talk with them, the one-on-one talks that they don't receive at home from their parents. I know for two of my client emergencies that I was there for them and their parents were not. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

When asked what the ideal length of time a youth should be enrolled in the NYVRP, one stakeholder suggested that it should be a three-year program, allowing time for establishing rapport with the youth, providing them with supports and services, and then slowly reducing the level of engagement with them.

*I think the NYVPR should be a 3-year program. You would do a similar phasing out process, but I think it should go by years. Year 1 would be to build rapport, and then start reducing your level of engagement with them and leave them really independent when year three comes. (Corrections)*

**Complexity of program delivery model.** When reflecting upon the NYVRP program delivery model, a handful of stakeholders expressed concern about the complexity of the model. Most of the concerns related to using the RIAP model to bring more rigor to the YVRP model by incorporating an empirical risk assessment and case planning process into the NYVRP. One stakeholder also suggested that attempts to formally address youth's mental health needs (through the use of RPT) further taxed the program (see Section 9.7 for more discussion of RPT).

*Even looking at the model itself, it was a little bit of an overload for any first-time project, especially in remote communities. So, for instance, having a hybrid model, even though the Philadelphia model, we know there was no risk assessment, but we brought in a corrections model that we used something from an evidence-based model that utilized a risk assessment tool. Then throwing in the mental health piece on top of it. I think it was such a complex, we made it more complex than we should have maybe. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

As has been discussed previously, the original risk assessment was determined to be too difficult for the NYVRP staff to complete. Given the challenges with the original tool selected (i.e., the YLS/CMI) and fully integrating the risk assessments into the case management process (i.e., there was limited evidence that the NYVRP used risk assessments to inform youth's care plans; see Section 9.5), some stakeholders questioned whether this aspect of the program delivery model should be retained in the future.

*We know the assessment tool didn't work out. I don't think there's any getting around that. When you have your frontline workers who aren't able to perform certain tasks, that's fine. I think they did fine with the work they should have been doing. I don't know if them doing risk assessments is advantageous. It's hard for me to say throw risk assessments out the window, as it should be evidence-based and especially when working with the ones who are high risk. At the same time, the community knows who's high risk, I think. (Corrections)*

Some interviewees also commented that the communities, in general, lacked the knowledge, understanding, and capacity to do intensive case management. Consequently, it was suggested that, if Core Teams are expected to participate in case management activities, such as developing case plans, they should receive training to increase their knowledge in this area.

*I don't think its realistic to think that the people we have in the communities are going to be doing intensive case management. We need to have realistic expectations. (Corrections)*

*They didn't even know what care plans were. Even that kind of training could have went to the Core Teams. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

**Family involvement in the NYVRP.** The RIAP model values the incorporation of integrated, multi-dimensional, comprehensive supports, including a focus on the family. The NYVRP shared this value and attempted to involve parents and families in the program as much as possible. However, NYVRP staff indicate that their ability to do so was influenced by the parents' own level of readiness for healing, as well their other commitments and responsibilities.

*Getting family involvement was one of the target things we wanted to do. To get families part of that healing process. Because of the reality of the communities, there was a lot of resistance there. People weren't ready to give up their way of dealing with it and coming face to face with the knowledge of what's really going on...It'd be labelled something else differently like why this kid is acting this way or why this kid is not eating. Nobody wants to address those things yet. It made it hard to get parents to that point when they're not ready. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*It's like we were working against the parents. I had a youth that I was working with, but had unhealthy parents working against me. She would take her daughter out and they would get drunk. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*The community talks about bad kids, but not about bad parenting. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*The NYVRP tried to engage the parents, but there's just a lack of parental involvement and supports. (Community Stakeholder)*

*It's not that [the parents] don't want to be engaged. It's that they have other commitments in their personal lives, they have other kids at home. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Due to a lack of family involvement, the NYVRP took on tasks that may be more appropriate for parents to perform, such as scheduling and transporting youth to appointments. However, one stakeholder indicated that, if the NYVRP did not perform these tasks for the youth, it would be detrimental to the youth's healing journey.

*Some of these kids, they would be driving them in to go to Pelican Narrows and Prince Albert [for counselling appointments] because the family themselves couldn't take care of that themselves. NYVRP was doing that, because if they didn't, it would be all for naught. (Community Stakeholder)*

It should be noted that it was possible to engage some parents in the program. For instance, some parents “came to programming whether it be to volunteer or just to listen in” (NYVRP PMT/Staff). In some cases, HAWWs were also able to engage parents during home visits and to incorporate them into the work being done with the youth.

*I would educate the youth about our history, and I would implement the parents too. Because the parents, you know, you go to the home, you work with the kids for 2 to 3 hours in the evening or do a program and you educate them about healthy things, wellness of themselves, the four aspects, self-esteem, confidence, healthy relationships, you know with the community too and themselves. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

In the future, several stakeholders indicated that the NYVRP should continue its efforts to engage families and, if possible, increase the extent to which parents are involved in the program. In particular, stakeholders would like to see the parents reinforcing what the HAWWs are teaching the youth, assisting with implementing their care plans, and supporting their healing journeys.

*I think maybe getting the parents more involved. I don't know if that's possible. And maybe having the workers share the care plans with the parents so they can assist them when they're not with them. I think parents need to be playing the same role model role as the HAWW. I know a lot of them aren't, but...you can't just say it, you have to do it. So they would need to be that role model when the HAWW can't be. They need to have that person modelling that behaviour all the time. If they are only getting that one or two hours a time with the HAWW, that's not enough. (Corrections)*

**Land-based learning and cultural teachings.** One important element of the NYVRP that is not adequately captured in the program delivery model is the incorporation of land-based

learning as a strategy for teaching and healing the youth. The NYVRP staff do not believe that land-based learning is a true adaptation of the YVRP or RIAP model; rather, they view it as a form of support that is appropriate and relevant in the communities where the program is being delivered. They posited that, if the NYVRP is implemented elsewhere, it would be implemented in a manner that suits the culture of that community. In this sense, culture was not seen to be an adaptation but the context in which the program was situated. Even so, it is worth highlighting the role that land-based learning played in the NYVRP as NYVRP staff and stakeholders commented that land-based learning and opportunities to work with the Elder/Mentors were among the most important elements of the program. Through these opportunities, youth were able to participate in culture camps, traditional ceremonies, medicine picking, beading, making traditional clothes, and activities such as hunting, fishing, and snaring.

*Having the Elders, doing the land-based stuff, those were important things because our target youth are high risk kids and they were gravitating toward the gangs. And in the gangs they get that sense of family. And by utilizing the Elders, it teaches them the traditional practices where it keeps them another way and gives them that belonging that they were looking for. A sense of belonging. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Another strength was staff, how they adapted the model in terms of doing a lot of land-based learning...it was a strength because a lot of the kids, they don't necessarily go out of the communities very much. They don't have the money to do things. They didn't know a lot about the things they got to learn. Some of the kids, probably never got to hang out with them before in a prosocial, culturally-based setting. I think that brought a lot to the table just in terms of really making it more fitting or culturally appropriate/ competence to the project. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Corrections stakeholders especially valued the land-based learning opportunities the NYVRP provide to the youth as they recognized that these are important skills and opportunities for the youth to have, yet they do not have the capacity or ability to offer these services themselves.

*In terms of our work, we're not able to put in all the time that we would like with our clients doing leisure activities and that kind of stuff. It would be nice if we did, but we just don't have the time to spend, we have so many clients. Having them spend quality time with the kids, getting involved in cultural activities and snaring, that kind of stuff, is a strength. (Corrections)*

*The stuff they were doing with the clients is stuff my workers can't do with them. For example, my workers can't take them trapping. In my mind, these are very essential skills for kids in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay. (Corrections)*

In terms of the impact of the land-based learning opportunities on the youth, NYVRP staff perceived that these opportunities provided the youth with space to be more open about their feelings and to build stronger relationships with the HAWWs and other youth in the program.

*In the bush, the healing environment helps the kids open up and talk more about those hurts they would never tell anyone...it creates space and they are more willing to talk. I*

*talk to them and I become vulnerable. They need to see that its okay to talk about them.*  
(NYVRP PMT/Staff)

In the future, some stakeholders suggested that the NYVRP should place an even greater emphasis on land-based learning.

*I think more we should focus more on our traditional values, which is ceremonies and the traditional aspect of what we take our animals for our lives. And also for our medicine to help our youth understand why we pick it and what it's for. I know it's a lot of land-based stuff.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

**Appropriateness of program model.** A handful of stakeholders commented on the appropriateness of the NYVRP program delivery model for the three communities in which was implemented. These stakeholders valued the program model and believed it could benefit other First Nation communities. For instance, a NYVRP staff member stated “*whoever thought of this program, it's had a tremendous effect on the youth.*” However, another community stakeholder cautioned that it needs to be tailored in a way that fits the geographic characteristics and cultural traditions of the location in which it is being implemented.

*The program should go to other communities, but according to the way they live, their norms, they way we have it and changed it to fit us. It needs to fit into the geography and the traditions. I think it would benefit a majority of First Nation communities. It benefits the kids and it benefits the parents.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

### 9.1.5 Interpretation

Overall, the NYVRP followed the basic structure of the YVRP and RIAP models, with several adaptations introduced to the models to make it applicable for implementation in northern Saskatchewan. Several of the adaptations made to the NYVRP and RIAP models were planned in advance at the time that the NYVRP funding proposal was submitted to NCPS and the most important adaptations included directing programming to Indigenous youth aged 12 to 24 years at risk of violence and gang involvement, a greater focus on rehabilitation and support than on strictly supervising conditions, using risk assessment tools to determine the risk level of youth and develop individualized case plans, and engaging community-based organizations in addition to police and probation officers to support the youth in the program and to allow for integrated case management. Following the implementation of the NYVRP, a handful of additional modifications were required to improve the functioning of the program. The most significant modifications are discussed below.

First, the length of time youth could be enrolled in the program was increased from 12 to 18 months to better meet the program's goals of focusing on support and rehabilitation with the youth (as informed by the YVRP and RIAP models). Upon conclusion of the program, however, some stakeholders still questioned whether 18 months was an appropriate length of time for youth to be enrolled in the NYVRP or if the program length should be extended further. One stakeholder suggested the NYVRP should be a three-year program, while others indicated that it is difficult to establish a set length of time in which youth should be enrolled in the program, as

healing can take longer for some individuals compared to others. In the future, based on the experiences of the NYVRP, one of the key factors that should be considered when determining the targeted length of time an individual can be enrolled in the program is the amount of trauma youth have experienced and the amount of healing that will consequently be required before they can function independently without the support of the NYVRP. It is also necessary to consider the number of positive supports youth have, as the NYVRP was the only positive support in many of the youth's lives and it was observed that the youth may return to their previous behaviours (or experience other negative unintended impacts) if support is withdrawn prematurely. To account for these factors, there should be some flexibility in terms of the length of time an individual can remain in the NYVRP.

A second modification that the NYVRP introduced was a "Phasing Out" process to help youth transition out of the program. This was an excellent adaptation that ultimately allowed the NYVRP to function more in line with its overarching theoretical model. Specifically, one of the principles that underlies the RIAP model is that youth should progressively be prepared for increased responsibility and freedom in the community. The introduction of the "Phasing Out" process was directly in line with this principle, as it allowed youth time to transition out of the NYVRP and to progressively learn how to live their lives without the constant support of the NYVRP.

A third adaptation made to the NYVRP program delivery model pertained to the simplification of the risk assessment process. An important feature of the NYVRP (as informed by the RIAP model) is the use of an empirical risk assessment tool. The formative evaluation revealed that few risk assessment tools were completed by either HAWWs or Corrections for youth enrolled in the NYVRP in 2017-18, suggesting that, initially, the program was not following this aspect of the program delivery model very closely (Jewell, Mulligan, et al., 2019). Therefore, the program's decision to modify the risk assessment process to conduct the YLS/CMI: Screening Version, POSIT, and ACE-Q with all youth enrolled in the program, regardless of referral source, enhanced the NYVRP's ability to use risk assessment tools to determine the risk level of consented youth and develop individualized case plans to address their identified risks/needs. Even with the simplification of the risk assessment process, however, the risk tools were still not used to their fullest extent. For instance, there was limited evidence that the tools were used to inform the youth's care plans and the case management discussions that occurred at Core Teams (Jewell, Akca, et al., 2019). In fact, interviewees noted that it was challenging for Core Teams to participate in integrated case management because they lacked the knowledge and skills to do so. In the future, it is important to consider the knowledge and capacity of the individuals expected to implement the risk assessment protocol to: a) determine whether a risk assessment protocol is appropriate/realistic (note: a formal risk assessment tool is not a component of the original YVRP model); b) tailor any risk assessment protocol that is incorporated into the program model to match the knowledge and experience of those responsible for implementing it; and c) provide training to all parties expected to be involved in case management (especially if such activities are new to the community) to ensure an adequate level of knowledge about the process. Notably, some stakeholders perceived the NYVRP's program delivery model was too complex given the capacity of the communities where it was implemented and their lack of familiarity with evidence-based corrections models.

A final adaptation introduced to the NYVRP was the incorporation of land-based learning and cultural teachings as a means of supporting the youth. Program staff suggested that this was not a true adaptation; they perceived it as the operationalization of the type of supports that were necessary and meaningful in these communities. However, land-based learning and teachings from Elders/Mentors played a significant role in the program and warrant highlighting. In the NYVRP communities, where the effects of colonization and intergenerational trauma are prevalent, land-based learning and learning from Elders/Mentors offered important opportunities for youth to connect with their culture and to participate in traditional activities. Thus, when adapting the YVRP and RIAP models, it is important consider what is the best way to rehabilitate and support the youth and to tailor the supports offered to the needs of the youth where the program is being offered.

To conclude, in the formative evaluation, NYVRP project management team and the evaluation team posited that, despite the numerous adaptations introduced to the YVRP model to make it applicable for implementation in the north, the NYVRP should be considered a derivation of the YVRP model rather than a new model altogether. At the conclusion of the NYVRP, we still maintain this position, as there continues to be more similarities than differences between the NYVRP and YVRP program delivery models. For instance, the use of street workers; provision of the intervention in the community; focus on high risk youth, mentorship, and connecting youth to supports and services; involvement of police to provide some supervision and surveillance; and employment of a similar governance structure are all features of the original YVRP model. The most significant characteristic of the YVRP model that is lacking in the NYVRP is the active involvement of POs with youth participants (beyond required check-ins with the POs). Moving forward, this final evaluation suggests that two aspects of the NYVRP program model may require further refinement (i.e., the program length and risk assessment protocol); however, overall, the NYVRP seems to be a reasonable adaptation of the YVRP and RIAP models that could be implemented in other communities.



## 9.2 Governance Structure

### 9.2.1 Evaluation Questions

- How does the governance structure support or impede the project?
- How well do project delivery staff work with community partners?

### 9.2.2 Indicators

- Elements of the governance structure
- Number of Oversight Committee meetings held and attendance level
- Number of Advisory Committee meetings held in each community and attendance level
- Satisfaction with the governance structure

### 9.2.3 Data Sources

- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Document Review

### 9.2.4 Results

#### *Oversight Committee Meetings and Attendance*

Throughout the five-year initiative, the NYVRP maintained its governance structure of having an overarching Oversight Committee and three local Advisory Committees (one in each community). In line with the decision in 2017-18 to hold Oversight Committee meetings bi-annually, two Oversight meetings were held each year from 2017-18 to 2019-20 (see Table 2). Attendance at the meetings varied. Focusing on the 2019-20 program year, the Oversight Committee meeting held on May 27, 2019 had approximately 15 persons in attendance, including representatives from the NYVRP, Ministry of Corrections and Policing, U of S evaluation team, the Northern Village of Sandy Bay, PBCN Chief and Council, PBCN Health Services, and the Saskatchewan Health Authority. In contrast, the Oversight Committee meeting held on January 20, 2020 had less attendance and representation. Here, only 9 persons attended, including representatives from the NYVRP, Ministry of Corrections and Policing, and the U of S evaluation team.

**Table 2: Number of Bi-Annual and Monthly Oversight Meetings by Program Year**

|                  | Oversight Meetings |                         |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|                  | Bi-annual          | Monthly Update          |
| <b>2017-2018</b> | 2                  | At least 3 <sup>1</sup> |
| <b>2018-2019</b> | 2                  | 8                       |
| <b>2019-2020</b> | 2                  | 8                       |

<sup>1</sup>The evaluation team only started to systematically track the occurrence of these meetings in January 2018.

The Community Stakeholder Survey examined reasons why stakeholders were unable to attend Oversight Committee meetings in the past 12 months. Eleven (of 25) survey respondents indicated that they had attended an Oversight meeting in the past year. Of these, three (27%)

attended both meetings, seven (64%) attended one meeting and one (9%) did not attend any meetings. The most common reasons provided for not attending Oversight meetings were:

- being too busy to attend ( $n=3$ )
- having other emergencies come up that had to taken care of ( $n=3$ )
- being away on vacation or other leave ( $n=2$ )

**Monthly Management Update Calls.** In addition to the biannual Oversight Committee meetings, monthly management update conference calls were held with managers from the various partner agencies, including Oversight Committee members, on the overall progress of the NYVRP. Eight calls took place in both 2018-19 and 2019-20 (see Table 2). In 2019-20, regular attendees at these meetings included the NYVRP project management team, NYVRP staff, Corrections stakeholders, and the U of S evaluation team. Occasionally representatives from the RCMP and Indigenous Services Canada also joined the calls.

Through these calls, regular updates were provided to stakeholders about NYVRP referrals and activities across the three sites, including Core Team meetings, Advisory Committee meetings, program administration, and current events, successes, and challenges in the communities. These calls were intended to foster collaboration and support from the NYVRP partner agencies by providing opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback to the program, share information, and ask questions. In an effort to build each site's capacity to run the NYVRP more independently, in the spring of 2019, rather than having the Project Manager or MOPO provide updates at these meetings, the HAWWs started to take an active role in reporting back on NYVRP activities.

### *Functioning of the Oversight Committee*

**Perceptions of the Oversight Committee.** Both the stakeholder interviews and community stakeholder survey explored perceptions of the Oversight Committee's functioning. The interviews revealed that one aspect of the Oversight Committee that was deemed to be an asset was having a respected figure in Saskatchewan as the Oversight Chair for the first half of the initiative. It was perceived that having this individual affiliated with the program brought credibility to the program and validated the difficulties encountered by the program.

*I think he really brought a lot to the table and him stating to everybody how much work the project was. Those comments coming from him really validated how challenging and difficult it really is to work on something like this and to get it implemented and five years just isn't enough. Having him as our chairperson and delivering some of those messages really helped. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

The interviews also revealed that stakeholders, especially the NYVRP staff, found the Oversight Committee meetings helpful for learning about the overall direction of the program and the outcomes it was expected to achieve. The presentation of evaluation findings was identified as being particularly helpful in this regard.

*It gives you more knowledge on what you're trying to do and what outcomes you're expected to get from the community to be helpful for our agency and program. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

NYVRP staff also indicated that they valued the Oversight Committee as it provided them a venue to share their experiences with the program, inform their partners about the work they were doing, and discuss what additional supports they needed to be successful.

*It would give us a chance to bring back what we needed to know and give insight into what we were doing in the program to these other people. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*We were able to voice out what we needed, what they needed to hear. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

In addition to these positive features of the Oversight Committee, it was suggested that the Oversight Committee could be further enhanced by placing a greater emphasis on problem-solving or finding solutions to some of the issues encountered by the NYVRP. For instance, one NYVRP staff member would have liked to see greater discussion of the safety concerns they encounter in their jobs at these meetings.

*Workers should have more say to address some of the concerns that they have. I know that our work puts us in danger sometimes, but we do what we go to do. I think that we should be able to express our concerns at the main table, considering what our job consists of. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Other stakeholders were dissatisfied with the lack of feedback that came from the Oversight Committee about how to address some of the problems faced by the NYVRP and believed that Oversight Committee members should have more strongly encouraged their staff to attend Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings when attendance started to wane.

*We never got real good feedback on how to deal with some of the problems that were identified in the communities. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*The number one thing about getting Core Team people involved and invested when the decline happened. We would talk about it at the Oversight meetings. They should have leaned on their people and nothing ever panned out. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

In the future, most stakeholders interviewed, especially NYVRP staff and management, believed that the Oversight meetings should continue. It was clear that NYVRP staff were receiving information at these meetings and provided with opportunities to express their experiences and concerns about the program that they were not receiving elsewhere. Further, NYVRP management saw the Oversight meetings as way of securing agencies' investment in, and support of, the program, and valued having a table for senior-level managers to learn about the program and who can then mandate staff participation in the program (e.g., by attending Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings).

Most stakeholders agreed, however, that if these meetings were to continue, they should be restructured to ensure that: a) the information presented at the meetings was not repetitive of the information presented at the monthly update or local Advisory Committee meetings; and b) the focus was on discussion rather than reporting back, including how agencies can support the program, identifying solutions to the problems encountered by the NYVRP, and a focus on common goals.

*If we were to continue this service delivery, I think the Oversight Committee would be necessary/essential to have. Just for the reasons, if not motivating through good work and successes and through your own personal passion and interest and investment in the community, at least then you have a director that makes you go. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

As part of this restructuring, some stakeholders questioned whether face-to-face bi-annual Oversight meetings were necessary, as these meetings were typically held in Prince Albert and took staff and some stakeholders out of the communities. One person suggested that an annual face-to-face meeting be held with a teleconference half-way through the year.

**Perceptions of the Monthly Update Phone Calls.** Upon reflecting on the monthly update phone calls with management, stakeholders were less certain of the value of these calls. Several stakeholders were unclear about the purpose of the calls and found that the information presented in these phone calls was repetitive in terms of the information shared from one month to the next, but also with respect to the information shared at other meetings (e.g., Oversight Advisory, Core).

*I found that the information was always the same. And I found like I never really learned anything from them. I heard it from the Core, and the Advisory, it was always very repetitive. (Corrections)*

*I found them almost carbon copy. I really didn't find them useful...I don't think they had much purpose. (Corrections)*

There were also concerns about the organization of the monthly update meetings, as sometimes the teleconferences were cancelled with no notice or it was unclear who was supposed to moderate the meetings (which led to delays in starting the meeting).

*I have called into numerous meetings only to find that the moderator is not online or the meeting has been cancelled yet not via the Outlook invite. Meetings start late and are not productive. I lost confidence in the meetings taking place as scheduled. (Corrections)*

If these calls do continue in the future, it was suggested that they also be restructured to focus more on troubleshooting, as well as on sharing more success stories to increase buy-in.

*They could have purpose, like we could have done a little more troubleshooting about referrals and stakeholder commitment... We could have shared a few more success stories to get people to buy in. (Corrections)*

Further, if the same information is being shared at different meetings, it may be necessary to consolidate some of the meetings to ensure that each meeting type is used to its fullest potential.

### *Advisory Committee Meetings and Attendance*

Following the first year of program delivery, it was decided that Advisory Committee meetings would be held every two to three months. In 2019-20, there were four Advisory Committee meetings held in Deschambault Lake, two in Pelican Narrows, and five in Sandy Bay (see Table 4). An additional meeting in Deschambault Lake had been scheduled but was cancelled due to staff illness. Three additional Advisory Committee meetings had been scheduled in Pelican Narrows, but they were cancelled due a lack of response to meeting invitations and/or a lack of attendance the day of the meeting. Thus, Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay met the targeted number of Advisory Committee meetings; Pelican Narrows was unable to due to a lack of participation.

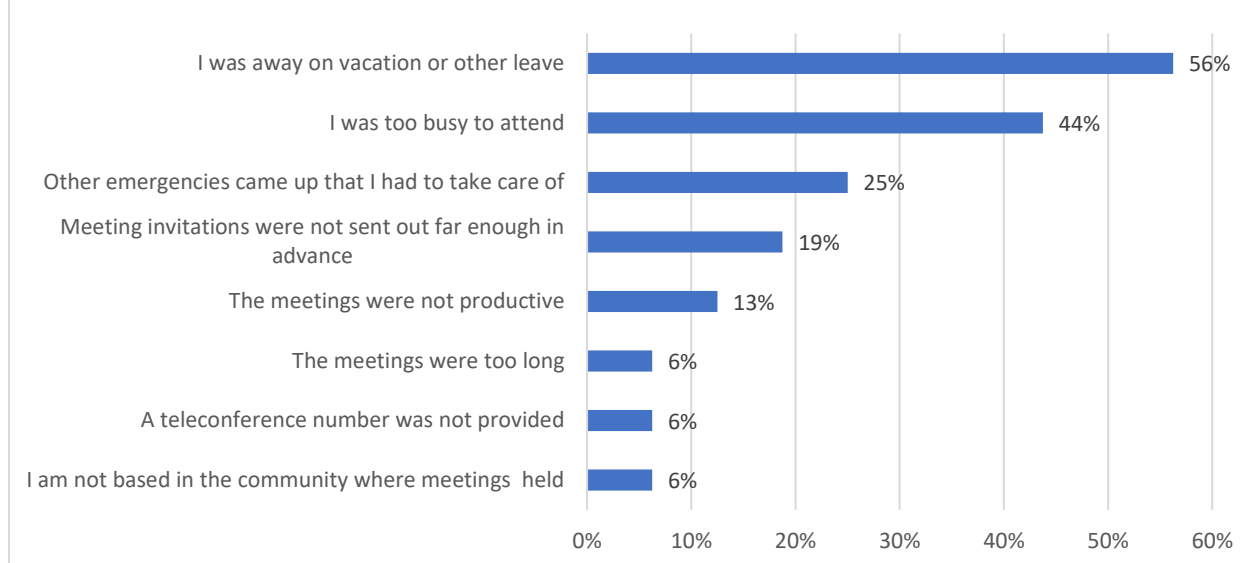
**Table 4: Number of Advisory Committees by Community and Program Year**

| Advisory Committee Meetings |                       |                     |               |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------|
|                             | Deschambault Lake (n) | Pelican Narrows (n) | Sandy Bay (n) |
| <b>2017-2018</b>            | 4                     | 4                   | 4             |
| <b>2018-2019</b>            | 5                     | 4                   | 5             |
| <b>2019-2020</b>            | 4                     | 2                   | 5             |

One of the challenges faced by the Advisory Committees since 2018-19 was low attendance and participation among community partners. In 2019-20, in Deschambault Lake, it was common for one to three Advisory Committee members to be in attendance at the meetings in addition to the HAWW. Pelican Narrows frequently only had one Advisory Committee member in attendance, while Sandy Bay experienced slightly higher attendance rates with approximately one to four Advisory Committee members regularly attending meetings.

Given the decline in participation in the Advisory Committees, the Community Stakeholder Survey explored reasons that prevented Advisory Committee members from attending Advisory Committee meetings. Sixteen (of 25) survey respondents indicated that they were invited to Advisory Committee meetings. Of these respondents, 44% self-reported that they attended most meetings, 13% attended about half the meetings; 31% attended a few meetings, and 13% attended no meetings. Figure 1 presents the list of reasons stakeholders provided for not attending Advisory Committee meetings. The most common reason stakeholders provided for not attending Advisory Committees was being away on vacation or leave (56%;  $n=9$ ) followed by being too busy to attend (44%;  $n=7$ ) and having other emergencies to take care of (25%;  $n=4$ ). Reasons related to a lack of organization also were endorsed, such as meetings being too long or not productive or a teleconference number not being provided.

Figure 1: Stakeholders' Reasons for Not Attending Advisory Committee Meetings



### ***Functioning of the Advisory Committees***

Many of the issues pertaining to the organization or structure of the Advisory Committees that appeared on Community Stakeholder Survey arose frequently in the stakeholder interviews. For instance, several Corrections interviewees indicated that they struggled with meeting invitations being issued with short (or no) notice and meetings being cancelled at the last minute. There were also some concerns about the meetings being off-topic or focused only on reporting rather than on problem-solving.

*There were a lot of issues around the scheduling. I wasn't invited to a lot of them, I would find out after, or the day before, so it was hard to schedule sometimes, and then they were cancelled a lot. (Corrections)*

*I found that the information was almost the same at every single meeting. I don't think anything changed from the beginning to the end. I don't think we ever had any problem-solving type discussions. (Corrections)*

*I think part of it had to do with the structure of the meeting, in terms of not necessarily having more interactive meetings where real discussion points that would open the table up for people to really have a good meaningful conversation about whether it be the program itself or youth issues or even successes in the community, you know what they should do as a committee to address youth violence. The meetings really focused more on the program itself and program updates. Instead of picking a topic or subject area, or something that's happening in the community or trends we're seeing and trying to work on them with the agencies. Trying to find commonalities with those agencies so we could see interest in having them stick around. (Corrections)*

Beyond some of these organizational issues that contributed to low meeting attendance and participation, deeper issues were also identified in the stakeholder interviews. For instance, several interviewees commented that the individuals attending the meetings were not invested in the Committees. They perceived that many of the agencies involved in the Advisory Committees did not believe that the NYVRP was important or worth the investment of their time. Others perceived that some agencies were there for their own benefit and were not interested in supporting the NYVRP (and sometimes led meetings off-track with their own agendas). As a result of this disinterest, the NYVRP did not receive as much support from the agencies as they wished, which compromised its ability to deliver the program as a collaborative, multisectoral intervention. In fact, several NYVRP staff commented that the lack of support they received from agencies was the greatest challenge they faced in delivering the program and led to a sense of operating in isolation.

*Getting the local agencies to follow through on what they said they would bring for our program...to be apart of the Core meetings, the Advisory, to come, to put their two cents in, to bring the different issues and then to develop something to address those problems—they never did that...And it was always bringing up these agencies, who decided to come, bringing them up to speed. This is what we are doing, this is what's going on. They weren't as involved as they should be. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*The most challenging part of the program was accessing the support that we needed, like the stakeholders, the agencies...You try booking a meeting and no one shows up. And you try to help the youth and the families and no one will help you. You feel alone. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*We started seeing agencies drop off in participating in all aspects and that was a huge challenge for a model that was supposed to be integrative, collaborative, working in partnership for the benefit of the young person or multisectoral approach. It just kind of fell apart. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*It seems like some of the agencies come to represent themselves and that person talked strictly about their agency and what they're doing. They would get off track a lot and wasn't there for NYVRP...When they did show up, it was a lot of off-track discussions. I would consider it mostly complaining... stuff that didn't even really matter. And I think [the NYVRP] tried to engage with them, wanted to listen to what they were saying, but they didn't necessarily want to do anything. People just weren't invested in it there or their agencies. (Corrections)*

A respondent of the Community Stakeholder Survey was also critical at the level of support the community provided to the community.

*Truthfully, I am disappointed in our community for not taking more of a role in supporting this program. I think it could have done a lot more than it did. I think, as a school leader, it allowed me to get to know some of the kids who had challenges in a different way. For me and the school, it was a positive process. For the community, I am unsure. (Community Stakeholder)*

It should be noted that the NYVRP did attempt to re-engage the agencies by holding one-on-one meetings with each agency in late 2018/early 2019; however, these efforts did not seem to increase attendance and participation in 2019-20.

*I don't think it's the NYVRP, it's really the community members need to step up and be more involved. I don't know why they weren't, they should have welcomed it a lot more than they did. And I think NYVRP, like they tried really hard to get people involved and it just didn't work. (Corrections)*

Another challenge that affected the functioning of the Advisory Committee was members lack of understanding of the purpose of the meetings and the objectives the NYVRP were trying to accomplish. It was perceived that many of the agencies were unfamiliar with implementing evidence-based models, which may have limited their ability to buy-in to the Advisory Committees. Stemming from this lack of understanding about the purpose of the Advisory Committee was confusion about who should be attending the meetings, with some agencies sending different representatives to meetings who were uninformed about the program and, in some cases, unable to contribute to the meetings.

*Even though we created a Terms of Reference and so forth, I think there was still a lack of understanding of what we were trying to do. Even though on a broader sense, they understood. But when we started talking about, you know, evidence-based model, service delivery model, trying to develop standards, it kind of lost people. We tried to bring it down but there was not enough common understanding in terms of what they were around the table for. Especially when all of the sudden, the default was progress updates. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Sometimes there were people at the meetings who didn't need to be there. They had nothing to do with NYVRP...At the last one I went to, there was an admin there because the person supposed to be there sent her for them...She was strictly taking notes. (Corrections)*

These concerns were also raised by a respondent of the Community Stakeholder Survey.

*I think that the community needs to be more on board. I also think there needs to be more community understanding of mandate of the programme and its mission. (Community Stakeholder)*

Another challenge that was identified with the functioning of the Advisory Committee meetings was that the agency representatives attending these meetings needed mentorship themselves. The NYVRP staff described that, in addition to leading these meetings, they often served as role models to the other agencies in terms of how to behave at the meetings.

*We role model the behaviour we want to see the kids do. We have to do that for the agencies too. And everything, almost everything I attend, I have to remind people of protocol, being respectful, it's a constant process. What I've identified is that a lot of the*



*people that are in frontline work or in leadership roles, they need a lot of healing themselves. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

One stakeholder group that was specifically identified as not being as involved in the Advisory Committees as they should have been was community leadership. Several interviewees were critical of the lack of participation by community leaders, commenting that leaders often campaigned about their concerns for youth during elections, yet did not follow through by participating in initiatives, such as the NYVRP, that were intended to help youth in the communities.

*I had to bug [our leader] to say you have to come to this meeting we need you to support us. The councillors need to come too. When you're working with high risk youth, you need to address those to the leaders so you can address those to the workers. Everyone says it's a good program – but why didn't they show up at the meetings? (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Come election time its all about the youth, but, for Advisory, we invite our local [leader], we invite our council, they should be there, but they don't come. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Even the councillors here in the community, when they started the campaign, all they talked about was the youth, helping the youth with this. When this thing came up, they disappeared...I tell them it's ending, they say that's too bad. It's a good program, I hope it continues. How would you know that, I think? You never come to the meetings. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey also identified community leadership's lack of engagement with the program as being problematic. For instance, one community stakeholder commented that “*The community leadership appears disengaged from the NYVRP initiative within the community and do not show strong support,*” while another indicated that “*more support and engagement in the community from leadership was required.*”

A final systemic issue that was perceived to contribute to the low attendance at the Advisory Committee meetings was the reactive nature of the communities. That is, there was a perceived tendency for the communities to come together only when something bad happened. According to one NYVRP staff member, “*It's only when things happen. When things happen, people react.*” Indeed, a lack of collaboration or cooperation among community agencies was noted by NYVRP management staff, and stakeholders as a longstanding issue in the three communities (and a bigger problem than the NYVRP can solve on its own).

*They come when something is going on. When it was about our program, it wasn't as important. We just weren't important. They left it up to us a lot. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Interviewees also commented that other multi-sectoral meetings, such as interagency meetings, in the communities experienced similar problems with attendance and participation and were held intermittently as a result.

When asked whether Advisory Committee meetings should continue in the future, most stakeholders were uncertain of the value of continuing the meetings. Of the three meeting types (i.e., Oversight, Advisory, and Core Team), stakeholders found the least value in the Advisory Committee meetings.

*Going forward after the program ends, I don't think it's important to keep the Advisory Committee.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*There's real value in the Core Team. Advisories don't necessarily offer that same value.* (Corrections)

However, they acknowledged that if the functioning of the Advisory Committees can be enhanced, they could provide an important means for facilitating a sense of community ownership over the program, as well as providing a mechanism for the NYVRP to be accountable to the communities.

*I think it's a good concept. For this model to continue working, I think the Advisory Committee meetings are essential. It provides that level of accountability to everyone in the community. And because it is more that community ownership, not necessarily community driven, but at least community ownership, it provides a sense of that and credibility.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

If the Advisory Committees are retained, some ideas offered for making meetings more meaningful were:

- clarifying the purpose of the meetings and who should be attending them
- reducing the number of meetings to once every three months with monthly update phone calls in between
- consolidating the Advisory Committee meetings with either the Core Team meetings or monthly management update calls
- holding Advisory Committee meetings in conjunction with local inter-agency meetings.
- booking Advisory Committee meetings further in advance
- holding Advisory Committee meetings outside of the community (e.g., at Slim's Cabin, in Flin Flon, or in Prince Albert)
- focusing on discussion and problem-solving rather than reporting. For instance, the meetings could focus on issues faced by the NYVRP (e.g., issues experienced at the frontline that may be resolved by managers at the Advisory Committees) or on broader issues related to youth violence in the communities that are common to all agencies.

### **9.2.5 Interpretation**

In line with the YVRP theoretical model, a two-tiered governance structure has been maintained by the NYVRP throughout the five-year initiative. The governance structure was comprised of: a) an overarching Oversight Committee; and b) local level Advisory Committees in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay. As anticipated, two in-person Oversight meetings were held in 2019-20 and eight monthly update phone calls occurred. In terms of the

Advisory Committee meetings, in 2019-20, two to five meetings were held in each community. Specifically, Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay were able to hold meetings at the intended frequency of every two or three months, while Pelican Narrows was unable to meet this objective due to a lack of participation by its partner agencies.

In principal, the governance structure is adequate and comprehensive as it allows for local community representatives to provide input and direction into the NYVRP, while also providing a mechanism for higher level decisions makers to be involved in the program, resolve issues (e.g., policy conflicts) that cannot be addressed at the local level, and encourage local managers and staff to participate in the program. However, there were issues with the functioning of both the Oversight Committee and Advisory Committees that hampered these committees' effectiveness. In particular, the value of the monthly management update calls and the Advisory Committees were questioned.

Many of the concerns that were raised were common across all meeting types (i.e., Oversight, monthly update calls, and Advisory Committees) and are within the control of the NYVRP to address. For instance, it was identified that the purpose of the Committees/meeting types needed to be clarified, including who is invited to participate in each Committee/meeting. It was generally agreed that the meetings would be more effective if they were restructured to focus less on reporting back on program activities to having a greater focus on discussing success stories, issues faced by the NYVRP, or broader issues related to youth violence in the communities that are common to all partner agencies. There was also a need to ensure that novel information is being discussed at each type of meeting (i.e., Oversight, monthly update, Advisory) to avoid repetitive information from being reported from one meeting type to another. In addition, it may be necessary to reduce the number of meetings held and to consolidate meetings, such as holding in-person Advisory Committee meetings every three months and only scheduling the monthly update phone calls as needed. Further, additional attention to the organization of the meetings is required, including ensuring that adequate notice is provided when inviting attendees to meetings, providing as much notice as possible if meetings are cancelled, ensuring teleconference information is available to those attending from afar, and determining in advance who will be moderating the meetings.

Broader issues affecting the functioning of the Advisory Committees in particular were also identified, including a lack of interest among local agencies to support the NYVRP, lack of participation by community leadership, tendency of the communities to only come together in response to negative incidents, and lack of experience with evidence-based models. These issues are more challenging for the NYVRP to address on its own. Moreover, the lack of interest in supporting the NYVRP did limit the extent to which the program could be delivered as collaborative, multi-sectoral program. As many NYVRP staff commented, the program was often left on its own to work with the youth even though, at the outset of the initiative, agencies had, in principle, agreed to support the program in a collaborative manner. While NYVRP management and staff attempted to mitigate these issues with regular one-on-one contact with agencies, overall, they were not successfully able to increase agencies' interest to contribute to the program in a meaningful manner. It is likely these broader issues that really hampered the effectiveness of the Advisory Committees; although, addressing the structural and organizational

issues of the meetings raised above may have increased the likelihood of agencies participating in the meetings.

In sum, there is value in having a two-tiered governance structure of an overarching Oversight Committee comprised of senior management and local Advisory Committees with local managers and decision makers. However, if this governance structure is to continue in the future, the nature of the meetings will have to be restructured, meeting types will need to be consolidated and the frequency of meetings reduced, and serious consideration will have to be given in terms of how to re-invigorate the Advisory Committees to increase the participation and support provided by the partner agencies.

## 9.3 Staffing

### 9.3.1 Evaluation Questions

- Are the necessary staffing and resources in place to implement the NYVRP?
- What challenges existed in staffing?
- What training did staff receive?
- How effective was the training provided to staff?

### 9.3.2 Indicators

- Length of staffing process
- Qualifications of staff
- Amount of staff turnover
- Satisfaction with staffing levels
- Number and type of training opportunities

### 9.3.3 Data Sources

- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Document Review
- Observation

### 9.3.4 Results

By the conclusion of 2019-20, the staffing contingent of the NYVRP consisted of 1 MOPO, 1 HAWW in Deschambault Lake, 1 HAWW in Pelican Narrows, and 2 HAWWs in Sandy Bay. During the program year, the second HAWW positions in Deschambault Lake and Pelican Narrows became vacant and the program did not fill the positions. The part-time Administrative Assistant position also became vacant part way through the year and this position was not filled either. The Project Manager had left the program in the previous program year (2018-19) and this position also intentionally remained vacant in 2019-20.

#### *Strengths of the NYVRP Staffing Model*

Nearly all of the staff and stakeholders interviewed agreed that the NYVRP's staff was one of the program's greatest strengths. Throughout the initiative, the NYVRP maintained a contingent of dedicated core staff that have been with the program since the beginning, including the MOPO, 1 HAWW in Deschambault Lake, 1 HAWW in Pelican Narrows, and 1 HAWW in Sandy Bay. A second HAWW joined Sandy Bay in 2018 and should also be considered as part of this core contingent.

The staff hired to the NYVRP were local to the communities and selected for living a healthy lifestyle and their passion for youth. The level of compassion and understanding that the staff brought to the program due to their shared cultural backgrounds with the youth was considered to be an asset, as was their knowledge of the communities.

*Selecting people who were really seen as people in the community who lived healthy lifestyles was one of the biggest strengths. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*The biggest strength to me is definitely a staff who lasted to the end. I think they brought a lot of accountability, credibility, and, really, a lot of passion towards the work. Especially when it came to the mentorship piece and engaging young people. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*One of the program's strengths was our staff, their commitment for our youth...our cultural background, and how we are connected to the youth and the land and how we make the connection. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*A strength was the workers, the passion. We have so many issues in our communities. The majority of us have a past. There's some understanding of where they came from. Just throughout the program. And the education. Because the NYVRP is working with the community and it's a new project and it's working with youth. I would like to say that the biggest word for it would be compassion. And it's understanding our own people and understanding where the issues are coming from. There's no judgemental stuff on their part. I think that was the biggest strength. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

It was also acknowledged that each of the HAWWs brought their own unique strengths to the program, which complemented each other. For instance, some HAWWs were considered to have strong administration skills, whereas others were considered to have strong cultural backgrounds. Regardless, all HAWWs had attributes that were appealing to the youth targeted by the program.

*I think they all had their special attributes that made them appealing to young people. If not appealing, at least young people were drawn to them because of their warmth...All of them having, being fun, energetic, and active and still providing those guidelines and boundaries that kids need and want. Boundaries and rules. They were able to do that and I think that's what kept some of the youth engaged for a long time and others for more shorter periods. And why they were able to get so many consented for sure. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

The interviewees also indicated that a particularly strong attribute of the staff was their willingness to go above and beyond for their youth clients. For instance, the staff maintained close communication with their clients, helped the youth obtain the basic necessities, and made themselves readily available to the youth regardless of the time of day.

*I think a strength was our relationships with the clients. We kind of go above and beyond our job titles. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Where other people would shut off their work phone at the end of the day, my work phone remained on. Vigilance and availability were akin. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*I think their close communication with the kids mainly would be a successful aspect. The workers went above and beyond outside their roles basically. In some way or form, they*

*could find a connection. And they made themselves available to the kids 24/7.*  
(Community Stakeholder)

*Often things would go for wrong for the kids after hours, so they would give the kids a lift from one location to the next. Sometimes kids had no food in their house, so they would be feeding them. They don't have proper clothing, a few them got the clothing when they didn't have any.* (Community Stakeholder)

The staff were also respected by their communities which was believed to helped with program delivery in terms of building relationships with the local agencies, having community members consent to their children participating in the program, and being invited to do one-on-one visits in the home. One HAWW commented, “*they know what my goals and intentions are for the community.*” In fact, staff became so respected and embedded in the communities that the communities started to rely on the NYVRP in times of crisis and involved them in other occurrences in the community. It was also perceived that staff’s intimate knowledge of the community helped them navigate situations that an outsider would not necessarily be able to do as successfully.

*Even though I know there were disadvantages to hiring local, some strong people who were known community members or upstanding community members was a definite asset in getting local stakeholders and even community members involved in terms of their kids, their young people, their children.... just having good reputations in the community, they were able to pull off one-on-one visits in the home.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*Whether its directly or indirectly, staff know the communities, where safe places are. Just having that in-depth knowledge, they were able to have one-on-one visits at home and even in difficult situations other people would turn backs on.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*Community members call us when they have suicidal ideation and need someone to talk to either their kids or themselves. Lots of workers come to us. They come to us to speak on their behalf to people in the community.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

Results from the Community Stakeholder also echoed the findings from the stakeholder interviews in terms of the staff being one of the most positive aspects of the program. When asked what they liked about the program in an open-ended question, many of the program attributes identified by respondents related to the staff (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Positive Attributes of the NYVRP related to Staffing Identified by Respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey**

| <b>Strength</b>                            | <b>Representative Responses</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Committed staff</b>                     | It works in Sandy Bay because of the commitment from [the staff].  |
| <b>Staff were hands on with the youth</b>  | Staff are hands on and informative<br><br>The workers came to the school to help with their students and they were very much involved in their students lives  |
| <b>Staff advocate for the youth</b>        | They are great advocates for youth in their communities.   |
| <b>Staff were role models to the youth</b> | The mentorship and rapport building with the HAWWs who model appropriate behavior and goal setting<br><br>I think participants became more motivated in areas such as school, leisure time, etc. from taking the program and met some great role models in working with the staff. |

### ***Challenges with the NYVRP Staffing Model***

**Staff Qualifications.** While the hiring of local staff living a healthy lifestyle and passion for youth was deemed to be a strength of the program, a consequence of emphasizing these criteria was that staff did not necessarily have formal education and experience in delivering a corrections-oriented, evidence-based model. Staff at all levels of the program, ranging from the program manager and MOPO positions to the HAWWs, were not well-versed in corrections evidence-based principles and theories, which hampered the implementation of the program. For instance, staff did not fully understand the risk-need-responsivity framework, which influenced the extent to which they were able to deliver the program in a way that aligned with these principles (e.g., using risk assessments to inform case plans). Their lack of understanding of these principles was also one of the reasons why a simplified risk assessment process had to be introduced. Upon reflection, NYVRP management and staff agreed that this issue could have been mitigated with additional training and refresher sessions on corrections theories and principles and the application of evidence-based models provided by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing.

*The majority of our staff, if not all, didn't have necessarily the postsecondary education to understand the concepts, and put corrections evidence-based principles into practice....When it comes to evidence-based training, it's usually specialized training and, generally, it's learned on the job. For instance, if you look at corrections, they offer their own training around it. I think that was a huge challenge for staff. Then you bring in intimidation with there being a language barrier in terms of some of the academic language that is used with evidence-based projects and social learning theory, cognitive*



*behavioural services and interventions...And not only in terms of frontline staff, but even with the managers. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Our staff didn't have any background or experience in corrections work, evidence-based knowledge, which made it very hard. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

It was also identified that some staff did not have the basic computer and administrative skills required to proficiently complete the reporting and paperwork they were expected to perform (e.g., typing skills; knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint). As a result, staff who had good computer/administrative skills had to support staff who did not have these skills with their files. In the future, the NYVRP management team recommended that an effort be made to hire staff that have some administrative skills in addition to living a healthy lifestyle and being passionate about youth. Alternatively, training could be explicitly built into the program to allow staff who do not have adequate computer/administrative skills to acquire them early on in their jobs.

*With having HAWWs, it's good to have the locals but you need to make sure they have the administrative skills. Because that's a real hindrance. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*We need people who are good with all the skills needed to do the job. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

It should be noted that, even with staff's limited formal education and experience, they became observably more proficient with implementing the program delivery model over the course of the initiative. Thus, another consideration when hiring local staff who are unfamiliar with corrections, evidence-based practices, is to budget in additional time and supports for training to allow them to learn the model and become skilled at delivering it.

*I think it came as they went. I think, you know, they were getting the training at the beginning and then they needed some time to practice it. I think with more experience, they would have gotten really good with their assessments and motivational interviewing, those pieces come with time. (Corrections)*

**Staff Burnout.** By the end of the NYVRP, perhaps the most significant challenge the program faced with respect to staffing were feelings of burnout among the staff. Given staff's level of commitment and dedication to the youth, burnout became a concern for the program quite quickly into its tenure. The NYVRP project management team observed that *"the burnout showed up right away."* In describing the impact the program had on staff, community stakeholders made comments such as *"it took a lot out of them," "they were run ragged,"* and *"their job took a toll on them personally."* Many staff commented that there were times when they thought about quitting their jobs, because they felt so worn down by the work they were doing. One staff member stated, *"It's hard to keep going when you feel like your batteries are low."* Respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey also commented about the burnout experienced by staff:

*When I got involved, the NYVRP was just starting. It had a quick impact with the youth and youth crime. I watched the dedicated workers take on a big role. Over the last two years, I have also watched them slowly burnout. Their dedication remains because of their commitment. More workers are needed to balance the workload. You do not want to lose these people. (Community Stakeholder)*

NYVRP staff also commented that most of them have developed physical health issues since starting with the NYVRP. Further, most have delayed seeking medical assistance because of their investment in their jobs and the youth. One of the reasons why physical health problems were not quickly attended to is that staff must seek medical assistance in Flin Flon or Prince Albert, which takes them out of the community (and away from the youth) for at least a day to attend an appointment. The influence of geography on the way of life in these communities cannot be underscored enough.

*We've neglected our own health. Our job keeps us busy; we don't have the time to go. When you're in the North, you just can't go see a doctor. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Living and working in the communities where tragedies occur often, poverty is prevalent, and violence is encountered regularly exacerbated staff's susceptibility to burnout. Staff were not immune to the tragedies that occurred in their communities and often these tragedies directly impacted their families. For instance, events such as losing two teenage nieces to suicide, having family members go missing or dying under suspicious circumstances, having children self-harming or experiencing suicidal ideation, and having family members dealing with physical illnesses (e.g., diabetes) were some of the issues staff dealt with in their personal lives.

*In the three targeted communities of Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows, and Deschambault Lake, the crime rates are high, including the violent crime rate, and murders do occur in these small communities. Sadly, suicide is also a familiar event in these communities. During the course of this project, both Deschambault Lake and Pelican Narrows have lost community members to suicide. On a weekly basis, there are suicide attempts at all three sites, some do not even get reported; instead [we] would receive the call or be informed after the fact. The reality in which the people of these communities live is one of abject poverty and unemployment. The majority of people have developed maladaptive behaviors, where addictions to alcohol and drugs are very high. The majority have also suffered from one or two types of abuse, even all forms. Some have even become the abusers. It is important to note that, all of these are a **consequence** to the colonization process that First Nations people have been subjugated too, and continue to endure. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Further, staff commented that their positions with the NYVRP had negative consequences not only for their own wellbeing, but also for their families. One staff member stated "*this job has taken me away from my kids, my family;*" a sentiment that was echoed by all staff members over the course of the past two years. For instance, another commented "*Our families suffered. They felt neglected.*" Staff have seen mental health problems rise within their own children as result of their attention being directed toward the youth in the program. Two family retreats were

arranged for staff (one in August 2018 and another in February 2020) to help address the toll the program was taking on the staff and their families.

To address the burnout experienced by staff and to help them cope with the vicarious trauma they experienced through the youth they served, as well as with the events occurring in their own lives, it was suggested that mental health support be available to staff to access whenever needed. It was also perceived that this would take the pressure off the MOPO, who often was the primary source of support for staff and who spent a substantial amount of time maintaining staff morale.

*I would have liked to have something set in place where workers could have that extra mental health piece in place for them...If we had measures in place where we could have therapy for the HAWWs, I think that things would be good. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Going forward, if this program is implemented in another community, I think that we should have someone to be there for the staff, like a mental health worker. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

It was also observed that staff needed to actively engage in self-care to ensure that they maintain their own wellbeing.

*I think for the workers, I think they should really take care of themselves. Self-care is important. Not to completely drop their job and go on a vacation, but take care of themselves physically, mentally, emotionally, because we all go through different things. Everybody has their own life. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

**Staffing Resources.** By the conclusion of the NYVRP, the program was significantly understaffed compared to the original staffing model. According to the program design, the NYVRP staffing complement should have consisted of 8 positions: a Project Manager, a HAWC, 6 HAWWs (2 per community). In 2017-18, 1 Administrative Assistant was also added to the staffing model. By midway through 2019, only 5 staff positions remained filled: the MOPO (formerly the HAWC) and 4 HAWW positions (1 in Deschambault Lake, 1 in Pelican Narrows, and 2 in Sandy Bay). Thus, the program only had 55% of its positions filled.

The decision to not fill positions that became vacant post-January 2019 affected the efficiency of the program, especially with its administrative workload. The workload of the Project Manager was dispersed onto the Ministry manager, MOPO, and the HAWWs, which placed additional stressors and pressures on each of the remaining individuals. For instance, the MOPO took on new duties related to human resources and working with the Service Agreements holders, which were considered to be time-consuming. The loss of the Administrative Assistant also meant additional work was placed on the MOPO and HAWWs, such as coordinating Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings. It was perceived by one HAWW that these duties “took time away from the youth.” Another HAWW commented, “There wasn’t enough staff, because there’s so much admin work.” Given the challenges that were already occurring with respect to managing the administrative responsibilities of their respective roles, the loss of these positions further hampered the program’s ability to keep up with program administration. Further, having

a single HAWW in Deschambault Lake and Pelican Narrows led to caseloads of 10 to 11 youth in these communities, causing these sites to operate with caseloads higher than the intended 7 to 8 youth per HAWW. According to one respondent on the Community Stakeholder Survey, “*One person cannot manage everything that needs to be done and keep the youths engaged.*”

When asked to reflect on an ideal staffing model for the NYVRP, a majority of staff and stakeholders interviewed commented that it would be ideal to have three HAWWs per community with lower caseloads. In particular, it was suggested that one HAWW focus on programming, the second on one-on-one visits (and, possibly, to be on call for emergencies), and the third on administration. The HAWWs would then change roles periodically (e.g., each week). It was suggested that the program could consider hiring two teams of three per community that would switch out each week. An alternative suggestion offered was to hire more HAWWs who were part-time with lower caseloads. One stakeholder made an important observation that, given the severity of trauma the youth in these communities have experienced and the state of their homelives, they may require more time from the NYVRP staff than had originally been conceptualized. Regardless, the commonality across all these suggestions was to create a model that would help buffer against the burnout the HAWWs experienced. Several respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey also agreed that there was not enough staff allocated to the program, that the “*workload is heavy*” for the staff, and that additional frontline staff should be hired.

*I think you would need a team of 3 HAWWs per community. One to do programming, one to do admin, and one to do check-ins. And possibly switch off with another team of three. One week in and one week out to avoid burnout. They would switch roles back and forth so you don't get bored. And all people would need to have all the skills. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*I think that for this program, it would have been best to hire more staff with lower caseloads. Even if was just half-time. So say, four staff but at half time. Just so there wasn't as much burnout. They could spend more time with each individual young person, and they would have been spread out more. There would also be more support there, team support. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*It seemed like they had a heavy caseload for each youth. Sometimes they had six or seven for each caseworker. That seemed like a lot from listening to what they did with each youth. Because we don't, you have to keep in mind the homelife what the child has here on the reserve and some do have a really rough life from being neglected to raising themselves. (Community Stakeholder)*

At minimum, stakeholders agreed that there should be at least two HAWWs per community, in part to keep the caseloads manageable, but also to allow youth an option in terms of the HAWW with whom they are paired. It was observed that youth sometimes connect more with one HAWW than another. Many stakeholders also liked the composition of having a female and male HAWW in each community.

*I also like the idea of having the option. One HAWW may relate to youth better than the others. And having the male/female type thing was really good too. (Corrections)*

*I know the kids seemed to be kind of specific in terms of the [HAWWs] they liked and didn't like. (Community Stakeholder)*

*There were other children who felt more comfortable with one worker versus his or hers and they would switch workers. (Community Stakeholder)*

**Service Agreements.** A few challenges were encountered with the Service Agreements held by local community agencies to manage the NYVRP. Most notably, the agency holding the Service Agreement in Sandy Bay mismanaged their funds in 2019-20, which resulted in the local NYVRP staff not being paid for several pay periods. It required a substantial amount of work to change the Service Agreement holder for the final months of the program to ensure that staff would be paid for the remainder of their work. A separate concern that emerged in relation to the Service Agreements held by the other communities was that some HAWWs did not receive raises that were promised to them. In the future, the NYVRP cautioned against entering into Service Agreements with agencies that “pool” their budgets. They also suggested that staff be consulted about who should hold the Service Agreement.

*It's somewhat complex to find a healthy line, but for agencies to have a good standing program, they need to have an agency that is able to manage different programs without “pooling” budgets, especially when the agency is already under fiscal scrutiny for irresponsibly managing an agency budget. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

## **Training**

As mentioned in the previous section, there were some areas where it was believed that staff would have benefited from additional training. Most importantly, there was consensus among the NYVRP staff that they needed more in-depth training about correctional principles and practices. In fact, staff would have liked to have received the in-house training offered by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing and/or spent time shadowing staff in the Creighton Corrections office. In general, staff believed that they were not provided with the training and knowledge they needed to fully understand how to implement the NYVRP program delivery model, especially with respect to the RNR principles. More than one staff indicated that they felt like “*it was the blind leading the blind*” when it came to learning how to deliver the program.

*And they should have given us some corrections training– the methods for risk assessments, like why they did assessments, the RNR principles, how to apply them, identifying them, and putting together a care plan. These are all different things. The terms themselves were nothing I had ever come across before...It was like the blind leading the blind. Despite that, I know we did a good job with these kids. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Other stakeholders suggested the staff had all the training they needed, but lacked a mechanism for bringing the different trainings they received together to allow the staff to integrate the

information and apply it in a comprehensive manner. In the future, a four-week training program is recommended for staff to ensure they have the necessary background in correctional theories and evidence-based practices.

*Even though they had, what I feel was a comprehensive training, it wasn't used together, because it was all independent of each other, they didn't have enough time to put it all together in one kind of huge, overall concept in terms of what is the service delivery model and how do we use these different understandings of how we can reduce recidivism based on these interventions. They didn't have enough to put it together or someone in the community to help them put it together. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*In hindsight, as a result of lowering qualifications for the local positions (with the exception of the HAWC / MOPO), about a 4-week training program consisting of psycho-social theories on human and youth development and behaviours, relevant to adverse, anti-social, and pro-criminal behaviors, adolescent growth and developmental stages, characteristics, needs, and Resilience Theory, etc. to understand what is normal youth behaviour, and to recognize when they are acting out. In addition to a combination of strength-based social learning theories, cognitive behavioral interventions, intro to criminology, emphasizing research based principles and practices to reduce recidivism from a community perspective, and lastly the hybrid, SDM: success factors, processes, standards, and what paper work to fill and when to fill it out to track the different stages, and participant progress along the way. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Beyond this gap in the NYVRP's staff training, the staff indicated that they found the training opportunities provided to them useful. In particular, staff most valued training offerings related to motivational interviewing and mental health (e.g., SafeTalk Suicide Prevention, Mental Health First Aid, ASIST, FASD). In the future, staff indicated they would benefit from additional training to advance their motivational interviewing skills (i.e., Motivational Interviewing Level 2), as well as training on suicide prevention. Staff with limited computer skills would also benefit from training in this area. They also indicated that they preferred training that was 'hands-on' as most considered themselves to be visual learners.

Results from the Community Stakeholder Survey suggested additional areas where staff could benefit from training. Based on their experiences with the program, these stakeholders believed that staff required training to increase their ability to organize and maintain their casefiles. It was also suggested that staff take training on confidentiality and ethics (e.g., when there is a duty to report).

*Educate staff with managing their own youth paper files, organizational skills, scheduled calendars of events offered and who participated in the events. (Community Stakeholder)*

*They need further training on confidentiality and organization. (Community Stakeholder)*

### 9.3.5 Interpretation

Throughout the NYVRP, staffing has been both an area of strength and challenge for the program. One of the greatest strengths of the program was its ability to retain a core contingent of four staff (the MOPO and 1 HAWW in each community) who had been with the program since the beginning. The staff were recognized by stakeholders as being respected community members who were passionate about helping the youth in the community. Indeed, staff were seen as going “above and beyond” in their roles and were readily available for the youth, regardless of the time of day. It was also perceived that the level of respect staff held in their communities assisted them with delivering the NYVRP in terms of being able to build relationships with community agencies, getting youth (and their parents) to consent to their involvement in the program, and being able to conduct one-on-visits in the home). In fact, as the program matured, NYVRP staff became key contact persons in the communities in times of crisis (for their clients and even for other children/adults who were not involved in the program).

Despite these strengths, there were some notable challenges that were experienced with respect to staff. For instance, a drawback to hiring staff known to lead healthy lifestyles and who were passionate about youth is that the HAWWs did not necessarily have much formal education or training. In particular, a lack of computer skills limited some staff’s ability to perform the administrative aspects of their jobs (e.g., completing reports correctly). In addition, a lack of knowledge of correctional principles (e.g., RNR) and application of evidence-based practices hampered the implementation of the NYVRP program delivery model. For instance, staff struggled with using risk assessments in a meaningful manner to inform the case management process. That being said, staff did become observably more proficient with implementing the NYVRP program delivery model over the course of the initiative. In the future, it was recommended that, when hiring staff, incoming personnel should be living healthy lifestyles, have a passion for youth, and have some administrative skills.

The staffing levels of the NYVRP were well below the intended level throughout the 2019-20 program year. The NYVRP was intended to have 9 dedicated positions: a program manager, a HAWC, an administrative assistant, and 6 HAWWs (two per community). By mid-way through 2019, the staffing levels of the NYVRP were 55% of the intended level, with only the MOPO and 4 HAWWs remaining (1 in Deschambault Lake, 1 in Pelican Narrows, and 2 in Sandy Bay). The program intentionally chose not to fill any positions that became vacant following January 2019. A consequence of this decision was that duties from the vacant Program Manager and HAWW positions were distributed across the remaining staff. This detrimentally affected the NYVRP’s ability to keep up with program administration. In addition, the caseloads in communities with a single HAWW (approximately 10 youth per one staff) were higher than the intended level of 7 or 8 youth per staff.

Staff’s level of commitment to their jobs and the youth also took a toll on their own wellbeing, as well as their families. All staff struggled with burnout, which was observed as occurring fairly soon after the program began operating. Staff also reported experiencing physical health problems, which they were delayed in seeking assistance for due to the distance of their communities from the medical services they needed and their reluctance to be out of the community and away from the youth. Further, staff believed that their families were negatively

affected by their jobs in that it took time away from their own children, which resulted in declines in their own children's mental health. Importantly, the backdrop of frequent tragedies, abject poverty, and violence which characterizes the communities in which the staff live and work, combined with the vicarious trauma experienced by listening to and working with the high risk youth the NYVRP serves, further intensified the burnout staff experienced. The program did attempt to help staff manage the burnout they were experiencing by offering them two family retreats (one in August 2018; another in February 2019), but these retreats were not able adequately to address staff's burnout. In the future, it was recommended that a dedicated mental health support worker be available to the staff to support them in their roles.

Moreover, to resolve some of the staffing challenges experienced by the NYVRP, a majority of staff and stakeholders suggested that the NYVRP's staffing model be restructured to have at least three HAWWs per community, wherein one HAWW would be responsible for programming, another for one-on-one visits with youth, and the third for administration. The HAWWs would then switch roles periodically (e.g., every week); an alternative to this suggestion was to hire two teams of three that could trade off with each other weekly. Other stakeholders suggested that more HAWWs be hired but have them work part-time hours with fewer youth. Regardless of the specific solution chosen, most stakeholders were clear that a change in the staffing model was required to better protect staff from burnout. It was also observed that, due to the severity of the trauma youth in the communities have experienced and their poor homelives, more time is likely needed to work with this youth than may be the case in other locales. Therefore, lower caseloads for the HAWWs would help them better serve the youth and manage their roles.

Finally, some additional areas where training was required were identified by the staff and stakeholders. In particular, staff indicated that they would have benefited from more in-depth, cohesive training on correctional principles and practices. For instance, it was recommended that, in the future, staff receive a four-week training program that reviews various correctional theories and practices relevant to their jobs (e.g., RNR, social learning theory, cognitive-behavioural theory). In addition, opportunities should be built into the training program to allow staff to practice their skills, receive feedback, and synthesize the various trainings received. From the training that staff did receive throughout the course of the initiative, they found training on motivational interviewing and any mental health topics (e.g., SafeTalk Suicide Prevention, Mental Health First Aid, ASIST, FASD) as being most useful and indicated that they would like to receive additional training in these areas. Finally, stakeholders who work with the NYVRP suggested that staff could also benefit from training to increase their ability to organize and maintain their casefiles, as well on ethics (e.g., duty to report).



## 9.4 Ministry Support of the NYVRP

### 9.4.1 Evaluation Questions

- Did the Ministry of Corrections and Policing offer an adequate level of support to the NYVRP?

### 9.4.2 Indicators

- Type of support provided
- Satisfaction with support provided by the Ministry

### 9.4.3 Data Sources

- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Document Review
- Observation

### 9.4.4 Results

In the original proposal, the Ministry of Corrections and Policing had indicated that they would support the NYVRP in a variety of ways, including the following:

- Defining the interventions to be delivered
- Providing implementation assistance and quality assurance
- Dedicating senior practitioner level staff, such as a Service Integration Manager and the Northeast Clinical Director, to train and guide staff to assess individuals, develop case plans and deliver services and support activities to address the unique needs/risks factors for each youth
- Encouraging community youth/adult probation workers to work closely with project staff in the provision of supervision, support, and relapse prevention in line with the youth's risk and needs.

In line with its promised commitments to the program, the Ministry developed a training curriculum and provided training to the NYVRP staff, helped the communities operationalize the NYVRP program delivery model, and offered support to NYVRP management and staff throughout the duration of the program. In addition, the local community Corrections office in Creighton worked in partnership with the NYVRP by referring youth to the program, maintaining communication with the HAWWs, and incorporating the NYVRP into the youth's case management plans.

Despite these supports offered to the NYVRP, a majority of the NYVRP staff and several stakeholders indicated that they did not think the Ministry had provided enough support to the program. For instance, the staff commented that the Ministry manager assigned to the program was not always available to support the program (due to competing demands and workload pressures) and thought the program would have performed better if the Manager was able to dedicate more time to the NYVRP. Other stakeholders echoed this observation.

*[The Ministry Manager] supported us, but she wasn't always round...I felt like she was getting bombarded with other stuff on top of this program. And we were getting swept under the rug. We knew what we were getting into but if we had support, I think we maybe would have just been better. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*They might have needed a stronger commitment from the top...I feel like [the Ministry] relied too much on the MOPO to keep things on track...They had a lot of projects on the go, and this was just another cog in the wheel....It seemed like the priorities shifted or wasn't always there. (Corrections)*

Some staff also thought that supports could have been provided to the program more quickly. For instance, the family retreats organized for the NYVRP staff were viewed quite favourably, yet there were concerns about how long it took to arrange the second one (i.e., it occurred when there was only one month remaining in the initiative).

*The Ministry could have done more to support us as frontline workers. Like the family retreat took quite a while to get arranged. It wasn't until the last month of program. We were bugging them to have it in September. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

That being said, the staff did value the supports that were provided by the Ministry Manager, when available. Specifically, staff appreciated the Ministry's efforts to help them deliver the NYVRP program, the Manager's willingness to talk through issues when needed, and the family retreats.

*They've been so helpful with trying to get this program to the right steps we need to take to make the youth and the community a better place. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*[The Ministry Manager] was a big help, big, big help. With everything. She was always available too when we needed to talk. She was available to us. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*They've really helped us with our lives, with our own personal lives, with the family retreat. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

### ***Training and Implications for Program Delivery***

In terms of the specific areas where additional support was believed to be required, most focused around training (which had implications for program delivery), program administration, and data tracking. Beginning with training, as was discussed in Section 9.3, it was perceived that the NYVRP staff did not have an adequate understanding of the corrections-based principles and practices required to effectively apply all aspects of the NYVRP program delivery model. In particular, using the risk assessment tools to develop case plans was a notable area of weakness for the program, largely stemming from a lack of understanding about what risks should be included in the case plans, the types of strategies needed to address those risks, and who should be involved in developing the case plans. It was suggested that this gap in the NYVRP staff's knowledge and training could have been overcome with greater involvement of a Clinical Director in the program (as originally intended by the program delivery model). The NYVRP

was able to receive some assistance from a Clinical Director early on in the program (i.e., 2017-18), but it was believed the program would have benefited from regular interactions with a Clinical Director throughout the duration of the initiative, particularly a Clinical Director who understands the realities of working in the communities where the NYVRP is located.

*The other challenge was not having enough specialists on hand on a consistent basis. We had them there for training in the beginning, and we had [a Clinical Director] for about 6 different follow ups/meetings; however, it would have been really helpful to have someone on board with that kind of expertise on a consistent basis for staff. But also someone who's relatable and maybe from the area. For instance, maybe someone from the Creighton office whose staff would have known maybe from the past due to the proximity. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

It was also believed that having a fully developed risk assessment protocol, including a training strategy with regular follow-up sessions to support staff's learning, in place before program delivery would have also led to more success in this area (i.e., rather than establishing the risk assessment protocol after the program commenced and having to re-envision the risk assessment process mid-way through the program).

*It would have made life easier for us if we had the assessment tools ready for us to use and if we knew how to use them properly. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Further, it was suggested that a mentorship model could have been established between the NYVRP and the Supervisor located in the Creighton Corrections office to offer additional opportunities, especially for the MOPO, to deepen understandings of how to apply correctional theories and principles in practice.

### ***Program Administration and Paperwork***

In terms of program administration, staff's primary areas of concern revolved around a lack of clarity around the program's protocols and paperwork. These concerns date back to the onset of program delivery where staff did not have a clear understanding of the program's processes and the paperwork required at each step. In the future, it was recommended that clear guidelines be developed to ensure that new staff are fully aware of the expectations surrounding their roles. A program manual would have helped in this regard, yet one was never completed for the program.

*It felt like it was the blind leading the blind. For like a month, we were just reading stuff about the project...we didn't know what we were doing. Then they said we could start getting clients, start getting agencies. We did that, but they didn't tell us about all these forms. They said, this is the referral form you need to do, get the consent...Then they came one day and said you need to write all of these notes – chronological notes – then we start files. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*In the beginning, we were just not prepared with our staff and them not having the orientation they needed and training they needed. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*There was training provided on the forms and stuff like that, but we didn't finish an actual manual even though we probably had all the pieces to go in. We didn't put it in an actual manual format. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*I think that we are doing an awesome job and we could have done more we had what we needed in the beginning. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

New forms introduced by the Ministry throughout the program were also deemed to be challenging for the NYVRP staff. Staff felt that “*they threw forms at us*” and “*had trouble keeping up with the changing of the forms.*” Staff would have preferred for all forms to be developed before program delivery began and for the forms to be introduced to them in a cohesive, organized manner. For instance, a involvement summary form was introduced in the last month of the program, which was intended to help summarize the pertinent information for each casefile. Staff wished this form had been introduced at the time the NYVRP began, as they found this form “*tied it all together*” for them and their casefiles. Overall, it was believed that the program was “*a little too paper heavy.*”

*There should have had a mock file right away, and all the forms we needed. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*And that tool [Corrections introduced last month], we looked at each other and said we needed this way back there. It was like pulling it all together. I liked how it listed everything we needed to know. It listed the risk areas that we needed to hit. And it had a face sheet. It should have been in place when we started in our roles. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

All together, these various challenges were perceived to occur because the program was “*under-resourced to carry out everything in a more timely manner*” (NYVRP PMT/Staff). In the future, interviewees noted that it is important to have dedicated personnel who can support program implementation until the program is at the point where it can operate independently.

**Database.** The lack of a database also hampered the program’s ability to track information about its clients. The Ministry was supposed develop a database for the NYVRP, but due to several issues experienced over the years (see Section 4.3.3), the database was never completed. Not having a database affected the program’s ability to document relevant information about their clients, including their clients’ progress in the program. An Excel spreadsheet (i.e., the Community Data Collection Tracking Sheet) was developed for use in lieu of a database, but staff struggled with using the CDC, both due to their computer skills and a lack of understanding about the requested information in the spreadsheet.

*We should have followed through with the database. We needed the database. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

The lack of a database also affected the program’s relationship with Corrections stakeholders. Information (e.g., Corrections referral forms) sent to the NYVRP frequently went missing and it was thought that having a database would have helped address this issue. According to one

interviewee from Corrections, “we would provide information to them and it’s like it went into an abyss.” In fact, Creighton Corrections developed their own tracking sheet of individuals enrolled in, and information shared with, the NYVRP in response to the NYVRP’s issues with recordkeeping.

*Something else that comes to mind is the lack of database in the program. I know it was quite frustrating for [Creighton Corrections] because the Creighton office was continually being asked for the same information they were already provided. And it really is a challenge when you have a bunch of stakeholders working together without a common database to put it together. It’s strange to have an initiative without one and here we are its over and there isn’t one. (Corrections)*

*Initially some of us would give information to them if we would see them, but then they were getting lost, so then we started to email them where we could track it. We also started a spreadsheet to monitor clients. Then if the referral was accepted, I would mark when we did the assessment and gave the full referral. It would make me more organized too. I wanted the work to get done for them. When I looked at the big picture, it was just not being received. (Corrections)*

### **Commitment of Community Corrections**

A final component of the support that the Ministry was supposed to provide to the NYVRP was the involvement of local community youth workers/probation officers in supporting the corrections-referred youth enrolled in the NYVRP. According to Corrections stakeholders, they perceived that they followed through their commitment to support the NYVRP. For instance, staff were directed to participate in the NYVRP (i.e., to make referrals to the program, attend meetings, share information with the HAWWs) and to prioritize risk assessments for youth enrolled in the NYVRP. In line with these expectations, Corrections stakeholders did attend the majority of Oversight and monthly update meetings; there was less frequent attendance at Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings, but this was somewhat affected by the (dis)organization associated with those meetings (see Sections 9.5, 9.7).

*I made it an expectation for our staff to go to all those meetings...I think, in that sense, the commitment was definitely there. (Corrections)*

*We tried to prioritize the NYVRP assessments...There were some that didn’t get done, it wasn’t like a huge amount. (Corrections)*

From the NYVRP’s perspective, there was some concern about Corrections’ level of engagement with the program (e.g., sharing referral forms with the NYVRP). However, these concerns seemed to be a consequence of the program’s poor recordkeeping, as there is evidence from the casefile review that Corrections provided 13 referral forms that were not available in the NYVRP’s own documentation.

### 9.4.5 Interpretation

At the outset of the program, it was proposed that the Ministry of Corrections and Policing would support the NYVRP in three ways: providing training, implementation assistance, and quality assurance support to the communities. In addition, it was expected that community youth workers/probation officers would work closely with the NYVRP to support their mutual clients (i.e., youth referred from Corrections to the NYVRP). Overall, the available evidence from the stakeholder interviews (as well that derived from observation) suggests that the Ministry of Corrections and Policing did not provide enough support for the NYVRP to be delivered as effectively as possible. While the Ministry played an instrumental role in preparing the NYVRP for program delivery, it did not follow through with the full level of support necessary to ensure that all aspects of the program could be delivered with full fidelity to the program delivery model. In particular, training, program administration, and data tracking were the areas that could have benefited from additional support.

With respect to training, it was generally agreed that the NYVRP staff required additional training on correctional theories and practices to increase their understanding of the RNR framework and the risk assessment protocol they were expected to carry out. A training curriculum was developed by the Ministry and some training was provided to NYVRP staff; however, this training was deemed inadequate. Originally, the Ministry had proposed that a Clinical Director would be engaged to train the NYVRP staff. While a Clinical Director was utilized early on in the program (i.e., in 2017-18) and staff were provided with specialized training on the YLS/CMI, the training provided to the staff was not enough. The NYVRP likely would have benefited from regular interactions and follow-up sessions with a Clinical Director throughout the program.

It was also believed that the Ministry did not have all the necessary materials in place to support program delivery at the time that the NYVRP started accepting clients. For instance, the procedures and paperwork required, from seeking referrals to having clients complete consent forms and recording chronological notes, were not presented to staff in a cohesive manner. Prioritizing the completion of a program manual likely would have addressed this gap. In addition, staff found it challenging that the risk assessment protocol had not been finalized at the time that program commenced and that not all program forms had been developed. This resulted in new forms being introduced throughout the program, including an involvement summary form which was introduced within the last month of program delivery. Importantly, staff indicated that the summary involvement form should have been shared with them from the outset, as this particular form helped them tie together all of the different pieces of information they collected for a given client. In general, a more detailed and complete plan for the program's expected documentation developed prior to beginning program delivery likely would have alleviated some of the confusion experienced by the staff. A review of the program's documentation mid-way through the initiative also may have helped identify aspects of the administration process that were not useful, as well as gaps that needed to be addressed.

A final challenge experienced with respect to program administration was not having a database to support data collection and recording keeping. The Ministry was supposed to develop a database for the project, but due to several issues encountered within the government (e.g.,

delays in receiving permission to use a particular version of the proposed database), the development of the database was delayed so much that it was never completed. Not having a database comprised the quality of the NYVRP's data collection, as staff were asked to use an Excel Community Data Collection (CDC) Tracking Sheet. Staff struggled with completing the CDC due to a lack of familiarity with Excel, as well as a lack of understanding of information sought by the CDC. As a result, the data contained with the CDC was unreliable when compared to raw data sources. The NYVRP also exhibited poor recordkeeping practices, which likely would have been mitigated to at least some extent by having a database. For instance, there were discrepancies between the number of corrections referral forms that the NYVRP had on file compared to the records maintained by the Creighton Corrections office (i.e., there was evidence that 13 Corrections referral forms were sent to the NYVRP that were not in the casefiles).

One area where the proposed level of support offered by the Ministry seemed to match the level of support provided related to the involvement of community youth workers/probation officers in the program. Corrections staff were expected to participate in the program, and they did regularly attend Oversight and monthly management update meetings. Staff also attended Advisory Committee and Core Team meetings (albeit less frequently due to issues with the organization of meetings). They also made an effort to prioritize the risks assessment for NYVRP clients and to remain in communication with the HAWWs.

Overall, in understanding the gaps in the level of support provided by the Ministry, it seems that a lack of resources and the limited timeframe of the initiative prevented all of program pieces from being in place at the time program delivery commenced. Indeed, the primary support dedicated to the program was a Ministry Manager and it was noted that she was not fully dedicated to the NYVRP. As a result, competing priorities limited the amount of support that could be provided to the program. In the future, when developing and implementing a pilot project such as the NYVRP, the Ministry should consider dedicating a Manager to the project for the full duration of the pilot project period. It is common for it to take two to four years of development, adjustments and modifications before a new program can be implemented with good fidelity (Bertram, Blase, & Fixen, 2015). Thus, it is important to maintain an adequate level of support throughout both the program design and initial program delivery stages to allow issues that arise to be addressed and corrected quickly. It is also necessary to take the context in which a pilot project is occurring into consideration. In this case, the NYVRP communities had limited, if any, experience with implementing corrections, evidence-based models. As such, it should have been expected that a higher level of support may have initially been required until staff became adept at program delivery.

## 9.5 Adherence to RNR Principles

### 9.5.1 Evaluation Questions

- How well does the NYVRP adhere to the principles of risk, need, and responsiveness?

### 9.5.2 Indicators

- % of community-referred youth with completed YLS/CMI: SVs
- % of corrections-referred youth with completed LSI-SKs or SPRA
- % of NYVRP youth with completed POSITs
- % of NYVRP youth with completed ACEs
- *n* of youth with case plans
- % of youth with case plans that address identified risk factors

### 9.5.3 Data Sources

- Casefile Review
- Database Review

### 9.5.4 Results

Guided by the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model, the completion of empirical risk assessments for each client was considered as a key component of the NYVRP to identify the risk levels and needs of the youth and develop care plans for them accordingly. During 2017-18, it was intended that the YLS/CMI would be completed by HAWWs for community-referred NYVRP clients and LSI-SKs (12-18 years) or SPRAs (older than 18 years) would be completed by Corrections for the corrections-referred clients. In addition, the Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT) was identified as another (optional) tool that could be used to assess risk for all NYVRP participants. Due to the challenges with completing the YLS/CMI and LSI-SK/SPRA (as described in section 8.1.4), the risk assessment process was revised during the second year of program delivery. In January 2019, a new risk assessment process was implemented wherein HAWWs were expected to complete the YLS/CMI: SV (i.e., a brief screener version of the YLS/CMI), POSIT, and ACE-Q (i.e., the Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire) with all NYVRP clients, regardless of their referral source.

#### *Number of Risk Assessments Completed*

There was a remarkable increase in the completion rates of the risk assessments tools following the implementation of the new risk assessment protocol. Between January 2019 and March 2020, YLS/CMI:SVs, POSITs, and ACE-Qs were completed for 84% of all eligible youth (*N*=58; see Table 6). However, there was a decrease in the number of assessments completed in 2019-20 from 2018-19. In 2018-19 assessments were completed for 89% to 91% of all eligible youth (depending on the specific assessment considered), whereas, in 2019-20, assessments were completed for 64% to 71% of all eligible youth (depending on the specific assessment considered). According to the NYVRP project management team, the youth who did not have the full battery of assessments completed with them left the program or were deemed inactive before the HAWW was able to complete the assessments.



**Table 6: Risk Assessment Completion Rates by Program Year**

| Risk Assessment Tool Completion Rates |                      |                                   |                        |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Program Year                          | Risk Assessment Tool | Anticipated Number of Assessments | Completed <i>n</i> (%) |
| 2017-18                               | YLS/CMI              | 38                                | 2 (5.3%)               |
|                                       | POSIT                | 54                                | 14 (25.9%)             |
|                                       | LSI-SK or SPRA       | 16                                | 3 (18.8%)              |
| 2018-19                               | YLS/CMI: SV          | 44                                | 40 (90.9%)             |
|                                       | ACE-Q                | 44                                | 40 (90.9%)             |
|                                       | POSIT                | 44                                | 39 (88.6%)             |
| 2019-20                               | YLS/CMI: SV          | 14                                | 9 (64.3%)              |
|                                       | ACE-Q                | 14                                | 9 (64.3%)              |
|                                       | POSIT                | 14                                | 10 (71.4%)             |

***YLS/CMI Screener***

The YLS/CMI: SV is a shortened version of the full YLS/CMI. It is comprised of eight items taken from the full version of the YLS/CMI. Specifically, the screener version asks about history of conduct disorder, current school or employment problems, criminal friends, alcohol/drug problems, leisure/recreation activities, personality/behaviour, family circumstances/parenting, and attitudes orientation. Six of the items are yes/no questions, whereas the remaining two items are scored on a scale of 0 to 3. The YLS/CMI: SV allows us to know whether a given young person is at low risk, moderate risk or high risk in terms of offending behaviour. The cut-off scores used to determine the risk level are as follows: a) low risk: 0 to 2; b) moderate risk: 3 to 5; and c) high risk: 6 to 8.

Overall, the YLS/CMI: SV was completed with 84% of eligible participants ( $N=58$ ). Lower completion rates were observed in 2019-20 (64%) compared to 2018-19 (91%). The highest rate of completion of the YLS/CMI: SV was in Sandy Bay (96%) followed closely by Pelican Narrows (94%). Deschambault Lake had the lowest rate of completion (63%; see Table 7).

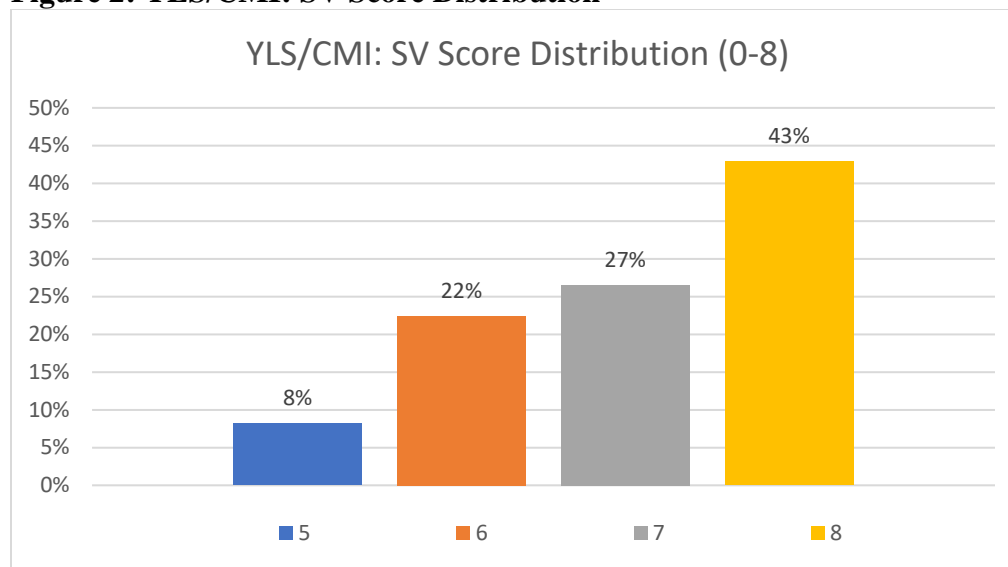
**Table 7: Number and Percentage of YLS/CMI: SV Completed**

| Community         | Anticipated Number | Completed (n)/% |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Deschambault Lake | 16                 | 10 (62.5%)      |
| Pelican Narrows   | 18                 | 17 (94.4%)      |
| Sandy Bay         | 24                 | 23 (95.8%)      |

Forty-five out of 49 participants (92%) scored as high risk on the YLS/CMI: SV (i.e., had a score of six or higher) and four participants scored as moderate risk (i.e., had a score of 5; see Figure 2). Overall, the participants had a mean YLS/CMI: SV score of 7.0 (Min: 5, Max: 8).

Participants in Sandy Bay had the highest average score ( $M=7.0$ ) followed by those in Pelican Narrows ( $M=6.8$ ), and Deschambault Lake ( $M=6.7$ ; see Table 8).

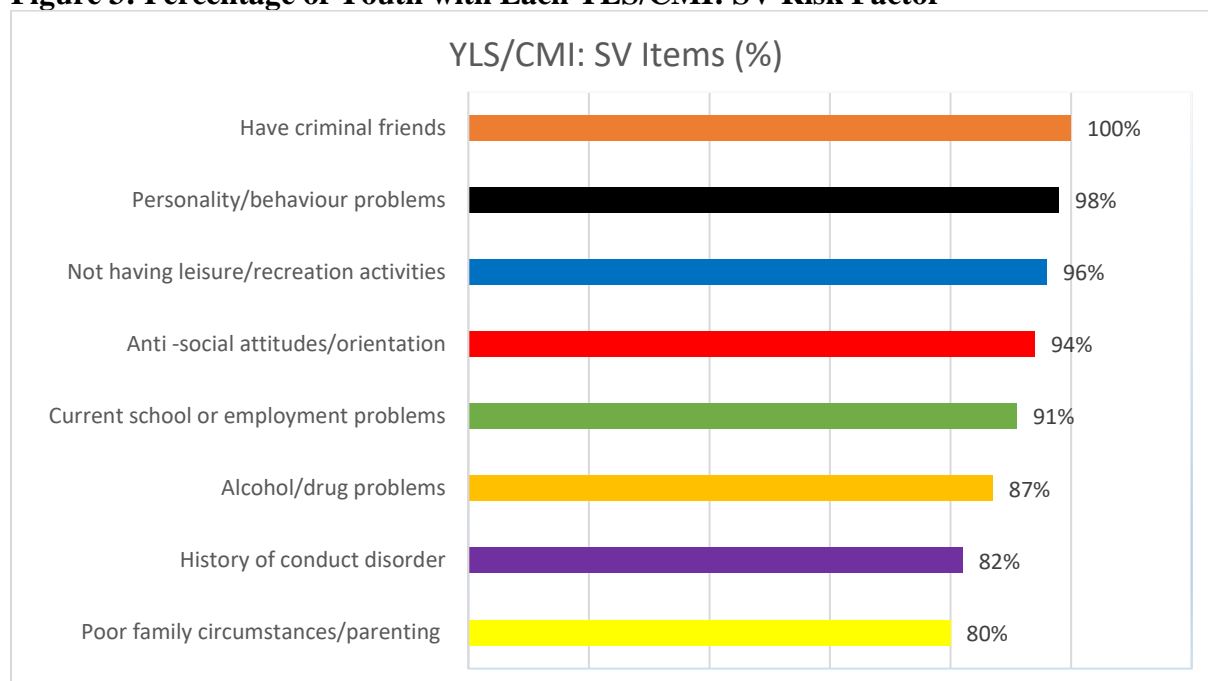
**Figure 2: YLS/CMI: SV Score Distribution**



**Table 8: YLS/CMI: SV Score Statistics**

| YLS/CMI Score Statistics |    |         |         |      |
|--------------------------|----|---------|---------|------|
|                          | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean |
| Deschambault Lake        | 11 | 5       | 8       | 6.7  |
| Pelican Narrows          | 17 | 5       | 8       | 6.8  |
| Sandy Bay                | 21 | 5       | 8       | 7.0  |

According to the YLS/CMI: SV results, all of the youth (100%) had friends with a history of delinquency, conduct problems, or antisocial attitudes. In addition, the vast majority of the participants exhibited serious personality or behavioural problems (98%; e.g., physical/verbal aggression, short attention span, hyperactivity, or poor self-control) and were not engaged in positive leisure/recreation activities (96%). Most participants also had antisocial or pro-criminal attitudes (94%) and experienced problems at school or work (91%; e.g., serious behavioural or achievement problems, being suspended or expelled, or being unemployed and not seeking employment). The youth also commonly experienced alcohol or drug problems (87%), had a history of conduct disorder (82%), and experienced poor family or parenting circumstances (80%; e.g., parental abuse, frequent conflicts at home, inadequate parental supervision (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Percentage of Youth with Each YLS/CMI: SV Risk Factor**

### ***POSIT***

The POSIT is a self-report brief screening tool designed for adolescents 12 through 18 years of age to identify problems requiring an in-depth assessment and potentially a need for treatment. The POSIT is comprised of 139 “yes/no” questions and consists of 10 subscales which are designed to screen for potential problems in the following functional domains: a) Substance Use and Abuse; b) Physical Health Status; c) Mental Health Status; d) Family Relations; e) Peer Relations; f) Educational Status; g) Vocational Status; h) Social Skills; i) Leisure and Recreation; and j) Aggressive Behaviour and Delinquency.

Overall, the POSIT was completed with 65% ( $n=63$ ) of all 97 clients who consented to participate in the NYVRP. It is perhaps most appropriate to look the completion rates for the POSIT in the last two years of program delivery, as the POSIT was optional during the first year program delivery occurred. As such, during the last two years of the NYVRP, POSITs were completed with 84% ( $n=49$ ) of the 58 eligible clients. In comparison, POSITs were completed with only 26% of eligible participants in 2017-18 when they were optional risk assessment tool. When looking at completion rates by community, Sandy Bay had completed POSITs for all of their clients and Pelican Narrows had completed POSITs for the majority (83%) of their clients. Conversely, Deschambault Lake only completed POSITs for 56% of their participants (see Table 9). The lower completion rates in Deschambault Lake were likely due to the loss of a HAWW at the time the new risk assessment protocol was implemented.

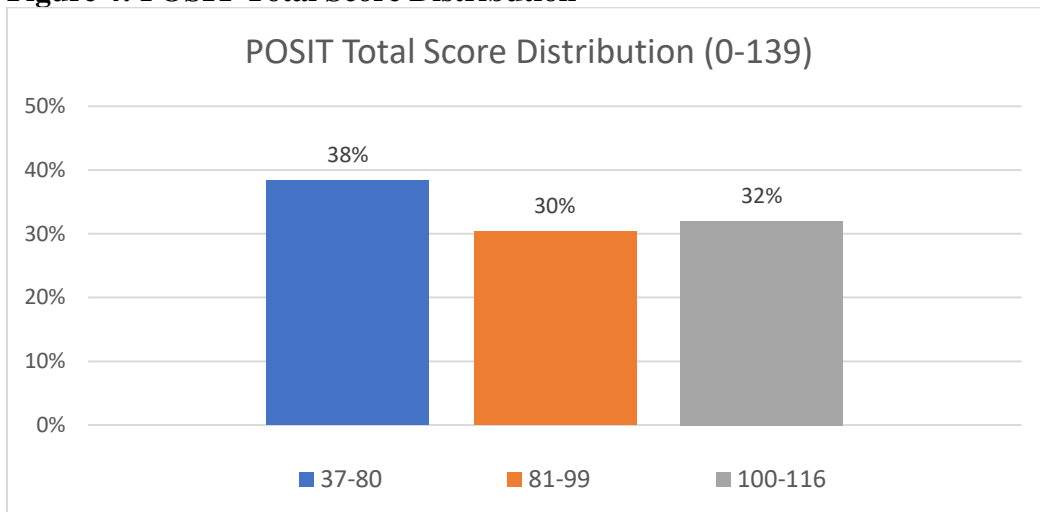
**Table 9: Number and Percentage of POSITs Completed in 2018-19 and 2019-20 Combined**

| Community         | Anticipated Number | Completed (n)/% |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Deschambault Lake | 16                 | 10 (62.5%)      |
| Pelican Narrows   | 18                 | 15 (83.3%)      |
| Sandy Bay         | 24                 | 24 (100%)       |

Each of the 10 subscales of the POSIT is generally interpreted independently of each other. That is, the tool is not designed to provide a global risk rating of the youth (i.e., cut-off scores for low, moderate, and high risk based on the total scale score are not available). That being said, looking at all the POSITs completed (i.e., from 2017-18 to 2019-20), the average total score for the POSIT was 86.3 with a range between 37 and 116. The highest mean score was in Deschambault Lake ( $M=91.9$ ; see Table 10), followed by Sandy Bay ( $M=86.5$ ) and Pelican Narrows ( $M=80.6$ ). Approximately one-third of the clients scored higher than 100 out of 139 (see Figure 4).

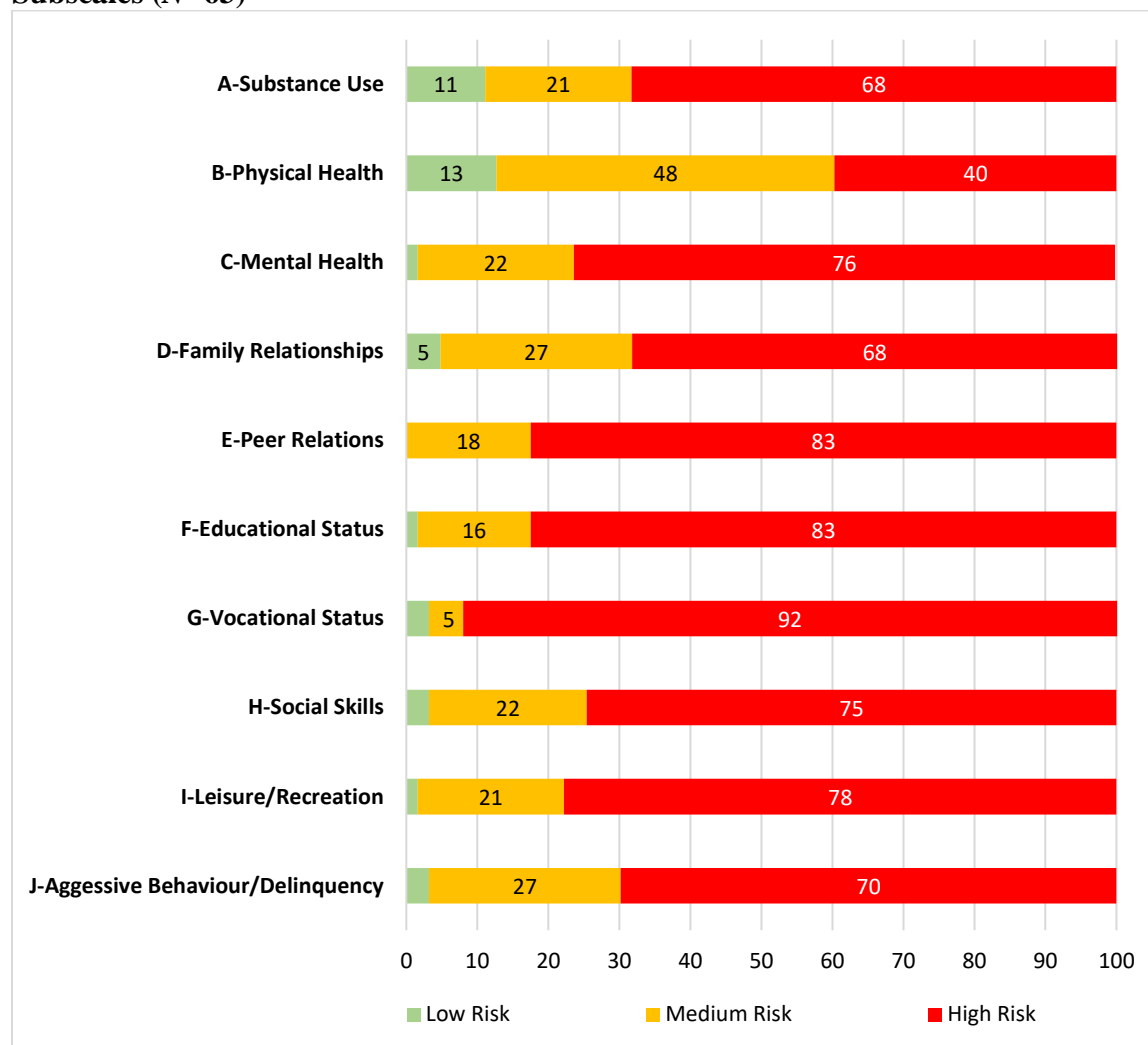
**Table 10: POSIT Score Statistics – 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20 Combined**

| POSIT Scores Statistics |    |      |         |         |
|-------------------------|----|------|---------|---------|
|                         | N  | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
| Deschambault Lake       | 18 | 91.9 | 60      | 116     |
| Pelican Narrows         | 19 | 80.6 | 50      | 108     |
| Sandy Bay               | 26 | 86.5 | 37      | 116     |
| TOTAL                   | 63 | 86.3 | 37      | 116     |

**Figure 4: POSIT Total Score Distribution**

In general, the clients scored mostly as high risk on the POSIT subscales (see Figure 5). Specifically, over 68% of the youth scored as high risk on each subscale except for Physical Health. The subscales that had the greatest proportion of clients scoring as high risk were Vocational Status (92%), Educational Status (83%), and Peer Relations (83%).

**Figure 5: Percentage of Youth Scoring as Low, Moderate, and High Risk on POSIT Subscales (N=63)**



### ***ACE-Q: Adverse Childhood Experiences-Questionnaire***

The ACE-Q is a tool used to assess childhood trauma experiences. The first section of the ACE-Q includes 10 dichotomous (yes/no) questions asking whether or not the participants had adverse experiences prior to 18 years of age (i.e. emotional, physical, and sexual abuse; neglect; domestic violence; unmarried parents; and the presence of a substance-abusing, mentally ill, or incarcerated member of the household). The items included in this section reflect what are considered to be the 10 traditional ACEs examined in the literature. ACE (Section 1) scores higher than three are considered “high” in non-delinquent clients (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015), while studies on juvenile offenders use ACE scores of six and higher as an indicator of the risk of offending (Baglivio et al., 2015). The second section of the ACE-Q asks supplementary questions about youth’s adverse experiences outside of their homes (i.e.,

bullying, separation from parents, living in foster care, serious medical problems, violence in neighborhood, arrest or imprisonment history, and victimization).

The ACE-Q was completed for 84% ( $n=49$ ) of eligible clients ( $N=58$ ). The highest rate of completion of was in Pelican Narrows (94%) followed by Sandy Bay (92%) and Deschambault Lake (63%; see Table 11).

**Table 11: ACE-Qs Completed by Community**

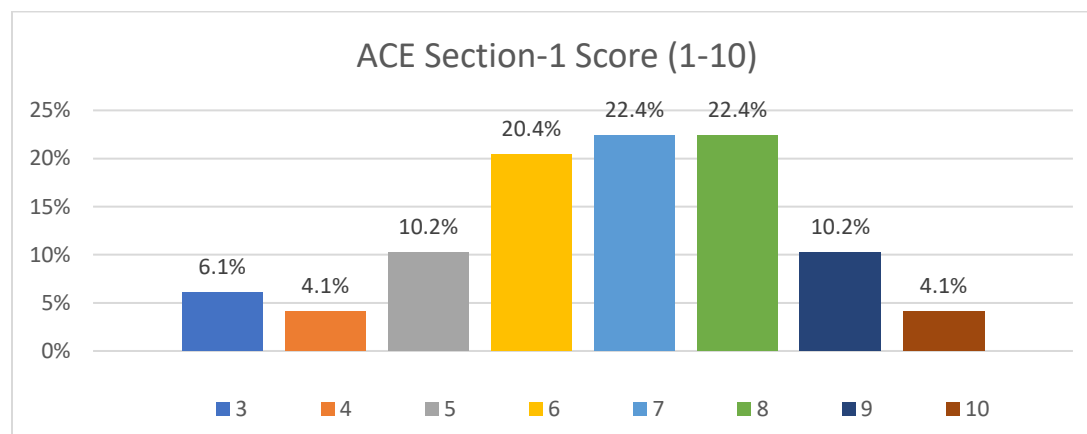
| Community         | Anticipated Number | Completed (n)/% |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Deschambault Lake | 16                 | 10 (62.5%)      |
| Pelican Narrows   | 18                 | 17 (94.4%)      |
| Sandy Bay         | 24                 | 22 (91.7%)      |

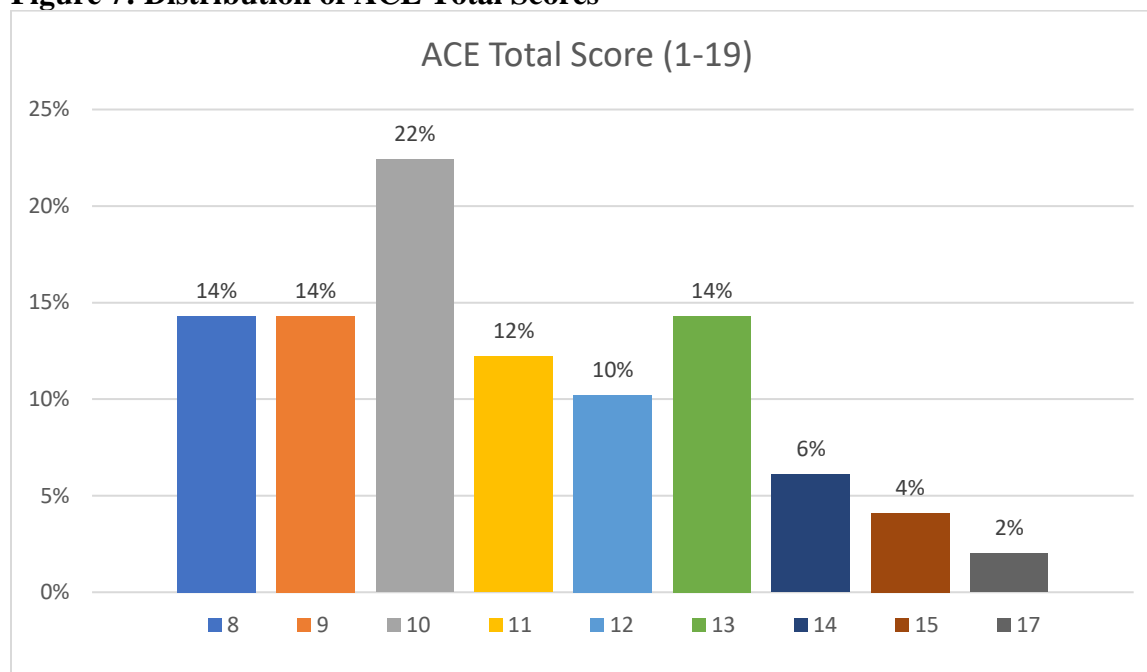
Across all participants, the mean score for the first section of ACE was 6.78 out of 10, while the mean score for the second section was 4.0 out of 9. The mean total score was 10.9 out of 19 (see Table 12). Indeed, on the first section of the ACE alone, nearly all (93.9%) scored 4 or higher, which is the recommended cut-off for referral to mental health treatment. Moreover, 80% of participants scored 6 or higher (36.7% scored 8 or higher), which places these youth at an increased risk for offending (see Figure 6). When looking at the total ACE score, all participants scored 8 or higher, with 71% scoring 10 or higher out of 19 points (see Figure 7). These scores suggest that, collectively, the NYVRP youth have experienced a large amount of trauma in their lives.

**Table 12: ACE-Q Score Statistics**

|                 | ACE Score Statistics |      |         |         |
|-----------------|----------------------|------|---------|---------|
|                 | N                    | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
| Section 1 Score | 49                   | 6.78 | 3       | 10      |
| Section 2 Score | 49                   | 4.25 | 2       | 7       |
| Total Score     | 49                   | 10.9 | 8       | 17      |

**Figure 6: Distribution of Scores on ACE-Q: Section 1**



**Figure 7: Distribution of ACE Total Scores**

In terms of community-level differences with respect to the ACE-Q scores, the greatest percentage of high-risk youth was in Sandy Bay. Here, 96% of Sandy Bay participants had scores of 6 or higher in the first section of the ACE, while only 71% of Pelican Narrows participants and 60% of Deschambault Lake participants were high risk based on their ACE-Q Section 1 scores (see Table 13). The mean total score (12.2 out of 19) and the mean Section-2 score (4.4 out of 9) were also highest in Sandy Bay (see Table 14).

**Table 13: Distribution of High-Risk Participants by Community (Scoring 6 or Higher in Section 1)**

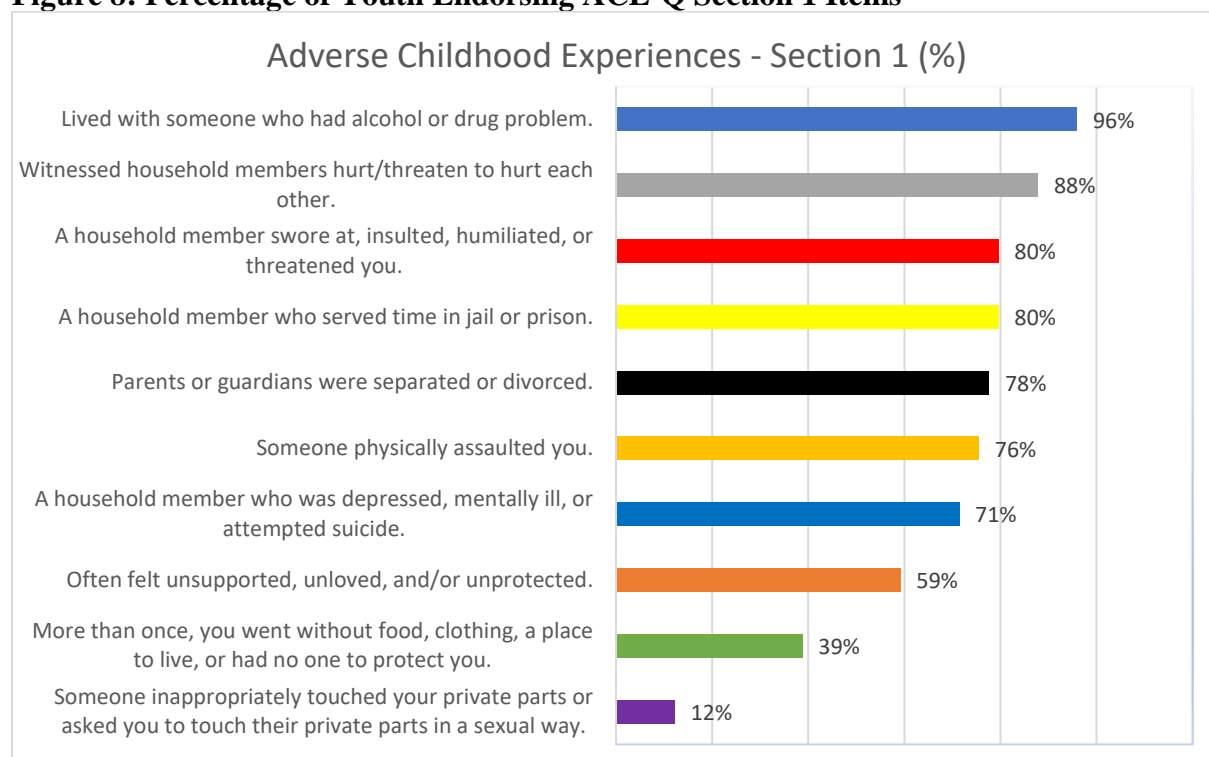
| Community                | Scores of 6 or higher (n)/% |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Deschambault Lake (N=10) | 6 (60%)                     |
| Pelican Narrows (N=17)   | 12 (70.6%)                  |
| Sandy Bay (N=22)         | 21 (95.5%)                  |

**Table 14: Distribution of ACE-Q Score by Community in 2018-19**

| ACE-Q           | Deschambault Lake (n=10) |     |     | Pelican Narrows (n=17) |     |     | Sandy Bay (n=16) |     |     |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-----|-----|------------------------|-----|-----|------------------|-----|-----|
|                 | Mean                     | Min | Max | Mean                   | Min | Max | Mean             | Min | Max |
| Section 1 Score | 5.90                     | 5   | 7   | 5.82                   | 3   | 8   | 7.91             | 4   | 10  |
| Section 2 Score | 3.80                     | 2   | 5   | 4.12                   | 2   | 7   | 4.36             | 2   | 7   |
| Total Score     | 9.70                     | 8   | 12  | 9.94                   | 8   | 14  | 12.23            | 9   | 17  |

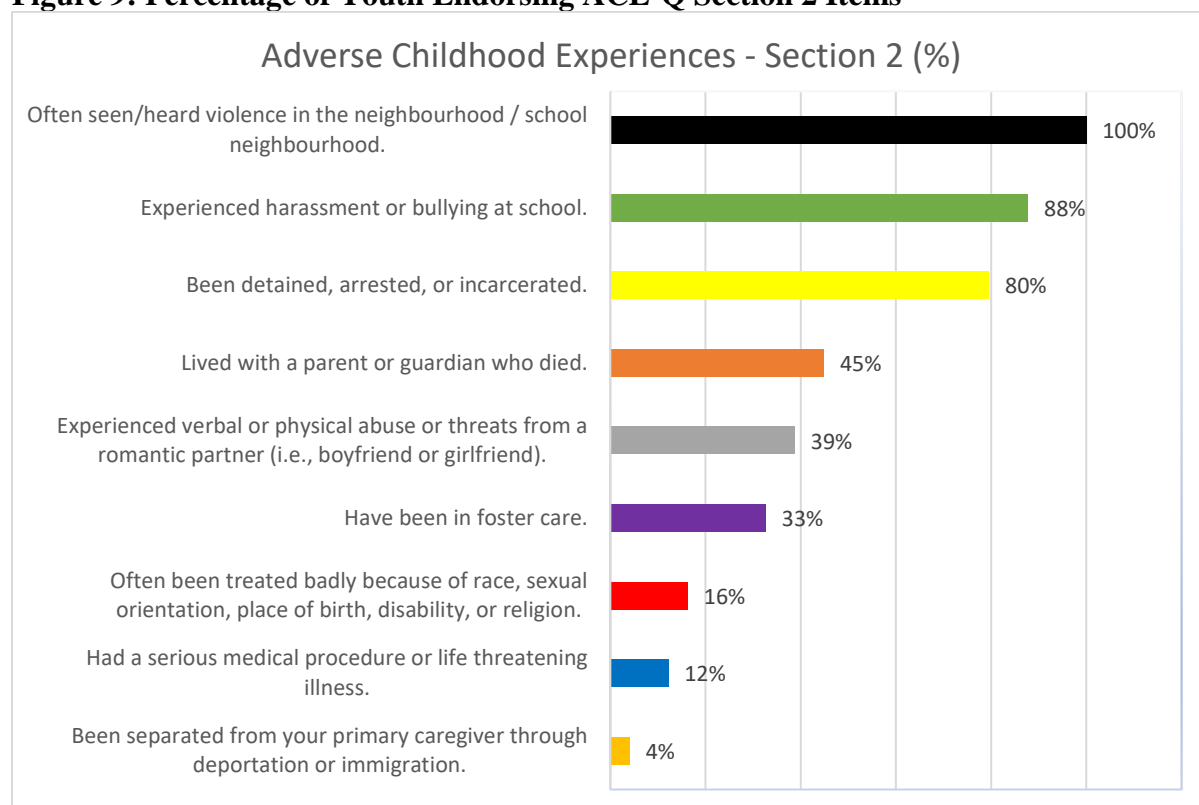
Overall, the majority of the youth had serious problems in their households such as alcohol or drug abuse (96%), physical abuse (88%), verbal abuse (80%), incarcerated household member (80%), mental illness, depression and suicide attempts (71%), and divorce or separation (78%). Being physically assaulted (76%) and feelings of being unsupported, unloved, or unprotected (59%) was also common among the participants (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Percentage of Youth Endorsing ACE-Q Section 1 Items**



All of the participants have seen or heard violence in their neighborhood and the majority have experienced harassment or bullying (88%) and been arrested, detained, or incarcerated (80%). Approximately 33% of the participants have been in foster care and 13% had a serious medical procedure or life threatening illness. Further, 45% of the participants have lived with a parent or guardian who died (see Figure 9).



**Figure 9: Percentage of Youth Endorsing ACE-Q Section 2 Items**

### ***LSI-SK and SPRA***

The LSI-SK is a risk assessment tool used by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing to assess adjudicated youth's risk of offending. It is based upon the YLS/CMI and is used with youth who are between the ages of 12 to 17 years. The LSI-SK places individuals on a five-point continuum of risk ranging from low to high. It assesses seven risk factors, including education/employment, pro-criminal attitudes, antisocial patterns, family circumstances and parenting, companions, leisure/recreation, and substance use/abuse. The SPRA is another risk assessment utilized by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing; it is comprised of fifteen items and is used with persons who are 18 years or older. It assesses eight risk factors, including education/employment, antisocial behaviour, pro-criminal attitude, peers, substance use, self-management awareness, residence stability, and financial stability. It results in a risk rating of low, moderate, or high.

It was originally intended that Corrections would conduct assessments of all corrections-referred youth. In 2018-19, when the risk assessment protocol changed to no longer require Corrections to complete assessments of the youth, it was still understood that Corrections would share any assessments completed with NYVRP clients with the NYVRP to help inform their case plans. In total, Corrections completed 19 assessments (12 LSI-SKs and 7 SPRAs) for NYVRP youth. Specifically, 12 LSI-SK assessments were completed for 2 community-referred youth, 5 corrections-referred youth, and 5 RCMP-referred youth. Further, 7 SPRA assessments were completed for 5 corrections-referred youth and 2 RCMP-referred youth. Thus, Corrections'

involvement with the youth enrolled in the NYVRP was not limited to youth that they referred to the program; they shared information about all common clients.

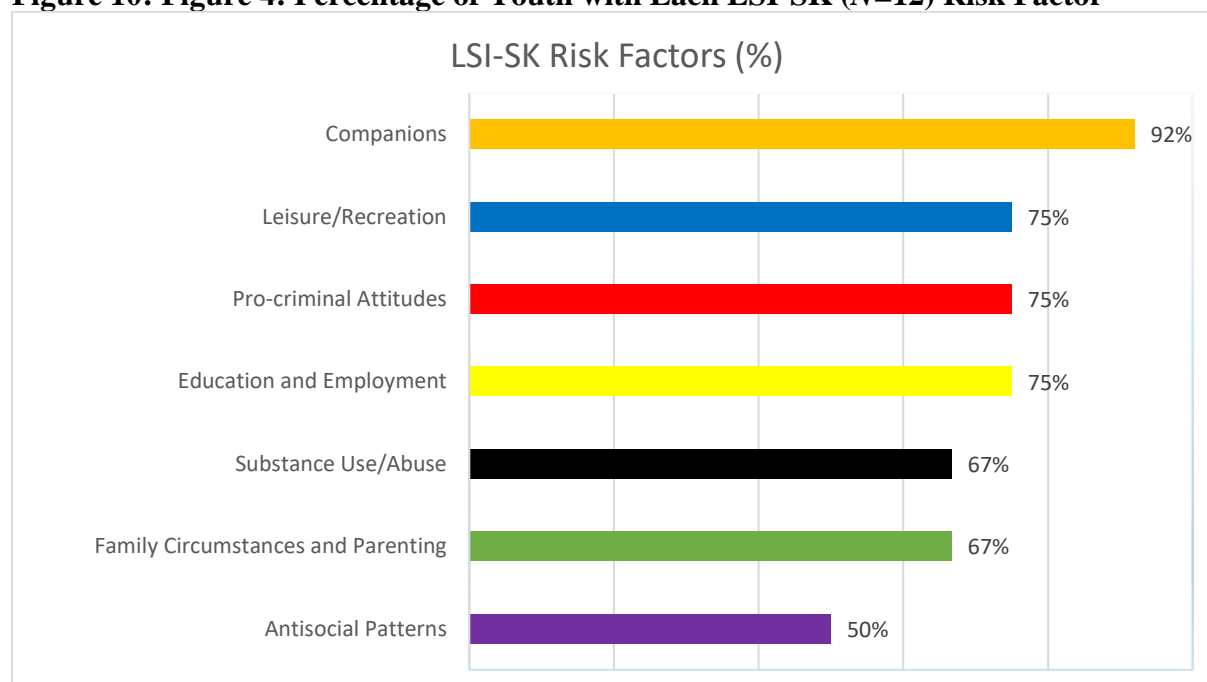
The majority of youth scored as high risk on the LSI-SK and SPRA (see Table 15). Among the 12 youth that had LSI-SK scores, 33% had a score of 3 (moderate risk), 33% scored 4 (high risk) and 33% scored 5 (very high risk). Thus, 66% of the youth were considered high or very high risk to offend. On the SPRA, 100% of the youth ( $N=7$ ) scored as high risk.

**Table 15: Corrections Assessment Score Statistics**

| Corrections Assessment Statistics |          |            |         |     |
|-----------------------------------|----------|------------|---------|-----|
|                                   | <i>N</i> | Mean Risk  | Minimum | Max |
| LSI-SK                            | 12       | 4.0 (High) | 3       | 5   |
| SPRA                              | 7        | 3.0 (High) | 3       | 3   |

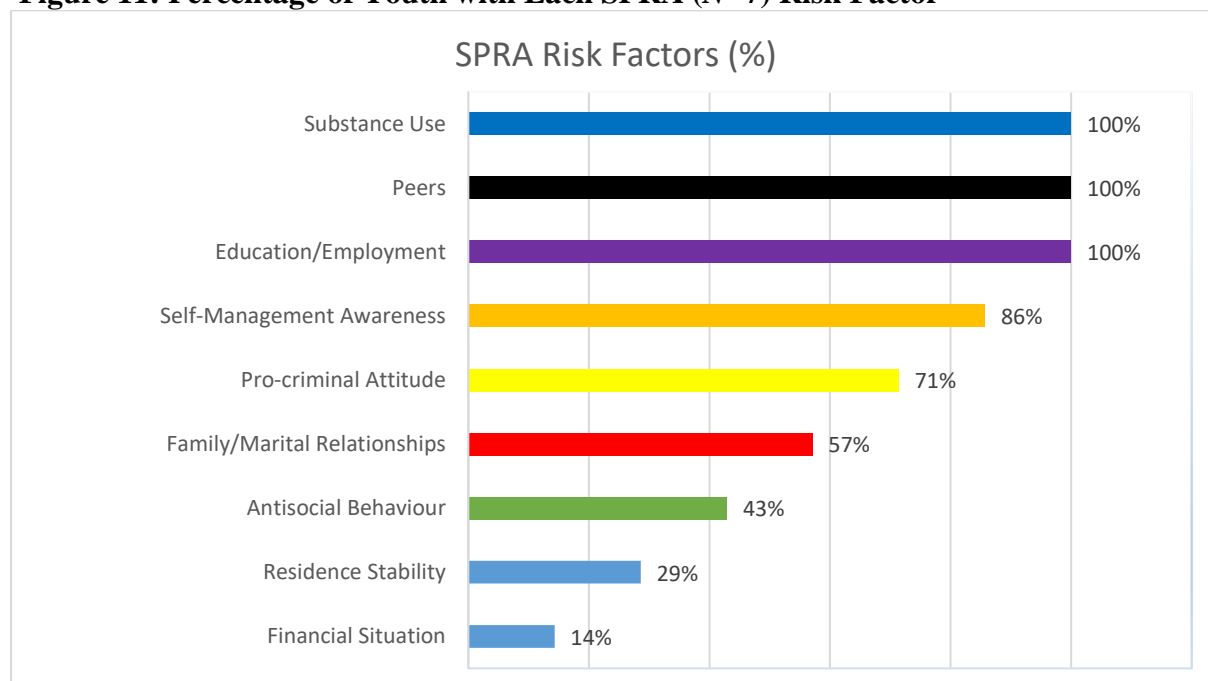
Similar to both the YLS-CMI:SV and POSIT assessment scores, companions emerged as the dominant risk factor for youth (92%; see Figure 10). Most youth (75%) struggled with having positive leisure/recreation activities and pro-criminal attitudes, as well as with their education or employment pursuits. Two-thirds also experienced issues in the areas of substance use/abuse and family circumstances and parenting. In general, the results of the LSI-SK mirrors the results of the YLS/CMI: SV. There was greater endorsement of comparable items on the YLS/CMI: SV (i.e., a greater percentage of youth were identified as being affected by each risk area); however the relative order of the proportion of youth who experienced issues with each risk area was generally the same between the two instruments.

**Figure 10: Figure 4: Percentage of Youth with Each LSI-SK ( $N=12$ ) Risk Factor**



For the youth that had a completed SPRA, substance use, antisocial peers, and education/employment were identified as risk factors for all (100%) of the youth (see Figure 11). Most youth also struggled with self-management awareness (86%), pro-criminal attitudes (71%), and family/marital relationships (57%). Thus, the risk profile of the older NYVRP participants looked slightly different than the younger NYVRP participants' profile, with substance use being more problematic among the older youth.

**Figure 11: Percentage of Youth with Each SPRA (N=7) Risk Factor**



A correlational analysis was conducted between the LSI-SK and YLS/CMI: SV; however, a correlation between the two instruments was not found,  $r=.13$ ,  $p=.700$ . A lack of power stemming from the small number of LSI-SKs may have contributed to this finding. It was not possible to conduct a correlational analysis of the YLS/CMI: SV and the SPRA due to lack of variation in SPRA scores (i.e., all youth were 'high' risk). A visual inspection of the data revealed that 7 youth scored as 'high' risk on both the YLS/CMI: SV and the LSI-SK/SPRA, while four youth scored as 'high' risk on the YLS/CMI: SV and 'moderate' risk on the LSI-SK. Conversely, one youth was identified as 'moderate' risk on the YLS/CMI: SV and 'high' risk on the SPRA. Overall, this suggests there were some inconsistencies between the scores obtained on the YLS/CMI: SV and the LSI-SK/SPRA; however, a larger sample size is required to more fully understand the relationship between the instruments.

### ***Known-Groups Validation of the Risk Assessment Tools***

A known groups validation<sup>13</sup> analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which clients' past arrests/incarceration could differentiate between their risk scores on the ACE-Q and the

<sup>13</sup> Known-groups validity is a form of construct validity that assesses an instrument's ability to distinguish between distinct groups based on differences that are established a priori (Devellis, 2017).

YLS/CMI: SV. We expected clients who had past arrests/incarceration to have higher risk scores. Accordingly, independent samples *t*-test analyses were used to compare the mean risk scores clients who had self-reported arrest/incarceration data ( $n=39$ ) to those who did not ( $n=10$ ; see Table 16). The arrest/incarceration data was derived from an ACE-Q item, which asked clients to self-report if, at any point since they were born, they had been detained, arrested, or incarcerated (i.e., clients who answered “yes” to this question were considered to have previous arrests/incarceration).

There was a significant difference between the clients who were arrested/incarcerated and those who were not arrested/incarcerated in terms of their ACE-Q Total Scores [ $t(8.7) = 3.47$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ] and their ACE-Q Section 2 Scores [ $t(15.17) = 5.89$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ] (see Table 16). That is, arrested/incarcerated clients had higher ACE-Q total scores and ACE-Q Section 2 scores. Since the question about being detained, arrested, or incarcerated is included in Section 2 of the ACE-Q, it is likely that the endorsement of this item resulted in higher Section 2 and ACE-Q total scores among youth who had been arrest/incarcerated.

Notably, there also was a significant difference in the youth’s YLS/CMI: SV scores where youth who indicated they had been detained, arrested, or incarcerated had higher YLS/CMI: SV scores than youth who had not been,  $t(44)=2.09$ ,  $p=.04$ . Being arrested or incarcerated suggests greater involvement in the criminal justice system. Thus, it makes sense that these youth would also have higher risk scores on the YLS/CMI: SV. Finally, a correlational analysis was completed between the ACE-Q and YLS/CMI: SV to determine the extent to which the scores from one tool corresponded to the scores of the other tools. There was a positive moderate relationship between the ACE-Q scores and YLS/CMI: SV scores ( $r = .49$ ,  $p < .001$ ), suggesting that higher ACE-Q scores were related to having higher YLS/CMI: SV scores.

**Table 16: Comparisons in Risk Scores of Arrested/Incarcerated Youth to Non-Arrested/Incarcerated Youth**

| Differences between Risk Scores of<br>Arrested/Incarcerated vs Non-Arrested/Incarcerated Youth |                            |       |                    |      |       |       |
|--|----------------------------|-------|--------------------|------|-------|-------|
|  | Arrested /<br>Incarcerated | Mean  | Mean<br>Difference | t    | df    | Sig.  |
| ACE1   | Yes                        | 6.90  | 0.60               | .98  | 47    | .33   |
|  | No                         | 6.30  |                    |      |       |       |
| ACE2   | Yes                        | 4.46  | 1.46               | 4.59 | 19.61 | <.001 |
|  | No                         | 3.00  |                    |      |       |       |
| ACE Total  | Yes                        | 11.33 | 2.03               | 4.00 | 27.77 | <.001 |
|  | No                         | 9.30  |                    |      |       |       |
| POSIT  | Yes                        | 92.97 | 4.47               | .52  | 8.18  | .62   |
|  | No                         | 88.5  |                    |      |       |       |
| YLS/CMI: SV  | Yes                        | 7.19  | 0.69               | 2.09 | 44    | .04   |
|  | No                         | 6.50  |                    |      |       |       |

### ***Adherence to Need and Responsivity Principles***

The risk levels of the participants were identified through risk assessment tools, and the adherence of the NYVRP to the ‘risk’ principle of RNR was identified above by reviewing the completion rates of the risk assessment tools. The adherence of the program to the ‘need’ and ‘responsivity’ principles, on the other hand, was evaluated through a review of the NYVRP Core Team Integrated Case Plans. The Core Teams in each community were to develop case plans (or care plans, as they are also referred to by the program) for each NYVRP youth during their monthly meetings based on the referral information, risk assessment outcomes, and their observations of each client. In the care plans, each client’s identified needs or risk factors were noted and goal plans based on those needs were specified. There were 39 casefiles included in the case plan analysis<sup>14</sup>. Notably, no care plans were identified for youth who consented in 2019-20. In addition, no updated care plans were found in the casefiles in 2019-20.

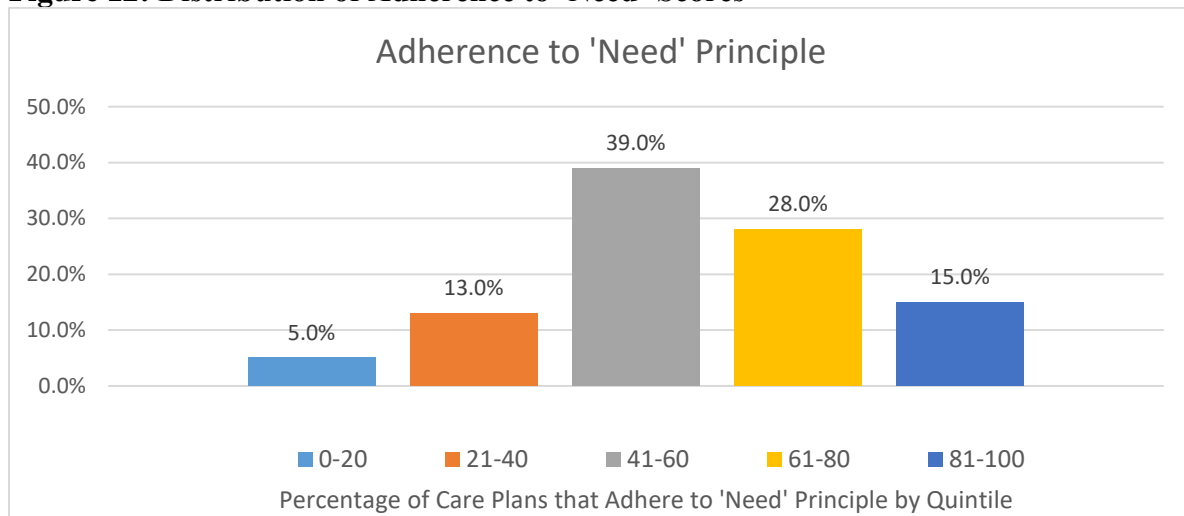
**Adherence to Need Principle.** To evaluate the adherence of the program to the ‘need’ principle, the percentage of risk factors noted in the care plan (compared to the total number of risk factors captured by the YLS/CMI: SV) was calculated for each client. For example, if the client scored high on 6 out of 8 YLS/CMI: SV items and 3 of them were noted in the care plan, the adherence to ‘need’ principle for that client was calculated as 50% ( $3/6 * 100 = 50$ ).

Based on the care plan review, the mean level of adherence to ‘need’ principle for the 39 clients was 57%. The highest mean level of adherence to the ‘need’ principle was in Deschambault Lake (61%) (see Table 17). For 57% of all clients, the level of adherence to the ‘need’ principle was lower than 60% (see Figure 12).

**Table 17: Adherence to ‘Need’ Principle by Community.**

| Adherence to ‘Need’ Principle<br>(Percentage of the Risk Factors Included in the Care Plans) |          |      |         |         |
|--|----------|------|---------|---------|
|  | <i>N</i> | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
| <b>Deschambault Lake</b>   | 10       | 61%  | 38%     | 83%     |
| <b>Pelican Narrows</b>   | 12       | 55%  | 17%     | 83%     |
| <b>Sandy Bay</b>   | 17       | 56%  | 14%     | 86%     |
| <b>Total</b>   | 39       | 57%  | 14%     | 86%     |

<sup>14</sup> A casefile needed to contain both a YLS/CMI: SV and case plan for inclusion in the case plan review.

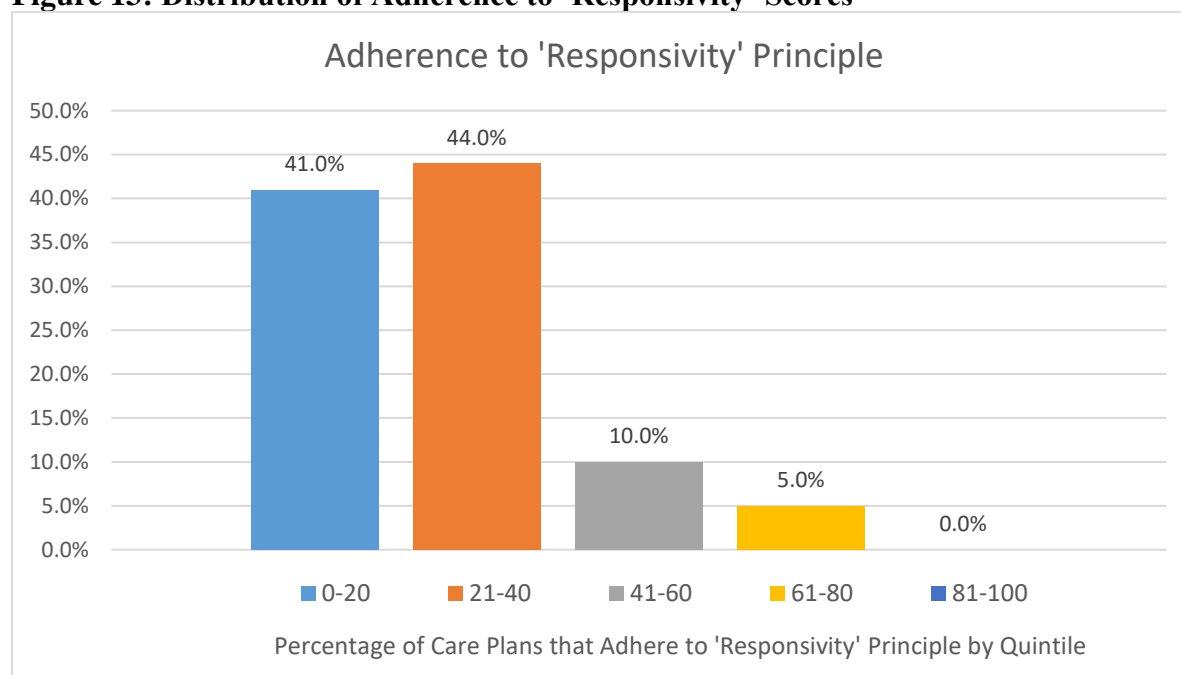
**Figure 12: Distribution of Adherence to ‘Need’ Scores**

**Adherence to Responsivity Principle.** The adherence to the ‘responsivity’ principle was calculated in a similar manner as adherence to the ‘need’ principle. Here, the percentage of risk factors addressed in the goal plans (as compared to the total number of risk factors identified on the YLS/CMI: SV) was calculated. For example, if the client scored high on 6 out of 8 items on the YLS/CMI: SV and 2 of the items were addressed in the goal plans, the adherence to the ‘responsivity principle for that client was calculated as 33% ( $2/6 * 100 = 33$ ).

The mean level of adherence to ‘responsivity’ principle for the 39 clients was 25%. The highest mean level of adherence to ‘responsivity’ was in Sandy Bay (38%) and the lowest mean was in Pelican Narrows (10%; see Table 18). For 85% of the clients, the level of adherence to the ‘responsivity’ principle was lower than 40%. Moreover, the adherence to ‘responsivity’ was lower than 80% for all clients in the program (see Figure 13).

**Table 18: Adherence to ‘Responsivity Principle’ by Community**

| Adherence to ‘Responsivity’ Principle<br>(Percentage of the Needs Addressed in the Care Plans) |          |      |         |         |
|--|----------|------|---------|---------|
|  | <i>N</i> | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
| <b>Deschambault Lake</b>   | 10       | 22%  | 0%      | 43%     |
| <b>Pelican Narrows</b>   | 12       | 10%  | 0%      | 29%     |
| <b>Sandy Bay</b>   | 17       | 38%  | 14%     | 71%     |
| <b>Total</b>   | 39       | 25%  | 0%      | 71%     |

**Figure 13: Distribution of Adherence to ‘Responsivity’ Scores**

### 9.5.5 Interpretation

The NYVRP program model is based upon the principles of risk, need, and responsivity and specifies that an empirical risk assessment instrument should be completed with each youth to develop a case plan that targets their areas of risk at the required level of intensity. During 2017-18, a number of challenges were encountered that led to few YLS/CMI and LSI-SK/SPRA tools being completed. In response to these difficulties (and following the recommendations of the formative evaluation), the NYVRP project management implemented a new risk assessment process in January 2019 wherein the YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q were to be completed with all youth. This new risk assessment process has been very successful and the completion rates for risk assessments have increased substantially in all three communities. Indeed, YLS/CMI: SVs, POSITs, and ACE-Qs were completed with 84% of clients who were active between January 2019 to April 2020. These increased risk assessment completion rates are an important achievement in the delivery of the program; however, it should be noted that the risk assessment completion rates did drop off slightly in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19. In 2018-19, completion rates ranged from 89% to 91% depending on the specific assessment considered, whereas in 2019-20 completion rates ranged from 64% to 71%.

It is also important to note that the suite of risk assessment tools the program selected are complementary to each other. Research has shown the predictive validity of both the ACE-Q (Baglivio et al., 2015; Evans-Chase, 2014) and YLS/CMI: SV (Campbell et al., 2014) in terms of predicting offending among youth. In addition, there is empirical evidence indicating that ACE-Q scores are associated with an increased score on the LSI-R scale (Moore & Tatman, 2016). In our own analysis, there was a positive moderate relationship between the ACE-Q scores and YLS/CMI: SV scores ( $r = .49$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This shows that the findings of these two tools support

each other and that higher scores on one of the tools predicts higher scores on the other. Our known groups validation analysis also demonstrated that the risk assessment tools were able to differentiate among NYVRP clients in expected ways (e.g., clients with previous arrests/incarceration had higher scores on the YLS/CMI: SV and ACE-Q than those who did not). Therefore, the introduction of these new tools improved the capacity of the program to assess the risk levels and needs of the clients by increasing the completion rates without losing any validity.

The outcomes of all three risk assessment tools (YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and the ACE-Q) showed that nearly all of the NYVRP participants were high risk. Delinquent peer networks, personality/behaviour problems, a lack of positive recreational activities, antisocial attitudes, and poor educational and vocational status were among the most common risk factors that contributed to their high risk scores. In addition, risk factors, such as poor mental health, poor parental supervision, limited engagement in prosocial recreational activities, poor social skills, delinquent behaviour, and substance abuse frequently appeared in the youth's risk profiles.

Corrections also shared the risk assessment results that they completed for 19 NYVRP corrections-involved clients (via the Corrections Referral Form). Approximately half of the youth for which assessments were available were referred to the NYVRP by Corrections, whereas the other half were referred by the RCMP/community referral sources, indicating that many youth referred to the NYVRP were involved with the criminal justice system (not just those referred to the program by Corrections). Approximately two-thirds of the youth with completed LSI-SKs scored as high or very high risk, while all youth with completed SPRAs scored as high risk. The LSI-SK risk profile of youth mirrors the risk profile of the YLS/CMI: SV, with the same risk factors emerging as being most problematic for the youth. However, based on the SPRA results, it seemed that substance use was a greater issue for the older youth than the younger youth. Due to a limited sample size, a correlational analysis resulted in a low, non-significant correlation between the YLS/CMI: SV and LSI-SK (there was not enough variation in the SPRA scores to permit a correlational analysis). A visual inspection of the data suggested that there were some inconsistencies between youth's scores on the two assessments, with a quarter of the youth who were moderate risk on the LSI-SK scoring as high risk on the YLS/CMI: SV. In the future, additional analyses exploring the relationship between the two instruments would help to establish the concurrent validity of the two tools.

The ACE-Q revealed that the youth enrolled in the NYVRP have experienced a large amount of trauma during their lives, including living with someone who had substance abuse issues, witnessing household members hurt or threaten each other, being the target of insults or threats in their own house, experiencing harassment or bullying at school, being detained arrested or incarcerated, and witnessing violence at home, school, and in their neighborhood. Based on their ACE-Q scores, almost all youth met the criteria for referral for mental health counselling.

Experiencing adverse childhood events and childhood trauma is associated with increased risk for delinquency, violence, and mental health issues such as substance use, conduct disorders, and suicide attempts (Baglivio et al., 2015; Evans-Chase, 2014). Research has estimated that between 75% to 93% of youth entering the juvenile justice system have experienced some type of trauma (Baglivio et al., 2015; Costello et al., 2003, Dierkhising et al., 2013). The experiences asked in the ACE-Q have a cumulative effect on human development and the co-occurrence of these



elements in a youth's life leads to both proximal and distal negative outcomes, including delinquency, violence, and substance abuse. Research on juvenile offenders showed that offenders are 4 times more likely to have ACE scores of four or above than non-offenders and juvenile offenders with higher ACEs have a high risk of re-offending (Baglivio et al., 2014).

Beyond providing a risk score to determine program eligibility, the risk tools employed in the NYVRP were intended to inform care plans developed for the youth. In fact, assessing the criminogenic needs of the clients and addressing these needs through various programs and services were among the main objectives of the NYVRP. As such, the NYVRP's adherence to the 'need' and 'responsivity' principles of the RNR model was evaluated by comparing the care plans developed by Core Teams for each client to his/her results on the YLS/CMI: SV. Based on this analysis of the care plans, the adherence of the program to the 'need' and 'responsivity' principles were not at a satisfactory level. It was expected that the criminogenic needs identified on the YLS/CMI would be reflected in the care plans and that suitable goals for each client would be developed based on those needs. However, a substantial number of risk factors identified by the YLS/CMI: SV were not mentioned in the care plans. On average, only 57% of these risk factors were documented in the care plans. As a result, the necessary goals to address those risks and needs could not be developed and noted in the care plans of the clients. Reflective of this, only 25% of the risks factors identified on the YLS/CMI: SV had corresponding goals documented in the case plan. Another observation made during the care plan review was that the majority of the goals mentioned in the care plans were not comprehensive and explanatory. They did not address the specific conditions and characteristics of the clients in these plans and only briefly mentioned what should be done for the client to meet their criminogenic needs (e.g., refer to counselling, encourage to attend school, bring to gardening). Finally, there was no evidence that care plans were updated once the risk assessments had been completed for the youth. Moreover, there were no new care plans on file for youth who began the program in 2019-20. Thus, incorporating the results of the risk assessments into the youth's care plans in a meaningful manner and ensuring that care plans are in place for each youth reflect areas where improvements can be made to ensure adherence to RNR principles.

## 9.6 NYVRP Participant Characteristics

### 9.6.1 Evaluation Questions

- How many youth participated in the NYVRP?
- What are the characteristics of the youth participating in the NYVRP?
- Is the NYVRP reaching its target population?

### 9.6.2 Indicators

- *n* and % of youth referred
- *n* and % of youth consented
- *n* and % of active and inactive clients at yearend
- Demographic characteristics of youth (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity)
- *n* and % of youth that meet the eligibility criteria
- *n* and % of youth that are high risk

### 9.6.3 Data Sources

- Casefile Review

### 9.6.4 Results

#### *Referrals to the NYVRP*

**Overall Referrals.** Based on the casefile review, a total of 151 referrals<sup>15</sup> were made to the NYVRP by the end of November, 2019. Specifically, 90 referrals were made during the first year of program delivery (i.e., March, 2017 to March 31, 2018), 43 were made during the second year (April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019), and 18 were made during the final year (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020). The demographic characteristics of all referrals made to the NYVRP are summarized in Table 19.

Overall, an approximately equal number of referrals were received from community referral sources (e.g., schools, Holistic Health, ICFS, family; 38%) and the RCMP (36%). Corrections made slightly fewer referrals to the program (26%). There was a substantial increase in the proportion of referrals from community sources in 2019-20 (72%) compared to the previous years (i.e., 27% in 2017-18 and 47% in 2018-19). Conversely, the RCMP made substantially fewer referrals in 2019-20 (6%) compared to 2017-18 (43%) and 2018-19 (35%).

All of the youth referred to the program were Indigenous and the majority of youth were male (70%). Most youth were also between the ages of 12 to 17 years (74%). The average age of individuals referred to the NYVRP was 16 years.

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<sup>15</sup> Seven youth were referred to the NYVRP twice. Of these youth, three declined to participate in the program upon their first referral; two declined to participate following a second referral to the program (they had previously been deemed inactive); one did not consent following either referral; and one consented following both referrals to the program (the participant had stopped participating in the NYVRP in between the two referrals).

Data about the specific eligibility criteria that youth met were not available as referring agencies were not required to indicate the specific criteria that youth met on the referral forms. However, it does appear that all youth met the age requirement (i.e., that they must be between the ages of 12 to 24 years), with the exception of three youth. One youth was 25 years at the time she was referred to the program. This was the youth's second referral to the program, and she had been within the age criteria the first time she was referred. Two other youth were 11 years at the time of referral; one youth turned 12 within two weeks of his referral and the other was considered ineligible for the program. Further, staff perceptions about the eligibility criteria each youth met were available for 104 of the 151 referrals. Of these 104 youth, it was perceived that 70% had current/past involvement in violence, 67% were high risk, 24% were involved in gang activities, 19% were at risk for gang recruitment, and 11% did not meet the program eligibility criteria<sup>16</sup>.

**Table 19: Demographic Profile of NYVRP Referrals**

| Referrals               | Total<br>(N=151)<br>n(%) | 2017-18<br>(N=90)<br>n(%) | 2018-19<br>(N=43)<br>n(%) | 2019-20<br>(N=18)<br>n(%) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Referral Source</b>  |                          |                           |                           |                           |
| Community               | 57 (37.7%)               | 24 (26.7%)                | 20 (46.5%)                | 13 (72.2%)                |
| Corrections             | 39 (25.8%)               | 27 (30.0%)                | 8 (18.6%)                 | 4 (22.2%)                 |
| RCMP                    | 55 (36.4%)               | 39 (43.3%)                | 15 (34.9%)                | 1 (5.6%)                  |
| <b>Gender</b>           |                          |                           |                           |                           |
| Male                    | 105 (69.5%)              | 64 (71.1%)                | 29 (67.4%)                | 12 (66.7%)                |
| Female                  | 46 (30.5%)               | 26 (28.9%)                | 14 (32.6%)                | 6 (33.3%)                 |
| <b>Age<sup>17</sup></b> |                          |                           |                           |                           |
| 11 years                | 2 (1.5%)                 | 1 (1.3%)                  | 1 (2.6%)                  | ----                      |
| 12-14 years             | 47 (35.3%)               | 24 (31.2%)                | 15 (38.5%)                | 8 (47.0%)                 |
| 15-17 years             | 51 (38.3%)               | 28 (36.4%)                | 19 (48.7%)                | 4 (23.5%)                 |
| 18-20 years             | 20 (15.1%)               | 13 (16.9%)                | 3 (7.7%)                  | 4 (23.5%)                 |
| 21-24 years             | 12 (9.1%)                | 10 (13.0%)                | 1 (2.6%)                  | 1 (5.9%)                  |
| 25+ years               | 1 (.8%)                  | 1 (1.3%)                  | ----                      | ----                      |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>        |                          |                           |                           |                           |
| First Nation            | 129 (97.0%)              | 87 (96.7%)                | 42 (97.7%)                | 18 (100%)                 |
| Métis                   | 4 (3.0%)                 | 3 (3.3%)                  | 1 (2.3%)                  | ----                      |

**Referrals by Community.** An examination of referrals broken down by each community indicated that Pelican Narrows received the most referrals, followed by Sandy Bay and then Deschambault Lake. Overall, the RCMP was the primary referral source in both Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay, while community agencies were the primary referral source in Pelican Narrows. A contributing factor to this difference is that Pelican Narrows had a much more diverse referral base (and received referrals from a wide range of community agencies) compared to Deschambault Lake (where the vast majority of referrals came from the RCMP and corrections) and Sandy Bay (where most referrals came from the RCMP or education). Notably,

<sup>16</sup> The eligibility characteristics do not reflect mutually exclusive categories.

<sup>17</sup> Birthdates were missing for 1 Deschambault Lake, 7 Pelican Narrows, and 10 Sandy Bay participants.

in 2019-20, the majority of new referrals occurred in Sandy Bay (14/18 referrals or 78%), with most of these referrals coming from the school.

In terms of gender, Pelican Narrows had the fewest number of female referrals (22%) compared to Deschambault Lake (31%) and Sandy Bay (39%). Finally, Deschambault Lake had a somewhat older demographic with approximately 39% of its referrals being between the ages of 18 to 24 years compared to 21% in Pelican Narrows and 14% in Sandy Bay. Table 20 summarizes the demographic characteristics of all referrals by community and Table 21 identifies the specific referral agencies in each community by program year.

**Table 20: Demographic Profile of NYVRP Referrals by Community**

| <b>Referrals</b>       | <b>Deschambault Lake<br/>(N=42)<br/>n(%)</b> | <b>Pelican Narrows<br/>(N=55)<br/>n(%)</b> | <b>Sandy Bay<br/>(N=54)<br/>n(%)</b> |
|------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Referral Source</b> |  |  |                                      |
| Community              | 9 (21.4%)                                    | 26 (47.3%)                                 | 22 (40.7%)                           |
| Corrections            | 15 (35.7%)                                   | 18 (32.7%)                                 | 6 (11.1%)                            |
| RCMP                   | 18 (42.9%)                                   | 11 (20.0%)                                 | 26 (48.1%)                           |
| <b>Gender</b>          |  |  |                                      |
| Male                   | 29 (69.0%)                                   | 43 (78.2%)                                 | 33 (61.1%)                           |
| Female                 | 13 (31.0%)                                   | 12 (21.8%)                                 | 21 (38.9%)                           |
| <b>Age<sup>1</sup></b> |  |  |                                      |
| 11 years               | ----   | 1 (2.1%)                                   | 1 (2.3%)                             |
| 12-14 years            | 8 (19.5%)                                    | 20 (41.6%)                                 | 19 (43.2%)                           |
| 15-17 years            | 17 (41.5%)                                   | 17 (35.4%)                                 | 17 (38.6%)                           |
| 18-20 years            | 10 (24.4%)                                   | 6 (12.5%)                                  | 4 (9.1%)                             |
| 21-24 years            | 6 (14.6%)                                    | 4 (8.4%)                                   | 2 (4.6%)                             |
| 25+ years              | ----   | ----                                       | 1 (2.3%)                             |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>       |  |  |                                      |
| First Nation           | 42 (100%)                                    | 54 (98.2%)                                 | 51 (94.4%)                           |
| Métis                  | ----   | 1 (1.8%)                                   | 3 (5.6%)                             |

<sup>1</sup>Birthdates were missing for 1 Deschambault Lake, 7 Pelican Narrows, and 10 Sandy Bay participants.

**Table 21: Referral Agency by Community and Year**

| Referrals                    | Deschambault Lake (N=42)      |                               |                              | Pelican Narrows (N=55)        |                               |                              | Sandy Bay (N=54)              |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                              | Referred<br>2017-18<br>(n=22) | Referred<br>2018-19<br>(n=17) | Referred<br>2019-20<br>(n=3) | Referred<br>2017-18<br>(n=37) | Referred<br>2018-19<br>(n=17) | Referred<br>2019-20<br>(n=1) | Referred<br>2017-18<br>(n=31) | Referred<br>2018-19<br>(n=9) | Referred<br>2019-20<br>(n=14) |
| <b>Referral Source</b>       |                               |                               |                              |                               |                               |                              |                               |                              |                               |
| <b>Corrections</b>           | 7 (31.8%)                     | 4 (23.5%)                     | 3 (100%)                     | 14 (37.8%)                    | 4 (23.5%)                     | ----                         | 5 (16.1%)                     | ----                         | 1 (7.1%)                      |
| <b>RCMP</b>                  | 12 (54.5%)                    | 8 (47.1%)                     | ----                         | 7 (18.9%)                     | 4 (23.5%)                     | ----                         | 22 (67.7%)                    | 3 (33.3%)                    | 1 (7.1%)                      |
| <b>Education</b>             | ----                          | ----                          | ----                         | 8 (21.6%)                     | 8 (47.1%)                     | ----                         | 4 (12.9%)                     | 2 (22.2%)                    | 12 (85.7%)                    |
| <b>ICFS</b>                  | ----                          | ----                          | ----                         | 1 (2.7%)                      | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          |
| <b>Holistic</b>              | 2 (9.1%)                      | 5 (29.4%)                     | ----                         | 3 (8.1%)                      | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          |
| <b>Family</b>                | 1 (4.5%)                      | ----                          | ----                         | 3 (8.1%)                      | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          | 1 (11.1%)                    | ----                          |
| <b>Justice</b>               | ----                          | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          | 1 (5.9%)                      | ----                         | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          |
| <b>Legal Aid</b>             | ----                          | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          | ----                          | 1 (100%)                     | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          |
| <b>Community<sup>1</sup></b> | ----                          | ----                          | ----                         | 1 (2.7%)                      | ----                          | ----                         | ----                          | 3 (33.3%)                    | ----                          |

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<sup>1</sup>Specific referral agencies unknown

### *Consented Clients: Overall Demographics*

Of the 151 referrals to the NYVRP, 97 (i.e., 64%) consented to participate in the program. Youth who failed to consent to the NYVRP exhibited characteristics, such as avoiding the HAWW, refusing to participate in the NYVRP, being resistant to HAWWs' engagement efforts, and, in some cases, being transient. In addition, three of the youth were deemed ineligible. Of the 97 who did consent to participate in the NYVRP, 57 were enrolled in 2017-18, 28 were enrolled in 2018-19, and 12 were enrolled in 2019-20. Consequently, there was a smaller influx of new participants into the NYVRP in each subsequent year of the program.

Overall, youth who consented to participate in the NYVRP were primarily referred by the RCMP (39%) followed by other community agencies (34%) and corrections (27%). There were some differences in the primary referral source for each community, which are discussed in the next section. When looking at referral source by program year, the RCMP was the greatest referral source for consented clients in 2017-18, while community agencies provided the most referrals for consented clients in 2018-19 and 2019-20.

All youth enrolled in the program were Indigenous, and the majority were between the ages of 12 to 17 years (75%). On average, youth were 16 years upon consent to the NYVRP; however, youth enrolled in 2018-19 ( $M_{\text{age}}=15$  years) were slightly younger than youth enrolled in 2017-18 ( $M_{\text{age}}=16.3$  years) or in 2018-19 ( $M_{\text{age}}=17.3$  years). In terms of the gender composition of the program, most youth enrolled in the NYVRP were male (68%). See Table 22 for a summary of the demographic profile of NYVRP consented participants.

**Table 22: Demographic Profile of NYVRP Consented Participants ( $N=97$ )**

|                          | <b>Total<br/>(<math>N=97</math>)<br/><math>n(\%)</math></b> | <b>Enrolled<br/>2017-18<br/>(<math>N=57</math>)<br/><math>n(\%)</math></b> | <b>Enrolled<br/>2018-19<br/>(<math>N=28</math>)<br/><math>n(\%)</math></b> | <b>Enrolled<br/>2019-20<br/>(<math>N=12</math>)<br/><math>n(\%)</math></b> |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Consented Clients</b> |   |  |  |  |
| <b>Referral Source</b>   |   |  |  |  |
| Community                | 33 (34.0%)  | 13 (22.8%)   | 13 (46.4%)   | 7 (58.3%)  |
| Corrections              | 26 (26.8%)  | 17 (29.8%)   | 5 (17.9%)  | 4 (33.3%)  |
| RCMP                     | 38 (39.2%)  | 27 (47.4%)   | 10 (35.7%)   | 1 (8.3%)   |
| <b>Gender</b>            |   |  |  |  |
| Male                     | 66 (68.0%)  | 40 (70.2%)   | 18 (64.3%)   | 8 (66.7%)  |
| Female                   | 31 (32.0%)  | 17 (29.8%)   | 10 (35.7%)   | 4 (33.3%)  |
| <b>Age<sup>1</sup></b>   |   |  |  |  |
| 12-14 years              | 32 (33.4%)  | 19 (25.0%)   | 10 (35.7%)   | 3 (27.3%)  |
| 15-17 years              | 40 (41.6%)  | 20 (42.9%)   | 17 (60.7%)   | 3 (27.3%)  |
| 18-20 years              | 18 (18.7%)  | 12 (19.6%)   | 1 (3.6%)   | 4 (36.4%)  |
| 21-24 years              | 6 (6.1%)  | 5 (10.7%)  | ----   | 1 (9.1%)   |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>         |   |  |  |  |
| First Nation             | 94 (96.9%)  | 55 (96.5%)   | 27 (96.4%)   | 12 (100%)  |
| Métis                    | 3 (3.1%)  | 2 (3.5%)   | 1 (3.6%)   | ----   |

<sup>1</sup>A birthdate was missing for 1 participant.

A comparison of the demographic profile of the youth who were referred to the NYVRP and to those who consented revealed that an approximately equal proportion of males and females who were referred to the program also consented to it,  $\chi^2(1)=.28, p=.87^{18}$ . Further, there was no significant difference among corrections-, community-, and RCMP-referred youth in terms of their likelihood to participate in the program,  $\chi^2(2)=.84, p=.66$ . However, there was a marginally significant difference regarding the likelihood of youth belonging to different age groups to consent to the NYVRP,  $\chi^2(3)=7.29, p=.06$ . Youth who were 21 to 24 years were less likely to consent to the program than youth in the 15 to 17 years and 18 to 20 years age groups. (There was no difference in the rate of consent between youth 21 to 24 years and those who were 12 to 14 years).

### ***Consented Clients: Demographics by Community***

An examination of the profile of consented participants in each community revealed some differences across the three sites (see Tables 23 and 24). Deschambault Lake had the greatest number of consented clients, with 36 clients consenting over the three-year period in which the NYVRP was delivered compared to 30 clients in Pelican Narrows and 31 clients in Sandy Bay. Thus, it seems that client turnover is happening at a slower rate than anticipated in Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay. Moreover, Deschambault Lake had a much higher consent rate than the other communities—86% of referrals consented to participate in Deschambault Lake compared to 55% in Pelican Narrows and 57% in Sandy Bay. One HAWW in Deschambault Lake seemed to be particularly skilled at encouraging youth to participate in the program, which likely contributed to the higher consent rate in that community.

The majority of consented clients in Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay were referred by the RCMP (44% and 55%, respectively). The RCMP was one of the most engaged organizations in Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay, and the high number of referrals they made to the program was a reflection of their engagement. Conversely, community agencies were the top referral source for consented clients in Pelican Narrows (47%). This finding is likely due to the fact that there was a broader array of community agencies making referrals to the NYVRP in Pelican Narrows compared to Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay.

In terms of the NYVRP participants' ages, Deschambault Lake had a slightly older client population. The average age of clients in Deschambault Lake was 17 years compared to 15 years in Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay. In fact, Deschambault Lake was the only community that had several clients in the 21 to 24 years age range (Pelican Narrows had one client that fell in this age range). Interestingly, Sandy Bay was the only site that had an approximately equal proportion of male and female youth. Deschambault Lake (72%) and Pelican Narrows (77%) had predominantly male clients. These age and gender differences reflect the types of clients who

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<sup>18</sup>  $\chi^2$  denotes that a Pearson's chi-square analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a relationship between two categorical variables (i.e., whether the decision to consent to the program [yes consent, no consent] occurs more frequently among some groups of clients than others). The variables examined to assess differences in frequency of consent were gender (male, female), referral source (RCMP, corrections, community), and age group (12-14 years, 15-17 years, 18-20 years, 21-24 years).

$p$  is an indicator of whether a statistically significant difference in the frequency of consent between the groups was found. Specifically,  $p \leq .05$  indicates there was a statistically significant difference between two (or more) groups with respect to their likelihood to consent to participate in the NYVRP.

were in need of the NYVRP in each community; they do not reflect characteristics that the program explicitly targeted when seeking referrals.

**Table 23: Demographic Profile of NYVRP Consented Participants by Community**

| <b>Consented Clients</b> | <b>Deschambault Lake<br/>(N=36)<br/>n(%)</b> | <b>Pelican Narrows<br/>(N=30)<br/>n(%)</b> | <b>Sandy Bay<br/>(N=31)<br/>n(%)</b> |
|--------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Referral Source</b>   |  |  |                                      |
| Community                | 7 (19.4%)                                    | 14 (46.7%)                                 | 12 (38.7%)                           |
| Corrections              | 13 (36.1%)                                   | 11 (36.7%)                                 | 2 (6.5%)                             |
| RCMP                     | 16 (44.4%)                                   | 5 (16.7%)                                  | 17 (54.8%)                           |
| <b>Gender</b>            |  |  |                                      |
| Male                     | 26 (72.2%)                                   | 23 (76.7%)                                 | 17 (54.8%)                           |
| Female                   | 10 (37.8%)                                   | 7 (23.3%)                                  | 14 (45.2%)                           |
| <b>Age<sup>1</sup></b>   |  |  |                                      |
| 12-14 years              | 7 (20.0%)                                    | 12 (40.0%)                                 | 13 (43.3%)                           |
| 15-17 years              | 14 (40.0%)                                   | 13 (43.3%)                                 | 13 (43.3%)                           |
| 18-20 years              | 9 (25.7%)                                    | 4 (13.3%)                                  | 4 (13.3%)                            |
| 21-24 years              | 5 (14.3%)                                    | 1 (3.3%)                                   | ----                                 |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>         |  |  |                                      |
| First Nation             | 33 (100%)                                    | 29 (96.7%)                                 | 29 (93.5%)                           |
| Métis                    | ----   | 1 (3.3%)                                   | 2 (6.5%)                             |

<sup>1</sup>Age information was unavailable for 1 Deschambault Lake and 1 Sandy Bay clients.



**Table 24: Demographic Profile of Consented Participants by Community and Year**

| Consented Clients      | Deschambault Lake (N=36) |                          |                         | Pelican Narrows (N=30)   |                         |                         | Sandy Bay (N=31) <sup>1</sup> |                         |                         |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|                        | Consented 2017-18 (n=19) | Consented 2018-19 (n=14) | Consented 2019-20 (n=3) | Consented 2017-18 (n=20) | Consented 2018-19 (n=9) | Consented 2019-20 (n=1) | Consented 2017-18 (n=18)      | Consented 2018-19 (n=5) | Consented 2019-20 (n=8) |
| <b>Referral Source</b> |                          |                          |                         |                          |                         |                         |                               |                         |                         |
| Community              | 2 (10.5%)                | 5 (35.7%)                | ----                    | 8 (40.0%)                | 5 (55.6%)               | 1 (100%)                | 3 (16.7%)                     | 3 (60.0%)               | 6 (75.0%)               |
| Corrections            | 8 (42.1%)                | 2 (14.3%)                | 3 (100%)                | 8 (40.0%)                | 3 (33.3%)               | ----                    | 1 (5.6%)                      | ----                    | 1 (12.5%)               |
| RCMP                   | 10 (47.4%)               | 7 (50.0%)                | ----                    | 4 (20.0%)                | 1 (11.1%)               | ----                    | 14 (77.8%)                    | 2 (40.0%)               | 1 (12.5%)               |
| <b>Gender</b>          |                          |                          |                         |                          |                         |                         |                               |                         |                         |
| Male                   | 15 (78.9%)               | 8 (57.1%)                | 3 (100%)                | 14 (70.0%)               | 8 (88.9%)               | 1 (100%)                | 11 (61.1%)                    | 2 (40.0%)               | 4 (50.0%)               |
| Female                 | 4 (21.1%)                | 6 (42.9%)                | ----                    | 6 (30.0%)                | 1 (11.1%)               | ----                    | 7 (38.9%)                     | 3 (60.0%)               | 4 (50.0%)               |
| <b>Age<sup>1</sup></b> |                          |                          |                         |                          |                         |                         |                               |                         |                         |
| 12-14 years            | 3 (10.5%)                | 4 (28.6%)                | ----                    | 9 (45.0%)                | 3 (33.3%)               | ----                    | 7 (41.2%)                     | 3 (60.0%)               | 3 (37.5%)               |
| 15-17 years            | 5 (31.6%)                | 9 (64.3%)                | ----                    | 7 (35.0%)                | 6 (66.7%)               | ----                    | 8 (47.7%)                     | 2 (40.0%)               | 3 (37.5%)               |
| 18-20 years            | 6 (21.1%)                | 1 (7.1%)                 | 2 (100%)                | 4 (20.0%)                | ----                    | ----                    | 2 (11.8%)                     | ----                    | 2 (25.0%)               |
| 21-24 years            | 5 (5.3%)                 | ----                     | ----                    | ----                     | ----                    | 1 (100%)                | ----                          | ----                    | ----                    |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>       |                          |                          |                         |                          |                         |                         |                               |                         |                         |
| First Nation           | 19 (100%)                | 14 (100%)                | 3 (100%)                | 19 (95.0%)               | 9 (100%)                | 1 (100%)                | 17 (94.4%)                    | 4 (80.0%)               | 8 (100%)                |
| Métis                  | ----                     | ----                     | ----                    | 1 (5.0%)                 | ----                    | ----                    | 1 (5.6%)                      | 1 (20.0%)               | ----                    |

<sup>1</sup> Age information was unavailable for 1 Deschambault Lake and 1 Sandy Bay client.

**Days to Consent.** Overall, the median number of days it took for youth to consent to the NYVRP once referred to the program was 20 days (or just under three weeks). The number of days to consent ranged from 0 to 231 days (see Table 25).

**Table 25: Number Days to Consent by Year**

|                | Overall<br>(N=97) | 2017-18<br>(N=57) | 2018-19<br>(N=28) | 2019-20<br>(N=12) |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Median</b>  | 20.0 days         | 16.0 days         | 21.0 days         | 18.0 days         |
| <b>Mean</b>    | 26.3 days         | 24.2 days         | 32.9 days         | 20.8 days         |
| <b>Minimum</b> | 0 days            | 0 days            | 0 days            | 0 days            |
| <b>Maximum</b> | 231 days          | 97 days           | 231 days          | 75 days           |

According to the NYVRP service delivery process, 6 weeks is allocated for obtaining consent from corrections-referred clients, while 3 weeks is allocated for obtaining consent from community- and RCMP-referred clients. In line with the presupposition that consent will be gained more readily from community-referred youth, community-referred youth (*Med*=16 days) consented to the program approximately four to five days earlier than either corrections-referred (*Med*=20 days) or RCMP-referred (*Med*=21 days) youth (see Table 26). However, by the 3-week mark, more than half of all community-referred and RCMP-referred youth and nearly three-quarters of corrections-referred youth had consented. Further, by the 6-week mark more than 75% of community-referred and RCMP-referred youth and almost all corrections referrals had consented (see Table 27).

In terms of abiding by the timelines set out by the program for obtaining consent, the median number of days for community and RCMP referrals fell within the 3-week timeframe allocated for obtaining consent, while the median number of days for obtaining consent from corrections referrals fell well within the 6-week timeframe. That being said, for all referral types, there were cases where consent was obtained beyond the recommended 3- to 6-week consent period. In fact, it took up to 33 weeks to obtain consent from one individual. Finally, there were no significant differences across the three communities in terms of the average number of days it took youth to consent to participate in the NYVRP,  $F(2, 50.14)=.75, p=.48^{19}$ . Table 28 presented a summary of the mean and median days to consent by program year.

**Table 26: Number Days to Consent by Referral Source**

|                | Community<br>(N=33) | Corrections<br>(N=26) | RCMP<br>(N=38) |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| <b>Median</b>  | 15.5 days           | 20.0 days             | 21 days        |
| <b>Mean</b>    | 30.2 days           | 19.6 days             | 27.4 days      |
| <b>Minimum</b> | 0 days              | 0 days                | 0 days         |
| <b>Maximum</b> | 231 days            | 97 days               | 85 days        |

<sup>19</sup> *F* denotes that an analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical analysis was conducted. ANOVA compares the mean scores of three or more groups to determine if one group has a significantly higher score than one or more other groups. In this case, the number of days it took for youth to consent to the NYVRP in each community (Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay) was compared to see if consent occurred more quickly in one community compared to another.

**Table 27: Number of Weeks for NYVRP Referrals to Consent**

| <b>Number of<br/>Weeks<br/>From Referral</b> | <b>Community (n=33)<br/>Total % Consented</b> | <b>Corrections (n=26)<br/>Total % Consented</b> | <b>RCMP (n=38)<br/>Total % Consented</b> |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>1</b>                                     | 42%   | 27%   | 22%                                      |
| <b>2</b>                                     | 47%   | 46%   | 32%                                      |
| <b>3</b>                                     | 56%   | 73%   | 54%                                      |
| <b>4</b>                                     | 71%   | 85%   | 62%                                      |
| <b>5</b>                                     | 77%   | 89%   | 70%                                      |
| <b>6</b>                                     | 79%   | 92%   | 76%                                      |
| <b>7</b>                                     | 79%   | 96%   | 78%                                      |
| <b>8</b>                                     | 82%   | 96%   | 81%                                      |
| <b>9</b>                                     | 85%   | 96%   | 95%                                      |
| <b>10</b>                                    | 91%   | 96%   | 95%                                      |
| <b>11</b>                                    | 94%   | 96%   | 97%                                      |
| <b>12</b>                                    | 94%   | 96%   | 97%                                      |
| <b>13</b>                                    | 94%   | 96%   | 100%                                     |
| <b>14</b>                                    | 94%   | 100%  | 100%                                     |
| <b>22</b>                                    | 97%   | 100%  | 100%                                     |
| <b>33</b>                                    | 100%  | 100%  | 100%                                     |

**Table 28: Number of Days to Consent by Referral Source and Program Year**

| Days to Consent | Community Referrals (N=33) |                   |                  | Corrections Referrals (N=26) |                  |                  | RCMP Referrals (N=38) |                   |                  |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
|                 | 2017-18<br>(n=13)          | 2018-19<br>(n=13) | 2019-20<br>(n=7) | 2017-18<br>(n=17)            | 2018-19<br>(n=5) | 2019-20<br>(n=4) | 2017-18<br>(n=27)     | 2018-19<br>(n=10) | 2019-20<br>(n=1) |
| <b>Median</b>   | 13 days                    | 27 days           | 16 days          | 17 days                      | 17.5 days        | 20 days          | 22.0 days             | 21 days           | 0 days           |
| <b>Mean</b>     | 20.4 days                  | 43.5 days         | 25.1 days        | 21.6 days                    | 15 days          | 18.3 days        | 27.7 days             | 29.7 days         | 0 days           |
| <b>Minimum</b>  | 0 days                     | 0 days            | 0 days           | 0 days                       | 4 days           | 13 days          | 0 days                | 5 days            | 0 days           |
| <b>Maximum</b>  | 69 days                    | 231 days          | 75 days          | 97 days                      | 21 days          | 20 days          | 85 days               | 71 days           | 0 days           |

**Duration in NYVRP.** As of March 20, 2020, 27 youth were active in the program and 5 had graduated. Moreover, of the 27 active youth, staff thought 5 of those youth were ready to graduate from the program at the time the NYVRP ended. The remaining youth files ( $n=65$ ) were deemed inactive/closed due to reasons such as:

- A lack of participation in the program, including avoidance of the HAWW ( $n=32$ )
- Moving to another community ( $n=5$ )
- Being phased out after being in the program for the allowed length of time ( $n=5$ )
- Being incarcerated ( $n=2$ )

It is unclear why the remaining 21 youth stopped participating in the program, as a reason was not documented in their casefiles.

The 27 participants who were active in the program on March 20, 2020 had been in the program an average of 452 days or approximately 15 months (with their duration in the program ranging from 113 to 1,085 days [2.9 years]). Presumably, some of these youth were being phased out of the program; however, the available program documentation did not systematically document which youth were being phased. Notably, 44% of active participants had been in the program for less than 12 months, 26% had been in the program for 12 to <18 months, 15% had been in the program for 18 to <24 months, and 15% had been in the program for 24 to 36 months. Thus, nearly one-third of the participants had been in the program longer than the intended enrollment period of 18 months.

The 10 participants who graduated from the NYVRP had been enrolled in the program for an average of 396 days (range =113 to 963 days) or approximately 13 months. Overall, far fewer clients have graduated from the NYVRP than would be expected at the end of 2019-20, with only 10% of consented clients considered to have graduated from the program. Specifically, six clients from the first cohort of 57 youth graduated, no clients graduated from the second cohort of 28 youth, and four clients were considered to graduate from the final cohort of 12 youth (see Table 30). The criteria that youth had to meet in order to be considered graduates was not well-specified in program documentation, which could have contributed to the lower than expected graduation rates. At the conclusion of the program, the remaining 87 youth were considered inactive or closed due to reasons, such as the program ending while still actively participating in it (25%), lack of participation in the NYVRP (37%), moving to a new community (6%), being phased out of the program after being in it for the allowed length of time (6%), being incarcerated (2%), or unknown reasons (24%).

**Table 30: Number of Active, Graduated, and Dropout Clients by Cohort**

|                | Consents<br>( <i>n</i> ) | Active<br>March 31,<br>2018 ( <i>n</i> ) | Active<br>March 31,<br>2019 ( <i>n</i> ) | Active<br>March 20,<br>2020 ( <i>n</i> ) | Total<br>Graduates    | Total<br>Number of<br>Dropouts <sup>4</sup><br>( <i>n</i> ) |
|----------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------|---|
| <b>2017-18</b> | 57                       | 39                                       | 19                                       | 4  | 6 <sup>1</sup>        | 48  |
| <b>2018-19</b> | 28                       | n/a                                      | 19                                       | 11                                       | ----                  | 17  |
| <b>2019-20</b> | 12                       | n/a                                      | n/a                                      | 12                                       | 4 <sup>2</sup>        | 0   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>97</b>                | 39                                       | 38                                       | 27                                       | <b>10<sup>3</sup></b> | <b>65</b>   |

<sup>1</sup>One youth was considered “active” up until March 20, 2020.

<sup>2</sup>Four youth were also considered “active” up until March 20, 2020.

<sup>3</sup>In total, five of these youth were considered “active” up until March 20, 2020.

<sup>4</sup>Dropouts = Consented clients – active clients – graduates (excluding clients already counted in the active category).

Participants who were inactive (and who can be considered program dropouts) participated in the program for an average of 339 days or approximately 11 months (with participation ranging from 14 to 903 days). Youth in Sandy Bay ( $M=473$  days) remained in the program significantly longer than youth in Pelican Narrows ( $M=305$  days) and Deschambault Lake ( $M=200$  days) before becoming inactive,  $F(2, 52)=8.11, p=.001$ .

Table 31 presents a summary of the cumulative number of targeted and actual participants in the NYVRP. NYVRP had a target of enrolling 50 youth in the program during each first year of program delivery. It achieved this target in 2017-18, but only enrolled approximately half the number of anticipated clients in 2018-19 and one-quarter of the anticipated number of clients in 2019-20. Further, 67% of youth who ever consented to participate in the NYVRP dropped out.

**Table 31: Cumulative Number of Targeted, Consented, Active, Graduated, and Dropout Clients**

|                | Targeted<br>Number of<br>Participants ( <i>n</i> ) | Total Consented<br>Youth at<br>Yearend ( <i>n</i> ) | Total Active<br>Clients at<br>Yearend ( <i>n</i> ) | Total<br>Graduates<br>at<br>Yearend<br>( <i>n</i> ) | Total<br>Dropouts<br>at<br>Yearend<br>( <i>n</i> ) |
|----------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>2017-18</b> | 50   | 58  | 39   | 0   | 19   |
| <b>2018-19</b> | 100  | 84  | 38   | 3   | 43   |
| <b>2019-20</b> | 150  | 97  | 27   | 10 <sup>1</sup>                                     | 65   |

<sup>1</sup>Five of these youth were also considered active at yearend but were deemed ready to graduate by staff.

**Adherence to Program Eligibility Criteria.** As stated earlier, referring agencies were not required to specify the specific eligibility criteria each referred youth met. In addition, the eligibility criteria that each youth met was not systematically tracked in program documentation. Thus, it is difficult to determine the extent to which NYVRP clients meet the program eligibility criteria; however, the following observations can be made.

All consented youth, met the age requirements of the program (i.e., that youth be between the ages of 12 to 24 years). In terms of the youth’s current or past history of violence, involvement in

gang-related activities, or being at risk of gang-involvement, NYVRP staff perceptions<sup>20</sup> were available for 87 of the 97 clients included in the present analysis. Among the 87 youth, 9% ( $n=8$ ) were not perceived to meet any of the violence and gang-related criteria required for eligibility in the program; however, documentation in the casefiles (i.e., a police incident report and YLS/CMI: SV assessments) suggests that three of these youth did in fact meet the eligibility criteria. Otherwise, the remaining youth ( $n=79$ ) were perceived to meet the eligibility criteria. Specifically, it was believed 66% had current or past involvement in violence, 54% were high risk, 18% were at risk for gang-involvement, 16% were engaged in gang-related activities, and 14% engaged in antisocial or pro-criminal behaviours. Taken together, there is evidence that at least 85% ( $n=82$ ) met the eligibility criteria of displaying violent behaviours or being at-risk of gang involvement. It is possible that the remaining participants also met the eligibility criteria, but data was unavailable to verify their eligibility.

To be eligible to participate in the NYVRP, youth are also supposed to be high risk, as demonstrated by an empirical risk assessment. Risk scores were available for 49 youth. The YLS/CMI: SV results for these 49 youth indicated that 92% scored as high risk. The remaining youth scored as moderate risk (see Section 9.5). Further, on the POSIT, the majority of clients scored as high risk on several, if not all, of the 10 subscales. Finally, ACE-Q scores for 80% of the 49 youth were six or higher, which is the cut-off used in criminal justice research for being at high risk for offending. All of the youth who had risk assessments completed met the criteria for being high risk on at least one of the instruments.

### 9.6.5 Interpretation

By the end of the program on March 31, 2020, the NYVRP had received a total of 151 referrals and had a total of 97 clients consent to participate in the program. The NYVRP had a target of enrolling 50 youth each year; therefore, they should have had approximately 150 consented clients by the end of 2019-20. However, due to factors, such as extending the length of time participants can remain in the program and the high need level of youth enrolled, the program was shy of this target (by 35%).

Overall, the greatest referral source for the NYVRP in Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay was the RCMP (43% and 48%, respectively), while community sources (e.g., schools, Holistic Health, ICFS, self-referral by families) made the most referrals in Pelican Narrows (47%). Corrections was the second most common referral source in Deschambault Lake (36%) and Pelican Narrows (33%), while community agencies were the second most common referral source in Sandy Bay (41%). Notably, the proportion of referrals coming from community sources substantially increased in 2019-20 compared to the previous two years, while RCMP referrals decreased. This was largely due to the fact that most new clients in 2019-20 were in Sandy Bay where the school made the vast majority of the referrals. By the end of March 2020, Pelican Narrows had the greatest number of referrals ( $n=55$ ), followed by Sandy Bay ( $n=54$ ) and Deschambault Lake ( $n=42$ ).

Of the 97 clients who consented to participate in the program, 57 consented in 2017-18, 28 consented in 2018-19, and 12 consented in 2019-20. Overall, 64% of referred youth consented to

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<sup>20</sup> Includes information contained in the CDC Tracking Sheet and the intake forms for client enrolled in 2019-20.

participate in the NYVRP. A total of 27 youth were active at the end of March 2020; 15% of these clients had started the program in 2017-18, 41% started in 2018-19, and 44% were new in 2019-20. The 27 participants who were active in the program on March, 2020 had been in the program for an average of 15 months. Further, by the end of 2019-20, five youth had graduated from the NYVRP, while an additional five youth who were active at the program's end were identified as being ready to graduate as well. Clients were enrolled for an average of 13 months before they graduated. Consequently, only 10% of all youth who consented to participate in the program were considered to graduate from it. Among the remaining 87 youth who did not graduate, as noted above, 25% were still actively participating in the program when it ended, while the other youth's files were considered inactive or closed due to reasons, such as a lack of participation in the NYVRP (37%), moving to a new community (6%), being phased out of the program after being in it for the allowed length of time (6%), being incarcerated (2%), or unknown reasons (24%). Overall, inactive clients participated in the program for an average of 11 months. It is unclear why some youth who were phased out of the program were not considered graduates. In the future, the NYVRP should clarify the criteria for graduating from the program to bring greater transparency to this aspect of the program.

In general, the majority of youth who consented to participate in the NYVRP were male (68%), between the ages of 12 to 17 years (75%), and Indigenous (100%). A comparison of the demographic profile of the youth referred to the NYVRP and those who consented revealed that approximately the same proportion of males and females referred to the program also consented to participate. Similarly, there were no significant differences in the likelihood to consent based on the referral source (i.e., corrections, community, or RCMP). Youth who were 21 to 24 years, however, were less likely to consent to participate than those who were between the ages of 15 to 17 years or 18 to 20 years.

In terms of community level differences, Deschambault Lake had the greatest number of consented clients. Overall, this finding suggests that that client turnover is happening at a slower rate in Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay, likely because a number of clients at these sites were kept in the program beyond the recommended 12 to 18 months of participation. Moreover, Deschambault Lake also had the highest consent rate (86%) followed by Sandy Bay (57%) and Pelican Narrows (55%). Further, Deschambault Lake had an older demographic profile compared to the other communities; 40% of clients in Deschambault Lake were between the ages of 18-24 years compared to 17% in Pelican Narrows and 13% in Sandy Bay. Notably, Sandy Bay was the only site that had an approximately equal proportion of male and female youth enrolled in the program. All other sites had mostly male clients.

Once youth were referred to the NYVRP, it took them a median of 20 days to consent to participate. Further analyses revealed that community-referred youth consented at a faster rate (median of 13 days) than corrections- or RCMP-referred youth (median of 20 and 21 days, respectively). The program delivery model stated that consents from community-referred youth should be solicited within a 3-week timeframe whereas consents from corrections-referred youth should be obtained within 6 weeks. The median number of days for all referral types fell within these guidelines. However, these guidelines do not seem to be followed strictly and the NYVRP should consider permitting up to 10 weeks to obtain consent from clients, regardless of referral type, as it took up to 10 weeks to obtain 90% of the consents.



Finally, there is evidence that the majority of consented NYVRP clients met the program eligibility criteria. In terms of meeting the program's age requirement, all consented clients fell within the specified age range of 12 to 24 years. Referring agencies were not required to indicate the specific eligibility criteria youth met upon referral to the program; however, staff perceptions about the eligibility criteria each client met, combined with additional documentation in the casefiles, indicated that the majority of youth enrolled in the NYVRP were perceived to meet the eligibility criteria. Specifically, 82 of 97 youth (85%) were believed to have current or past involvement in violence, and/or be high risk, at risk for gang-involvement, engaged in anti-social behaviours, engaged in gang-related activities, or engaged in antisocial or pro-criminal behaviours. A final criterion for program eligibility was that the youth must be high risk. Risk scores were available for 49 youth. Among these youth, 92% scored as high risk on the YLS/CMI: SV; the majority of scored as high risk on several, if not all, of the 10 subscales of the POSIT; and 80% of the youth had ACE-Q Section 1 Scores that were six or higher, which is a marker of being at high risk for offending. Importantly, all of the youth who had completed risk assessments met the criteria for being high risk on at least one of the instruments.

In summary, while consistent data is not available for all 97 youth who consented to participate in the NYVRP, the data that is available indicates at least 85% ( $n=82$ ) of consented youth do meet the eligibility criteria. It is possible that even more youth meet the eligibility criteria, but there is a lack of documentation in the remaining 10 cases to determine this definitively. The relatively high rate of compliance to the program eligibility criteria is encouraging as past research has found that programs replicating the YVRP model are most likely to be successful when they recruit youth who have sufficiently high risk levels (i.e., as close to high risk as possible) to ensure the appropriateness of the intervention (vis-à-vis the risk principle of RNR; Public Safety Canada, 2018; Wortley, 2011).

## 9.7 NYVRP Program Delivery

### 9.7.1 Evaluation Questions

- To what extent is the NYVRP program delivery model implemented as intended?
- What programs and services were delivered through the NYVRP?
- To what extent do available resources match their service delivery needs?
- How often did participants access programming identified in their case management plans?
- What facilitated their access to programming? What barriers prevented their access to programming?
- What, if anything, would have improved their completion rate?
- What factors assist in the implementation of the program activities? What factors serve as barriers? What gaps in service delivery exist?

### 9.7.2 Indicators

- *n* of program components in place
- Average number of contacts per week with youth
- Non-traditional hours worked
- Caseloads of HAWWs in each community
- *n* of Core Team meetings
- % of agencies attending Core Team meetings
- *n* of action plans
- *n* and type of supports youth are connected with
- *n* of mentors and Elders
- Completeness of casefiles and reports
- Degree of community visibility and credibility

### 9.7.3 Data Sources

- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Document Review
- Casefile Review
- Observation

### 9.7.4 Results

In this section, the extent to which NYVRP staff adhered to the various aspects of the NYVRP program delivery model will be examined.

#### *Regular One-on-One Contact with Youth*

One of the key program services that NYVRP staff offered to the youth was frequent contact with them. The NYVRP Participant Survey suggested that HAWWs were in regular contact with the youth. Among the 7 youth who completed the survey, 71% (*n*=5) self-reported seeing their

HAWW three or more times a week, while the remaining 29% ( $n=2$ ) saw their HAWW two to three times per month.

Results from the stakeholder interviews also confirmed that NYVRP staff were regularly in contact with the youth and used this regular contact to engage the youth and establish trust, a process that often took a minimum of three to four months.

*It takes time to trust. Our youth have a big issue on trust...it really takes a while to build that trust, that relationship with that youth. They're always aware of what they're saying, especially around adults. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Most of the time they don't open up right away. It takes 3 to 4 months before they actually open up to us and help us understand them. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

One-on-one visits generally took place either in the home or when driving around the community. Importantly, stakeholders observed that part of staff's success with being able to conduct one-on-one visits in the home was due to their positions as respected members of the community (see Section 9.3). Both parents and the youth afforded the HAWWs a certain level of trust as a result the HAWWs' reputations in the communities and allowed them to come into their homes. Moreover, NYVRP staff indicated that the home visits were helpful for engaging in goal-setting activities with the youth (i.e., helping them identify what they want to accomplish in the future), connecting with the parents, and completing the assessments.

*We talk about the goal setting. What I do with them is...I get them to post pictures of themselves and to think about: what do I want to do within 3 months? 6 months? Where do they want to be when they graduate their grade 12? I talk to them about, down the road, okay, are you planning to finish your grade 12? (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*This is where we get our assessments done and its also where we get to chance to talk with the parents. When we do the home visits, the parent is usually home. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

In addition to having one-on-one contact with the youth, the HAWWs also worked with they youth in small groups. This was not in line with the NYVRP program delivery model which emphasized one-on-one contact but, rather, was staff preference for some types of activities (e.g., taking the youth snaring). Consequently, some stakeholders were concerned that youth were not receiving an adequate level of one-on-one time. To address this concern, NYVRP management directed staff to focus on one-on-one visits rather than group work with youth; however, the available evidence suggests that some group work still occurred.

*I don't know if it was... high numbers and not wanting to leave some of the kids out, but the kids aren't getting that one-on-one that was really a purpose. That was a big issue. (Corrections)*

### *Non-Traditional Hours of Work*

The document review and stakeholder interviews indicated that staff have flexible working hours to ensure that they are available during the times of day that the youth are most vulnerable. In fact, it was perceived that staff were available “24/7” for the youth, indicating a flexible approach to working with youth, regardless of the time of day (or night). For instance, staff would be available to youth when crises occurred after hours, provided youth with rides home if they were out too late, and assist the police with matters relating to the youth, if needed and appropriate.

*I saw them out after hours...and when there would be a situation where they could help us out, they were there. On weekends and evenings, you know, you saw them.*  
(Community Stakeholder)

*If we had picked somebody up and they were in cells, we would give them a call and let them know that we're here. Depending on the situation, they would come in have a chat, what are you doing, what the hell you doing that brought you in here. Not to share anything illegal, maybe just an arm of support.* (RCMP)

In fact, more than one NYVRP staff made a comment similar to the following: “*I’ve always had my phone on. Ever since the program started, I have it on. They will message me in the middle of the night sometimes.*”

### *Caseloads*

It was originally anticipated that there would be a caseload of 15 active youth in each community shared among two HAWWs, resulting in an individual caseload of 7 to 8 youth each. NYVRP staff’s caseloads varied each month, depending on the number of clients who have consented to participate in the program and who have been deemed inactive. Therefore, to provide an estimate of the caseload staff have been carrying, the average caseload for each HAWW was determined using information reported by the MOPO and HAWWs at monthly update meetings and Oversight meetings.<sup>21</sup> The caseload information presented in Table 32 reflects consented, active clients only.

**Table 32: Average Caseload of HAWWs by Community and Program Year**

| Caseload of HAWWs<br>(Average number of cases throughout the year) |                   |       |                 |                   |           |       |
|--|-------------------|-------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
|  | Deschambault Lake |       | Pelican Narrows |                   | Sandy Bay |       |
|  | HAWW1             | HAWW1 | HAWW1           | HAWW2             | HAWW1     | HAWW2 |
| <b>2017-2018</b>   | 5.8               | 5.8   | 6.3             | 6.8               | 5.9       | 6.7   |
| <b>2018-2019</b>   | 6.7               | 6.7   | 7.1             | 5.7               | 8.9       | 6.0   |
| <b>2019-2020</b>   | 9.9               | 0     | 8.0             | 4.5 <sup>22</sup> | 5.3       | 5.4   |

<sup>21</sup> For 2017-18, the first date caseload information was available was July 5, 2017.

<sup>22</sup> The table presents the average caseload across the full program year (2019-20). In Pelican Narrows, HAWW1 was employed throughout the year, whereas HAWW2 was employed only until October 2019. Thus, the caseloads

In 2019-20, the combined caseloads at each site were between 10 to 13 clients, which is slightly below the targeted caseload outlined by the NYVRP program delivery model. When there were two HAWWs in Pelican Narrows (March to October 2019) and Sandy Bay, the average caseload per HAWW was five to six clients. In Deschambault Lake, where there was only one HAWW throughout the year, and Pelican Narrows where there was only one HAWW between November 2019 to March 2020, the average caseload was 10 to 11 clients. Thus, sites that had two HAWWs carried caseloads that were lower than expected, while sites that had one HAWW carried caseloads that were higher than expected.

### ***Core Teams***

**Core Team Meeting Attendance and Participation Rates.** The purpose of Core Teams is for HAWWS to work in partnership with local community agencies to discuss what referrals the NYVRP should accept, develop care plans (i.e., case plans) for youth admitted into the program, and assist with implementing and monitoring the care plans developed for each youth. It was hoped that the agencies involved with a given youth would share information that could be used to tailor his/her case plan to meet his/her needs using the available community resources.

Table 32 outlines the total number of Core meetings held throughout the three years program delivery occurred. Considerably fewer Core meetings were held in 2018-19 and 2019-20 compared to 2017-18; however, it was determined midway through the first year of program delivery that Core meetings would be held only once a month rather than weekly. Therefore, only a maximum of 12 Core meetings were expected to be held in 2018-19 and 2019-20. In 2019-20, Deschambault Lake held 83% of the expected number of meetings, which was a sizeable increase in the number of meetings held compared to 2018-19. In contrast, Pelican Narrows only held 42% of expected meetings, which was a substantial decrease from the number of meetings held the previous year—five meetings were cancelled in 2019-20 due to a lack of attendance. Finally, Sandy Bay held 75% of expected meetings, which is fairly consistent with the proportion of meetings held the previous year.

**Table 32: Number of Core Meetings by Community and Program Year**

|                          | Number of Core Meetings |           |         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|
|                          | 2017-2018               | 2018-2019 | 2019-20 |
| <b>Deschambault Lake</b> | 16                      | 6         | 10      |
| <b>Pelican Narrows</b>   | 14                      | 9         | 5       |
| <b>Sandy Bay</b>         | 21                      | 10        | 9       |

The types of agencies that participated in the Core Team varied by each community, as did the participation rates of the agencies. Tables 33 to 35 present the percentage of Core meetings each partner agency attended. In 2019-20, the majority of the agencies decreased their attendance compared to the previous year, although there were notable exceptions to this trend. For instance, the RCMP attended all meetings in Pelican Narrows whereas, in the previous year, they only

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from April to October, 2019 for each HAWW1 and HAWW2, respectively, were 6.3 and 6.4. From November 2019 to March 2020, HAWW1 had an average caseload of 11.3.

attended 50% of meetings. In Sandy Bay, Corrections and Restorative Justice attended one-third of meetings held compared to zero or one meetings the year before.

In Deschambault Lake, most Core Team meetings consisted of the HAWW and one other agency (either the RCMP or Corrections). Notably, the RCMP stopped participating regularly in Core Team meetings when the Sergeant who had been participating transferred to another location. In Pelican Narrows, the RCMP had the highest and most consistent attendance at the meetings. Corrections and Education attended sporadically, while ICFS and Holistic did not attend any meetings. In Sandy Bay, the RCMP attended all Core Team meetings and Education attended the majority of meetings. The other agencies (i.e., Corrections, ICFS, MCRRHA, restorative attendance) attended approximately one-third of the meetings.

**Table 33: Agency Attendance (%) at Deschambault Lake Core Meetings by Program Year**

| Agencies       | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 | 2019-20 |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Corrections    | 43.8%     | 50%       | 60%     |
| RCMP           | 68.8%     | 83.3%     | 40%     |
| Education      | 25%       | 33.3%     | 10%     |
| ICFS           | 6.3%      | 0         | 0       |
| Holistic       | 25%       | 50%       | 0       |
| Justice Worker | 6.3%      | 0         | 0       |

**Table 34: Agency Attendance (%) at Pelican Narrows Core Meetings by Program Year**

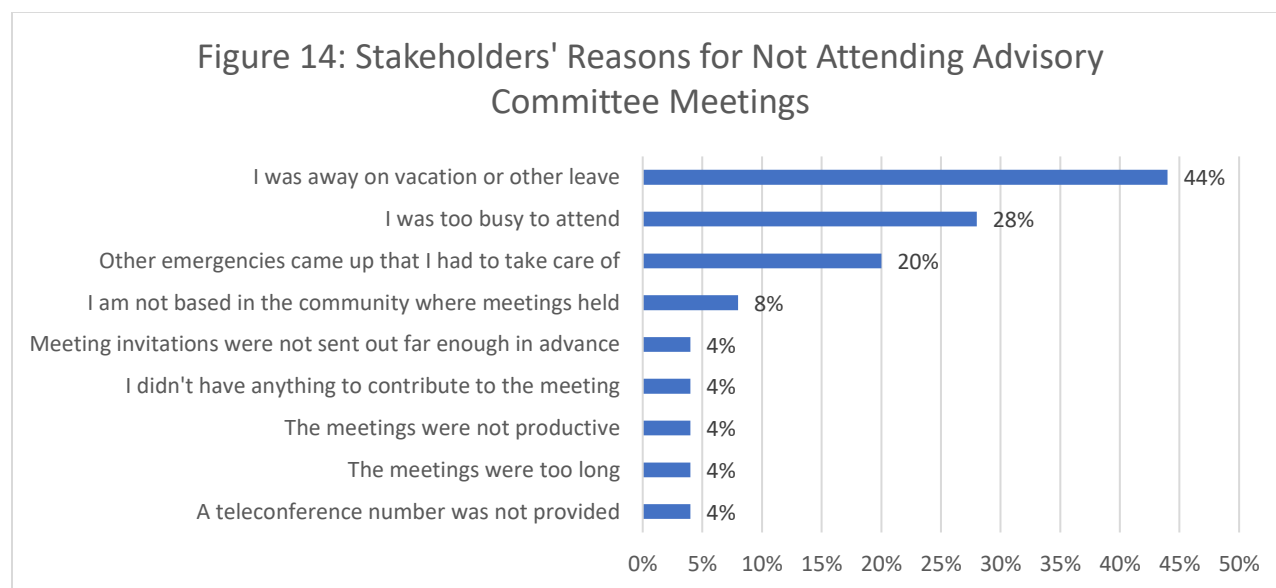
| Agencies    | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 | 2019-20 <sup>23</sup> |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Corrections | 28.6%     | 66.7%     | 40%                   |
| RCMP        | 50%       | 55.6%     | 100%                  |
| Education   | 57.1%     | 66.7%     | 40%                   |
| ICFS        | 7.1%      | 0         | 0                     |
| Holistic    | 50%       | 33.3%     | 0                     |
| Elder       | 57.1%     | 88.9%     | 0                     |

**Table 35: Agency Attendance (%) at Sandy Bay Core Meetings by Program Year**

| Agencies                  | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 | 2019-20 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Corrections               | 33.3%     | 0         | 33.3%   |
| RCMP                      | 100%      | 100%      | 100%    |
| Education                 | 76.2%     | 90%       | 77.8%   |
| ICFS                      | 0         | 0         | 11.1%   |
| MCRRHA                    | 76.2%     | 70%       | 44.4%   |
| Restorative Justice       | 66.7%     | 10%       | 33.3%   |
| Elder                     | 0         | 40%       | 0       |
| Community Resource Centre | 0         | 20%       | 0       |

<sup>23</sup> Table reflects percentage of meetings agencies attended for meetings that took place; five meetings were cancelled due to “no shows.”

**Declining Participation in Core Team Meetings.** The Community Stakeholder Survey examined why participation in Core Team meetings had decreased over the last year. Fifteen (of 25) survey respondents had participated in Core Team meetings in the past year. Of these respondents, 40% had attended most meetings, 16% had attended half the meetings, 12% had attended a few meetings, and 8% had attended no meetings. Figure 14 presents the list of reasons stakeholders provided for not attending Core Team meetings. The most common reason stakeholders provided for not attending Core Team meetings was being away on vacation or leave (44%;  $n=11$ ) followed by being too busy to attend (28%;  $n=7$ ) and having other emergencies to take care of (20%;  $n=5$ ). Reasons related to a lack of organization also were endorsed, such as meetings being too long or not productive or a teleconference number not being provided. Respondents' reasons for not attending Core Team meetings (and the frequency at which those reasons appeared in the data) mapped closely onto the reasons for not attending Advisory Committee meetings, suggesting that the reasons why individuals do not participate in meetings are consistent across meeting types.



**Perceptions of Core Team Functioning.** The stakeholder interviews elaborated on how the Core Team functioned and aspects of the Core Teams that worked well and those that could be improved. In general, stakeholders described that the Core Teams tended to focus on reviewing the clients and discussing “*how well they were doing, pros/cons, and anything new that might arise*” (Community Stakeholder). Most stakeholders valued this information about the youth (much of which came from the RCMP); however, some Corrections stakeholders did not find this information helpful (as they could access it themselves). One Corrections stakeholder commented that the focus should be on finding future solutions for the youth rather than on their past behaviours.

*Core was always informative...you are always learning something about their clients.*  
(Corrections)

*At the board, we go through all the clients and stuff and we have sharing, nice and open. When we end up dealing with clients, we would let them know whenever we have to do*

*something with the clients. Or we would help with Core process. So they know everything that some of their clients were up to and that they share with us and how that might affect us. (Community Stakeholder)*

*It kept everybody on the same page, it kept everybody involved. (Community Stakeholder)*

*All we did was talk about the youth and what they've done recently. It was basically the police talking about what new charges they've gotten, and I was talking about their reporting and how they've been doing. To me, it didn't seem too helpful or useful, there could have been more structure around what to do and not what they have done. They were just listing things, I can look at the computer and see what they've got for charges. The focus should be on solutions and it didn't seem like it, they were just listing those things it seemed. (Corrections)*

In addition to the youth's recent interactions with the RCMP or Corrections, agencies would also share information about programming or other opportunities they were offering in which the NYVRP clients could participate. Some stakeholders, particularly those in Sandy Bay, commented that the Core Teams helped the staff determine how to address issues faced by the youth.

*The ones that came, they would give us the programming that we needed...they would say there's this mental health thing being offered. They were relaying information to us that was useful for programming for the kids and giving us different perspectives on how to address an issue, a problem. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*I think all of our Core members have done their part and given what we need. They're always bringing something new to the table or even the programs that they can offer, especially in the school. They have started another pilot project there in the school—mental health capacity building. They do a lot of programming and the principal has invited us to put the youth in there, they don't even have to be in school. He said that they are more than welcome to join in the programming that we offer. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

One of the elements of the case management process that Core Teams were supposed to assist with was developing care plans for youth. There were mixed perceptions as to whether Core Teams actively contributed to the development of care plans. It seemed that the agencies did actively describe the programming and supports they could offer the youth, but that the youth's risk factors were not explicitly discussed or were only discussed informally.

*There was no discussion of risk factors. (Corrections)*

*When it came down to actually doing them, we had the Core members fill in their part. They would say what they could offer to the participant. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*We're supposed to come up with care plans when we have the Core Teams. I'll have the RCMP write how they will help this guy out in the future, and Health. They write stuff*



*down and I do it. I tell them: we have to work on these care plans for the youth, it's a must. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*When it went to the Core Team, agencies volunteered to help with some of the risk factors and sign off on them. Like RCMP would say talk to him about RCMP relations – like how they view the RCMP. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*We would – I think it was more informal. We would talk about each kid and what was going on with them. We could fill in blanks with each other and talk about going forward as well or what each person was going to do. (Corrections)*

Overall, the majority of stakeholders involved in the Core Teams seemed to believe that the discussions about the youth, including the sharing of ideas about how to support them, were valuable. It was also perceived that the right people were at this table to address the needs of the youth.

*I think that having a case plan, which so many people are working on together, makes a huge difference, but then also having each other to again fill in the gaps...We're able to assist each other in different areas. (Corrections)*

*I think they had the right people around the table at the beginning who needed to be there, in terms of the most prominent needs areas/targets (e.g., education). (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Importantly, most stakeholders agreed that, if the NYVRP continued, Core Teams should be continued. For instance, one Corrections stakeholder stated, “*there is real value in the Core Team,*” while a HAWW commented, “*they help us with the kids.*” Even so, some suggestions were offered to further improve the functioning of the Core Teams in the future.

One suggestion was to introduce greater structure to the meetings, such as having an agenda for the meetings with a focus on discussing and modifying the care plans and problem-solving. There were also concerns that sometimes the discussions morphed into gossiping; consequently, it was also recommended that the meetings stay on topic more.

*Maybe just have like more structure – have a list of things we go over. I would go over the care plans and then modify them as needed.... the more ideas you have and the more voices you hear, the better. (Corrections)*

*Sometimes I'd get information but sometimes I felt like it was the people in the community just kind of gossiping. A lot of time it wouldn't necessarily stay on topic...In the future, I suggest being more strict about staying on topic, on time, and including all the partners. (Corrections)*

Some stakeholders also recommended that greater attention needed to be paid to confidentiality at the Core Team meetings and ensuring that agency representatives joining the meetings were there on a “need to know” basis. It was unknown whether stakeholders who had concerns about

the confidentiality of Core Team meetings shared these concerns with the NYVRP. However, ensuring that only representatives who had direct involvement with the youth would better protect the youth's confidentiality and allow the objectives of the Core Team to be met more effectively.

*I think sometimes people were there that shouldn't have been there... Sometimes a teacher would come. We were discussing youth that this teacher wasn't involved with. I thought sometimes the table was full of people who didn't contribute and didn't need to present. There should be guidance on who should be there. I know they had a big emphasis on partnership and everyone in the community being involved, but that was a lot of confidential discussion regarding case management too, which the person really had no part in. (Corrections)*

It was also suggested that, in order to better include the community youth workers/probation officers, additional consideration needed to be given to making sure that they could participate by telephone if they were not able to be in the communities for the meetings. This would include ensuring that a teleconference number is provided to the probation officers in advance, starting the teleconference on time, and facilitating the meetings in a way that would invite the participation of individuals joining by phone. It was also noted that as much notice should be provided as possible when cancelling meetings to ensure that staff do not needlessly travel to the communities for the meetings.

*I think geography is a challenge for our staff. We go there anyway but, with the meetings being as often as they are, we should have been utilizing technology a little bit more. I think those core meetings could have been done by phone more often, but then you need someone around the table who could have the set up the conference line, start on time, and keep things on track. (Corrections)*

*The Core Team meetings... this happened pretty frequently, I would respond to an email about the meeting and then they would never call. In my entire time, I only attended half a dozen because they were cancelled last minute or forgot to email me and include me in the meeting and all sorts of things. (Corrections)*

*Our staff would drive from Creighton out to Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay, and then the meeting would fall through. It was a colossal waste of our time... It's one thing to have a phone meeting not go through and you're sitting in an office and it's another when it just cost five hours of your day. (Corrections)*

Another suggestion for future Core Team meetings was to be strategic about the location of the meetings, particularly in Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay. For instance, in Sandy Bay, it was observed that meetings tended to have greater attendance at some locations (e.g., Mamawetan Board Room) versus others and it was recommended that meetings be held, whenever possible, in the location that facilitated the greatest levels of attendance. In contrast, in Pelican Narrows, the suggestion was made to alternate meetings at different locations to facilitate attendance by different agencies (e.g., the Band office, ICFS, Health Centre).

### *Care Plans for Youth*

Care plans were supposed to be developed for each youth enrolled in the NYVRP. Care plans were found for 57 (59%) of the 97 consented clients (see Table 36). Care plans were available for approximately 71% of the consented clients in Sandy Bay, 67% of the clients in Pelican Narrows, and 42% of clients in Deschambault Lake. Based on the casefile review, no new care plans were developed in 2019-20 (out of 12 newly consented clients). Based on the available information, it is unknown why care plans were not developed for all youth.

**Table 36: Cumulative Number of Care Plans for Consented Clients by Community**

|                             | Deschambault Lake<br>(N=36)<br>n(%) | Pelican Narrows<br>(N=30)<br>n(%) | Sandy Bay<br>(N=31)<br>n(%) |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Care Plans Available</b> | 15 (41.7%)                          | 20 (66.7%)                        | 22 (71.0%)                  |

The care plans included in the youth's casefiles were generally simple and straightforward. It is unclear the extent to which the care plans were informed by the risk assessments completed with the youth, as it appeared that many of the care plans were developed prior to the completion of the risk assessment tools. Instead, it seems that they were based upon information gathered through discussions with the youth, the community safety plan developed by Corrections for adjudicated youth, and information from Core Team members. Further, the care plans were supposed to be considered dynamic documents that could be modified to better meet the youth's needs as new information comes to light; however, based on the casefile review, there was little evidence that the casefiles were regularly updated. It was also unclear how often the care plans were reflected upon and used to guide the work completed with the youth.

### *Partnership with Corrections*

The initial program design specified that NYVRP staff should be in contact with Corrections at least weekly in addition to Core Team meetings. Given the important relationship between Corrections and the NYVRP to support the NYVRP (through referral of youth to the program and the case management responsibilities of Corrections for all corrections-referred youth), a discussion of the nature of the relationship between the organizations featured prominently in the interviews with Corrections stakeholders, as well as with NYVRP staff.

Specifically, many strengths of the partnership between Corrections and the NYVRP were mentioned. For instance, both stakeholder groups agreed the work done by the NYVRP supports the objectives Corrections tries to achieve with the adjudicated youth for whom they are responsible. For instance, several Corrections stakeholders indicated that the HAWWs provide collateral information that can be used when creating or modifying case plans, as well to verify what the youth are sharing with their probation officers. HAWWs familiarity with the communities were seen to be an asset in terms of their ability to share information with corrections. The sharing of information about common clients was thought to be mutually beneficial, as the NYVRP staff also acknowledged that the information shared by corrections helped them with their own work.

*The collateral info that I wouldn't get without them. It has been helpful, especially in creating the case plans or modifying them based on the info I get. It is very helpful because there is no other source that I can use like that and there is no other group doing that. The NYVRP's probably the most positive thing going in that community.* (Corrections)

*I mean they're a good resource in terms of because they live in the community and are more intimately familiar with the community, they were a good information source/collateral source for probation. I could use that to verify things that clients tell me. We don't always take them at their word if they have a history of being dishonest, so I could confirm something with them.* (Corrections)

In addition to sharing information about common clients, another asset of the NYVRP from the vantage point of Corrections is that the program is able to give the youth opportunities that Corrections cannot, especially with respect to involving them in prosocial activities, such as cultural activities and land-based learning.

*In terms of our work, we're not able to put in all the time that we would like with our clients doing leisure activities and that kind of stuff. It would be nice if we did, but we just don't have the time to spend, we have so many clients. Having them spend quality time with the kids, getting involved in cultural activities and snaring, that kind of stuff, is great.* (Corrections)

Corrections stakeholder also valued that the HAWWs were able to reinforce the same messages that they were trying to share with youth. Indeed, the NYVRP staff indicated that they try to encourage the youth to follow their conditions and to explain why it is important that they do not miss curfew.

*We talk about clients' incidents, their orders, like whether they're on electronic monitoring, CSO, curfew, and stuff like that. They let me know and I try to get it through the youth's head that they need to be in their home at that part of the night and to not to get charged. I talk with them about the consequences if they don't obey the law.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*We're just working on reducing their risk factors, the intervention strategies, and trying to give them the same guidance that [the HAWW] does, but just compared to her, in a more limited role and more disciplinarian also.* (Corrections)

Despite these positive aspects of the relationship between the NYVRP and Corrections, there was also a substantial amount of friction between the two agencies. For the NYVRP's perspective, there was a perception among some stakeholders that Corrections was not following through with completing referral forms and risk assessments for the corrections-referred youth. For instance, one NYVRP stakeholder noted: *"I checked with everybody, and no one other than one or two in Sandy Bay, none of their referral forms were used by corrections."* However, Corrections attributed the perception that they did not send referral forms to the NYVRP to a lack of organization on the NYVRP's behalf, noting that the program often lost the information

sent to them. As a result, Corrections started to send information only by email in order to have a written record of the information shared and also created their own tracking sheet to have a record of the information they shared with the NYVRP. Indeed, the casefile review identified that Corrections had sent full referral forms that included risk assessment information for 19 youth, yet only 6 youth had these forms in their casefiles.

*I think the most challenging is they're so disorganized, which was so frustrating. I think that resulted in a lot of miscommunication and missteps. You know, how I [had] all of those long form referrals. That's a perfect example, sending things, them telling us we didn't get them when we know we sent them, since we started watermarking everything we sent. We wouldn't know, we would send them something and didn't know where it went. It was confidential information. (Corrections)*

*Initially some of us would give them to them if we would see them, but then they were getting lost, so then we started to email them where we track it. I also started a spreadsheet to monitor clients. Then if the referral was accepted, I would mark when we did the assessment and gave the full referral. It would make me more organized too. I wanted the work to get done for them. When I looked at the big picture, it was just not being received. (Corrections)*

Corrections stakeholders also indicated they were not necessarily informed when one of their referrals had consented to participate in the program. In addition, they were also sometimes unaware when community referrals who were involved in Corrections consented to participate in the NYVRP. As a result, Corrections was not able to prioritize assessments for these individuals. The casefile review confirms that the HAWWs generally did not follow the intended process to notify Corrections when a referral had consented. Once a client consents, the NYVRP is supposed to send a "Notification of Consent" form back to the referring agency; however, there were very few forms of this nature on file.

*For probation, we always struggle to do assessments... Sometimes we didn't even know if a client was accepted into NYVRP. We wouldn't even know sometimes... like who needed to be assessed. (Corrections)*

*We were always communicating with them, so sometimes there would be a referral come from an outside agency and then we didn't know that our client got consented to the program and we didn't refer them. That's an easy problem to solve. (Corrections)*

Rather than working together to rectify some of these issues, Corrections stakeholders felt that they were unfairly blamed by the NYVRP for not sharing referrals or completing risk assessments and that the NYVRP did not take accountability for their own role in the miscommunications that occurred with Corrections. This lack of accountability, combined with the disorganization experienced as a result of the NYVRP described above and in relation to scheduling meetings was perceived to damage the partnership between the NYVRP and Corrections.

*We received a lot complaints from [the NYVRP] regarding, well both with us not doing assessments, not giving them referrals and then not showing up to meetings, so they were complaining about us not doing it. But there was lack of accountability [on their end], not owning up to the organization. (Corrections)*

*Some of the other POs struggled with being told/blamed that they were not doing their jobs. They would feel defeated and that you're not doing your work. (Corrections)*

*With senior staff who experienced a lot of the disorganization, they didn't necessarily want to put the effort in anymore. (Corrections)*

In fact, both parties indicated that the other was not being a good partner. Some NYVRP staff perceived that Corrections relied too heavily on them to do check-ins with the youth and to monitor their activities in the community.

*Corrections relied on us so heavily to do check-ins, to find out about the youth, whether they were going to anger management appointments, how many check-ins we did, then coming to meetings they would be rude about it if it was cancelled, because we couldn't control who attended. We were made to feel like we were working for them, instead of a partnership. We were doing a favour to them, managing these kids, so they could do their work, because one of them, the one that I talk to said 90% of their work is reports on these kids. The POs I worked with before, kept phoning me and telling me, I need this information. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Conversely, Corrections perceived that the NYVRP would often ask them for information (some of which they should not be privy to) and were unwilling to share the same level of information with them. In fact, some Corrections stakeholders perceived that there was some role confusion between the role of the HAWWs in working with the youth and the role of POs.

*I felt like the NYVRP was supposed to be a partnership and sometimes I felt like they weren't contributing to the partnership. They were great partners for us and our clients, but I found there were times where they were asking a lot of us and then not returning a favour. I told [them], you can't expect the POs to do all this work all the time. They wanted monthly updates for the clients, but we were told the NYVRP can't provide us with an update....to be a partner, they should be contributing. (Corrections)*

*Then sometimes, maybe, there was trouble with knowing where our role and starts end and where their role starts and end. They would want reports and things that I was told that I wasn't supposed to share on them. Like court reports or reports on other clients not in the program. (Corrections)*

A final issue the stakeholder interviews revealed is that new POs may not necessarily have in-depth information about the NYVRP, including their role in the program and the processes that are supposed to be followed. One Corrections stakeholder stated “we need an introduction for staff for those who come on board. This is what you do...” In the future, the NYVRP and

Corrections may work together to develop a short information package to introduce the NYVRP to new Corrections staff.

### *Providing Youth with Supports*

One of the most successful components of the NYVRP's implementation was the many supports HAWWs have been able to connect youth with or provide directly to them. HAWWs have offered the youth personal support, as well as addressed their needs in domains such as education, employment, mental health, addictions, meeting court-ordered conditions, cultural and land-based teachings, and prosocial recreational activities (e.g., sports, arts and crafts). The staff have also included their clients in volunteer activities and, therefore, the clients have gained positive exposure in the community as helpers and respectable young people. During these volunteering experiences, it was noted that the clients feel positive about giving back to their community in addition to being involved in prosocial activities and environments. Table 37 highlights some of the ways in which the HAWWs have supported the youth.

During the stakeholder interviews, the interviewees highlighted the cultural and land-based teachings as some of the most valuable opportunities the NYVRP afforded to the youth. In fact, several NYVRP staff believed the program should focus even more on teaching the youth about traditional values and activities in the future.

*The cultural camps...They loved it out there. They didn't want to come home...We would take them for nature walks, we'd show them different plants, what they're used for as medicine and they were real amazed at that. They would be quiet, and listen, and just walk with us. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

In addition to the cultural and land-based teachings, several stakeholders commented that one of the key supports the HAWWs offered the youth was being a positive role model to them and helping them learn basic life skills.

*She showed them how to be a good person, use manners, show respect, how to succeed you know in life, to graduate. You can do something better for yourself, it's a pretty rough community. (Corrections)*

**Table 37: Supports HAWWs Offer to NYVRP Participants**

| Domain                                  | Activities Engaged in by HAWWs  |
|---|---|
| <b>Personal Support and Development</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping in nearby urban centres to remove them from stressors</li> <li>• One-on-one time to talk about what is going on at home</li> <li>• Facilitated attendance at parenting classes</li> <li>• Facilitated youth in obtaining ID</li> <li>• Taught youth how to making appointments</li> <li>• Delivered presentations related to self-esteem, role modelling, and goal setting</li> </ul> |

| Domain   | Activities Engaged in by HAWWs  |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitated attendance at youth conferences and workshops (e.g., New North Justice Symposium; Wellness, Resilience, and Recovery workshop, Healthy Lifestyle workshop, FASD conference)</li> <li>Facilitated volunteer activities (e.g., packing and delivering good food boxes)</li> <li>Made NYVRP offices a safe place for youth to hang out and have access to snacks</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Educational Assistance</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arranged for tutoring from mentors</li> <li>Arranged online educational programs</li> <li>Encouraged youth to attend school</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Employment</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisted with obtaining driver's license</li> <li>Assisted with creating a resume</li> <li>Facilitated attendance at resume writing workshops</li> <li>Facilitated attendance at job fairs</li> <li>Connected youth with local training opportunities (e.g., heavy equipment training, rock crushing, carpentry)</li> <li>Helped youth obtain summer employment</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Mental Health and Addictions Support</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arranged mental health counselling appointments</li> <li>Arranged addictions counselling appointments</li> <li>Transported youth to counselling appointments (when held in other communities)</li> <li>Facilitated attendance at programming offered by Holistic Health</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Support with Meeting Court Ordered Conditions</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported youth in writing an apology letter</li> <li>Facilitated youth's community service hours</li> <li>Ensured youth reported to POs</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Cultural and Land-Based Teachings</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural camps</li> <li>Cultural ceremonies (e.g., sweat ceremonies, round dances, Sundance ceremonies, full moon ceremonies)</li> <li>Beadwork</li> <li>Hunting</li> <li>Fishing, including fishing derbys and ice netting</li> <li>Snaring</li> <li>Traditional medicine picking</li> <li>Picking mint, berries, and mushrooms</li> <li>Nature walks</li> <li>Visits with, and teachings from, an Elder (e.g., cooking, men's roles)</li> <li>Drum making</li> </ul> |



| Domain  | Activities Engaged in by HAWWs  |
|---|---|
| <b>Arts</b>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrapbooking</li> <li>• Crafts</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Sports and Other Recreational Activities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involved youth in local sports (e.g., hockey, volleyball, baseball, yoga)</li> <li>• Boating and tubing</li> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• Movie nights</li> <li>• Skating</li> <li>• Baking Nights</li> </ul> |

In terms of connecting youth to the services they needed, the NYVRP generally believed that the youth could access the services they required. For instance, one staff member stated, “*When something came up, for the most part, we could get the kids in.*” The HAWWs agreed that, in most cases, the local agencies were willing to allow the NYVRP youth to participate in their programming or services; however, there were some agencies that requested that the HAWW attend with the youth. In some cases, it was because the agencies were not able to manage the youth. In Deschambault Lake, much of the available programming was for adults 18 and older and younger clients were only able to attend if they were accompanied by the HAWW. Regardless of these requested accompaniments, the HAWWs often supported the youth in attending appointments by reminding them of their appointments or transporting them there.

*There were some agencies that gave us a bit of a hard time. When it came to doing programming with the kids, they would request a worker be there. They couldn't handle the kids. It was all because of their approach.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*They said my clients [under 18 years] can go, but I have to sit with them.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

While it was generally agreed the youth had access to the services they required, it is important to note that sometimes youth were reluctant to attend the available programming due to concerns about the information they shared about themselves not being kept confidential by the program staff or other attendees. As a result, some stakeholders noted a preference for one-on-one activities among some youth.

*A lot of time, they would tell us they were reluctant to go to programming, because they were worried that members of the communities were going to see them with their worker. So they would always, clients often expressed concerned that people were gossiping with them.* (Corrections)

*They don't like group... No confidentiality in the community. Anything they shared went out into the community. So they liked the individual, one-on-one.* (Community Stakeholder)

Further, one HAWW also mentioned that the size of their agency vehicle (which can only hold up to 5 persons, including the driver) limited the number of youth that could be taken to events occurring outside the community.

**NYVRP Self-Reported Supports.** Results from the NYVRP Participant Survey offered additional insight into the types of supports and services with which youth are connected. The seven youth (who were from Deschambault Lake) indicated that they were connected with the programs and services identified in Table 38. The most common activities with which these youth were connected included addictions counselling or support groups, holistic health programs, cultural activities, and youth conferences. In general, the list of services maps onto those services identified through the document review and stakeholder interviews in Table 38. The number of programs and services to which each youth was connected ranged from 2 to 12 services; most youth (71%) connected to 2 or 3 programs or services.

**Table 38: Self-reported Programs and Services NYVRP Youth (N=7) Accessed**

| Service   | Number of Youth Who Accessed Service<br>n(%) |
|---|--|
| Addictions counselling or support groups                            | 4 (57.1%)                                    |
| Holistic health programs (e.g., men's classes, women's groups)      | 4 (57.1%)                                    |
| Cultural activities   | 4 (57.1%)                                    |
| Youth conferences   | 4 (57.1%)                                    |
| Anger management classes  | 3 (42.8%)                                    |
| Mental health counselling   | 2 (28.6%)                                    |
| Recreational activities (e.g., sports, gardening, arts, and crafts) | 2 (28.6%)                                    |
| Resume building   | 2 (28.6%)                                    |
| Help with finding a job   | 2 (28.6%)                                    |
| Volunteering in the community                                       | 2 (28.6%)                                    |
| Tutoring or other supports to help you with your school work        | 1 (14.3%)                                    |
| Parenting classes   | 1 (14.3%)                                    |
| Other: Hunting  | 1 (14.3%)                                    |

### ***Elders and Mentors***

Elders and Mentors were incorporated into the NYVRP to help the youth build their natural support networks, but also to offset HAWWs' unavailability when they were away from the community on training or during times of staff turnover. The intention was for Mentors and Elders to support the youth in ways that the HAWWs were unable (e.g., by helping develop a specific interest, providing the youth with cultural teachings) or during times when HAWWs were unavailable. For instance, in Pelican Narrows, the Elders acted in the following capacities:

*Counselling, acting as chaperones on outings, providing cultural teachings such as; snaring, ice fishing, net fishing, teaching smoking and prepping foods traditionally. As well as being a part of advisory meetings, and providing youth with traditional story telling. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

In Sandy Bay, the Elders/Mentors provided services, such as:

*Driving our youths to their personal counselling to Pelican Narrows, monitoring/mentoring our NYVRP youths while workers are out on training, cultural sweat lodge, attending advisory meetings, attending core meetings, continuing with one-on-one supports with youth, attending our PPT presentations, preparations of fire wood to smoke wild meat and food, basic teachings of cultural cooking, women's Skirt Making, and cultural guidance when on outdoor activities. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Several Elders and Mentors have been identified in each of the communities:

- Deschambault Lake: 2 Elders, 6 Mentors
- Pelican Narrows: 7 Elders, 7 Mentors
- Sandy Bay: 6 Elders, 8 Mentors

Some Elders and Mentors were engaged by the NYVRP much more frequently than others. In Deschambault Lake, it was estimated that four Elders or Mentors were regularly engaged by the program. In Pelican Narrows, six Elders were regularly involved in the program while, in Sandy Bay, two Elders regularly contributed to the program.

The amount of time Elders and Mentors spend with the youth was at the Elders/Mentor's own discretion. Unfortunately, due to inconsistencies in the casefile records, it was not possible to determine the number of NYVRP youth who have worked directly with Elders and Mentors. However, it was observed that the youth enjoyed the opportunity to work with the Elders and Mentors. One HAWW commented, "*Youth gravitate towards the Mentors/Elders.*" Further, the NYVRP Youth Participant Survey asked survey respondents to indicate whether that had been connected with Mentors or Elders. Of the seven youth who completed the survey, three had been connected with a Mentor and the same three youth had also been connected with the Elder.

When asked how their Mentor has helped them, two youth offered the following comments

- "He helps me a lot to be a better role model to the other troubled youth in the community"
- "Everything he can do, I am glad I get helped with the same stuff."

When asked how working with an Elder has helped them, they commented:

- "To Listen and be respectful"
- "Their wisdom is the best"

NYVRP staff and stakeholders agreed that involving Elders and Mentors in the program was an important aspect of the model. It was believed that having opportunities to learn from the Elders pulled youth away from gangs (see Section 9.1). Another stakeholder indicated that it was rare to see such active involvement of Elders and Mentors in a program such as the NYVRP.

*A strength was how the staff were able to utilize community mentors. That is not seen very often across the province in other similar programs, like Community Connections programs. Very rarely will you see agencies utilize community members or sustainable*

*community supports...so that was a major success. I thought, wow, I was so elated that they could do that. I haven't seen that anywhere else. I'm really hoping the young people will continue to connect with those mentors. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Mentors work with the NYVRP on a volunteer-basis, while the Elders are typically provided with an honorarium. One obstacle that has emerged with respect to paying the Elders an honorarium is that the program's ability to involve Elders was influenced by the NYVRP's budget and availability of funds. It was noted in meeting minutes that, at points in time when the NYVRP's budget was limited, Elders were drawn upon less frequently as a result. Another obstacle that was encountered related to trying to find Elders and Mentors to be involved in the program. NYVRP staff commented that some Mentors were unwilling to assist the program due to the expectation that services they provide would be unpaid, volunteer work. Other HAWWs struggled with finding healthy Elders and Mentors who were supportive of the youth in the program.

*Another challenge would be finding healthy mentors. I know that the Elders here, a lot of the good ones have passed on. We just have a handful of people we can choose from now. A lot of the Elders are quite unhealthy because there is stigma towards the youth. Like they get the name of the program and they don't want to participate. And they have their little conversations with other people regarding our program, bad talking, discouraging others to participate. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

### ***Remote Presence Technology (RPT)***

One of the unique innovations of NYVRP was the intention to use RPT to connect youth with the mental health treatment they require and increase their contact with their probation officers. The licenses for the RPT units were purchased at the end of the 2015-16 fiscal year and it took over a year to set-up the equipment and make it functional in each of the three communities, as well as in the Corrections offices. Some of the challenges that were encountered in making the equipment functional was having the proper modem and MiFi<sup>24</sup> equipment to increase the bandwidth to a sufficient speed to use the equipment and to allow the units to run by hotspotting on a phone or tablet, downloading licenses and having access to the licenses, and prioritizing the set-up of the equipment. As of late spring 2018, the RPT units were available for use between the communities and Corrections; however, in the fall of 2018, Corrections ultimately decided that it would not be using the RPT units to replace their supervision standards for face-to-face meetings. It had been hoped that the RPT units could be used to increase contact and supervision with Corrections to better follow the YVRP model, but it was ultimately not a possible strategy for doing so.

The RPT units were also intended to connect the youth with mental health providers to provide treatment to the youth, which they cannot access in their own communities. Originally, the NYVRP project management team had approached the psychiatry department at the University of Saskatchewan, who decided not to participate in the program as there were no monetary funds available to support their involvement in the program. They then approached the University of

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<sup>24</sup> Similar to a Wi-Fi connection.

Saskatchewan pre-doctoral resident program through the Saskatoon Health Region, which was interested in being involved; however, this program was also unable to enter into a partnership with the NYVRP to deliver services via RPT due to competing demands and limited resources. Finally, the project management team approached Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). This partnership has proven much more fruitful and, with the support of ISC, the NYVRP was able to identify a number of mental health therapists interested in working with the program, as well as a mechanism to pay the therapists through ISC programs (e.g., Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program). Mental health therapy via the RPT units commenced in June 2019 and approximately six to thirteen youth were able to receive therapy using this modality. A “kick-off” event was held to initiate service delivery using this modality where six therapists met with six youth in Prince Albert to have an initial face-to-face meeting. However, early in 2020, the equipment was deemed obsolete (by the company that supports their use) and the program was no longer able to continue using the units.

**Perceptions of RPT.** Stakeholders’ perceptions (as determined through the Stakeholder interviews) of using RPT to provide mental health therapy services to the NYVRP youth were not very positive. Given the small number of youth received RPT services for the cost of the equipment and the licenses (6 to 13 youth, approximately \$116,000 for the equipment and licenses over the five years), it was deemed that the RPT “*was a waste of time and money*” (NYVRP PMT/Staff). Further, stakeholders were critical of the limitations of providing therapy using RPT, noting that providing therapy in this way did not allow the therapist to adequately read body language and, consequently, to gather all the information they needed to fully understand the youth and the extent of their issues. It was also suggested by one NYVRP staff member that some of the youth “*needed more than RPT had to offer.*”

*It made it hard because we could get a boy in there that we knew there was some mental health issues and it missed that, we could share that info, but unless you are really good at reading body language, you missed things. Like these kids with cognitive disabilities, it would come out as hostilities...It’s good on paper but, in reality, it will never meet the needs. Because the spectrum of different problems upon different problems, you miss so much watching a screen. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Many of the NYVRP staff also commented that that youth were willing to try receiving therapy via RPT but, ultimately, were not very engaged in receiving therapy in this way. In many cases, youth struggled with not knowing the person on the other side. However, there was an exception to this as one client was very engaged in receiving therapy in this way.

*I asked if they wanted to do it again, they said okay but it wasn’t very enthusiastic like they were with the people at the clinic. They didn’t want to talk to the box because they barely knew the person on the other side. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*I had asked all of them if they are comfortable to talk with the counsellors on the other side and they said it feels weird. I don’t know who that person is. I had two youth go on the RPT. They both said they didn’t like it. It was discomfort. We used it in our office here. We would leave so they could speak freely. They did meet the therapist in person first and said it was uncomfortable. They liked it better when they met them one-on-one in*

*Prince Albert. When I asked the young girl, she said no, it's not the same. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*They just prefer not to use the RPT, they'd rather be in person. They're open to it, they give it a try, but they're not really into it. It's just a computer in front of their face, they can do that on their phone. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*One of the kids is doing awesome, he's still doing it. He's been asking why haven't we been using the camera thing. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

If RPT is used in the future, it was recommended that the youth and therapist meet in-person before having a therapy session to build a certain level of familiarity between the two agencies and increase youth's interest in receiving therapy via RPT.

*That meet and greet really helped to get kids enthused about using the equipment. Young people who have not met the therapist before are not as interested because they haven't met the therapist in person. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Mixed responses about RPT were also received on the NYVRP Participant Survey completed by seven youth in Deschambault Lake. Of these youth, four youth had seen a mental health therapist through RPT. Half of the youth found it to be "very helpful" to see a therapist using this modality, while half of the youth only found it to be "a little helpful." Similarly, two found it to be "very comfortable" to receive counselling through RPT, while two found it to be "a little or not at all comfortable." Finally, two youth indicated a preference for seeing a therapist in-person, one preferred RPT, and another did not have a preference.

The use of RPT also had implications for the NYVRP staff. As alluded to above, the RPT sessions took place in the HAWWs' office and the HAWWs had to leave the youth alone in the office to ensure they had the privacy they required for their sessions. Sometimes staff were uncomfortable doing this when youth were early in their tenure with the program and staff did not trust leaving them alone with their belongings.

*It left us open. Because some the kids that wanted to go on were not with the program long enough, so we were still in the process of teaching them about respect of our belongings, so leaving them in our office was iffy. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Staff also found that their workload increased as they were required to find out background information about each client (e.g., familial history of residential attendance, treaty status information) to allow the costs of the RPT services to be covered by one of ISC's programs (e.g., Residential School Health Supports Program). Staff found it challenging to gather some of this information about their clients as some of their clients did not know their family history. They also were often asked to gather this information within a short turnaround period. Moreover, it was noted that this information is typically sought by the mental health therapist directly, but because staff were giving their clients a choice to try RPT, they were asked to track this information down themselves. ISC suggested that another support persons staff could utilize to

gather this information was ISC's Resolution Support Workers; however, the extent to which staff utilized this resource was unclear.

*A lot of families they are working with, they don't have some of those connections to family members, they don't know their family history. It's really difficult process to track down that info, especially when asked to do it in a 2-day turn-around time. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*RPT wasn't easy, it was more difficult for staff, not in terms of knowledge level difficult, but in terms of workload difficulty. Creating a heavier workload for them by having to learn about family history and find the right people who knew the history of the family to be able to access the right program through Indigenous Services Canada. Also, on top of that, the work they were doing would normally fall to the therapist. But because this was our staff trying to give a choice to the individual to try out RPT, they had to hunt down the info for the therapist. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

A final challenge that was mentioned with respect to RPT pertained to youth not showing up to their appointments. Some therapists were upset when this happened, as these sessions were their livelihood and they could have a scheduled another client had they known the youth was not going to attend. NYVRP staff acknowledged this challenge yet found it difficult to mitigate it given that high risk (and sometimes unpredictable) nature of the youth involved in the NYVRP.

### ***Phasing Out Process***

In 2018-19, the NYVRP introduced a Phasing Out process to help NYVRP youth slowly transition out of the program. The phasing out process occurs in three steps wherein supports are slowly withdrawn from the youth to allow them to become accustomed to functioning without the program: 1) At the 75% level, HAWWs visit the clients twice a week (a one-on-one visit and a group based activity); 2) At the 50% level, there are two visits per week (a check-in and a one-on-one visit); and 3) At the 25% level, there is only a one-on-one visit. After this, it is expected that youth will be ready to completely transition out of the program; however, they are able to contact the HAWWs in the future should they so desire. It should be noted that youth who are ready to graduate should have natural supports that they can draw upon when they are no longer actively involved with the HAWW.

Based on the available evidence, it is unclear how closely the Phasing Out process was followed. Some staff and stakeholders perceived that some youth's files were closed even though they did not "graduate" from the program.

*The ones that got off the program. They didn't graduate....they were taken off the program. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*[One youth] got kicked out, was phased out in Oct/Nov...The reason I was given is they weren't seeing any successes with him, which is a silly reason to stop working with someone. But [the HAWW] kind of informally still works with him, especially now during the pandemic, but he wasn't still in the program. (Corrections)*

It was also acknowledged that some youth did not have the supports they needed in order to graduate from the program.

*They need supports. They need to find one person they can trust. For some, they do have that person. For the ones that have drastic issues at home, they're the ones that really need the support...They are still coming here, on a daily basis or every second day.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

Others suggested that the Phasing Out process should conclude with the opportunity for the youth to return to the program as peer mentors. It was thought that a peer mentorship component would help the youth maintain a connection to the program, while being able to serve as a role model to others. Notably, one NYVRP graduate from Deschambault Lake successfully transitioned into the role of “Mentor” after completing the program.

*Instead of cycling youths off the program, they need to be brought back to the team as mentors. We tried this in Deschambault Lake and it made a huge positive impact and showed continued support to those that finish the program.* (Community Stakeholder)

The NYVRP Participant Survey, completed with seven youth in Deschambault Lake, revealed that the number of supports these youth had varied from one to three or more supports. Among these youth, 57% ( $n=4$ ) indicated they had 3 or more supports, 14% ( $n=1$ ) had 1 support, whereas the remaining three did not answer the question (perhaps because they did not have any supports to report). When asked what the youth needed to feel ready to graduate from the NYVRP, three youth answered this question and provided the following responses: 1) be proud; 2) graduate school; and 3) no (suggesting the youth was not ready to contemplate graduating the program).

### ***Completion of Reports and Files***

The completion of program forms and the maintenance of accurate, comprehensive casefiles was an area with which the NYVRP struggled. In general, the staff preferred spending their time working directly with the youth and found the amount of paperwork required by the program and the agencies where their positions were located to be overwhelming. In particular, staff found it difficult to remain up-to-date on their chronological notes, while balancing interactions with the youth.

*The administration part is not too much of a hassle. Just when it gets compiled. You know, everyday we have to interact with our youth and we don't get the chance to continue updating because there is always something going on.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

They also questioned the utility of some of the forms used by the program (e.g., intake forms). Therefore, if the program continues, it was recommended that a review of the documentation required be completed to ensure that only necessary paperwork is required. According to the NYVRP project management team, it was “a little too paper heavy.” It was also acknowledged that the lack of an administrative assistant put a greater administrative burden on the staff,



especially with respect to maintaining their casefiles and scheduling meetings, and that greater support in this area was required. It was also suggested that instead of each HAWW maintaining their own casefile on a given client that a travelling casefile approach be used wherein each HAWW could add to the casefile as needed (as sometimes HAWWs would see each other's clients).

*Paperwork—streamline it – Assessments – all those things are important. The important thing is developing the case plan and the case management that follows. What would streamline the history notes, is if they did the travelling file and to have that admin assistant do the other stuff – sending out the emails for Core, Advisory, and Oversight (NYVRP PMT/Staff).*

*Not hiring an admin person from the beginning, even just putting their files together having someone prepare a file of all the documents they need and in the correct order would have been really helpful to them. That was a challenge for them—putting all that material together and making sure they were filling out everything properly. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

The casefile review also revealed some issues with completeness of the staff's reports and files. For instance, casefiles in Pelican and Sandy Bay were much more robust than the casefiles in Deschambault Lake. With some exceptions, the casefiles from Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay typically included most pertinent client information such as referral forms, consent forms, care plans, and chronological notes; whereas, the casefiles from Deschambault Lake were less likely to include this information. In addition, the casefile review revealed that the HAWWs in some of the communities did not know how to score the YLS/CMI: SV, as they were calculating the total scores incorrectly. Finally, staff struggled with completing the CDC tracking sheet and, as a result, the data contained within it is unreliable. To address these administrative issues, it was suggested that the NYVRP may need to implement a strategy to ensure that staff do not get behind on their administrative duties, such as having alternating shifts wherein one HAWW is responsible for completing paperwork and the other is responsible for contacting the youth.

### **9.7.5 Interpretation**

Overall, the NYVRP was largely implemented in line with its program delivery model. The data available indicates that HAWWs have regular contact with the youth each week and are readily available to the youth whenever the youth need them, including evenings and weekends. The HAWWs also have been successful in establishing trusting relationships with the youth as reflected by the fact that youth often seek them out and are willing to disclose personal information to them (e.g., when completing risk assessments). They also have garnered the respect of other community members and agency representatives and this respect has likely facilitated the HAWWs' ability to be invited into their clients' homes to conduct one-on-one visits. According to the NYVRP program delivery model, the HAWWs should be spending most of their time with the youth in a one-on-one capacity; however, there was some indication from the stakeholder interviews that HAWWs preferred meeting with the youth in small groups. Staff were re-directed by management to engage primarily in one-on-one visits; however, it is unclear what portion of the time spent with the youth occurred one-on-one versus in a group.

The NYVRP had a targeted caseload of 15 active youth in each community shared among two HAWWs, resulting in an individual caseload of 7 to 8 youth each. In the final year of program delivery, the combined caseloads at each site ranged from 10 to 13 clients, with individual HAWWs having an average caseload of approximately 5 to 11 clients. In Deschambault Lake, there was a single HAWW carrying an above average caseload of approximately 10 clients. In Pelican Narrows, the caseloads were equally divided between two HAWWs for the first half the year (average caseload of 6 clients); however, after the second HAWW vacated his position, the remaining HAWW had an above average caseload of 11 clients. In Sandy Bay, the caseloads were slightly below the expected levels with an average of 5 clients per HAWW. Thus, depending on the community, sites were either above or below the targeted caseload per individual HAWW.

The use of Core Teams is another key element of the program delivery model. It was originally anticipated that Core Teams would be held weekly; however, this target was unrealistic and too burdensome for member agencies. Therefore, midway through 2017-18, the frequency of Core Team meetings were reduced to once per month. In 2019-20, Deschambault Lake held 83% of the expected number of meetings (a 33% increase in meetings held compared to 2018-19), while Pelican Narrows held 42% of expected meetings (a 33% decrease compared to 2018-19), and Sandy Bay held 75% of expected meetings (an 8% decrease compared to 2018-19). Notably, five meetings were cancelled in Pelican Narrows in 2019-20 due to a lack of attendance.

The types of agencies that participated in the Core Team varied by each community, as did the participation rates of the agencies. After seeing an increase in Core Team attendance in 2018-19, a decrease in attendance was experienced among a majority of agencies in 2019-20. In general, the RCMP was one of the few agencies that consistently attended Core Team meetings in all three communities throughout the three years in which program delivery occurred. Corrections and Education also regularly participated in Core Team meetings in all three communities, with Corrections increasing their level of involvement in Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay in 2019-20 and Education decreasing their level of involvement in all three communities in 2019-20.

According to the Community Stakeholder survey, common reasons stakeholders provided for not attending Core Team meetings were being away on vacation or leave, being too busy to attend, and having other emergencies to take care. Reasons related to the NYVRP's lack of organization also were identified, such as meetings being too long, meetings being unproductive, or a teleconference number not being provided. Respondents' reasons for not attending Core Team meetings (and the frequency at which those reasons appeared in the data) mapped closely onto the reasons for not attending Advisory Committee meetings, suggesting that the reasons why individuals did not participate in meetings were consistent across meeting types.

In general, the stakeholder interviews suggested that the Core Team was viewed as a valuable component of the NYVRP, as they facilitated information sharing about youth who are common clients to the agencies involved, as well as information about possible programming and other opportunities in which the youth can be involved. The extent to which Core Teams explicitly discussed youth's risks and participated in the development of care plans was unclear; however, there is evidence that suggests these discussions took place informally. One issue that arose with

respect to the Core Teams' functioning related to the confidentiality of the information shared at the meetings. Some stakeholders indicated that, at times, individuals who were not directly involved with the youth being discussed were present at the meetings. Other stakeholders noted that confidentiality is a general concern within the communities when seeking services (i.e., individuals are oftentimes reluctant to access services due to concerns that the information they reveal while accessing the service may be shared with others), suggesting this is an important issue for the NYVRP to address to ensure that both service providers and youth remain willing participants in the program.

Several areas of improvement for enhancing the functioning of the Core Teams were identified, such as ensuring that: a) the meetings have more structure (i.e., have an agenda, avoid off-topic discussions that could be viewed as gossiping); b) there is a greater focus on discussing care plans and identifying solutions for the youth rather than discussing what they have done; c) youth's confidentiality is protected by only having agency representatives directly involved with the youth present at the meetings; and d) a teleconference number is provided in advance to members attending by telephone and facilitating the meeting with telephone participants in mind (e.g., starting the teleconference on time, providing notice if meetings are cancelled). Many of these suggestions relate to the organizational aspects of the meeting and are similar to suggestions that stakeholders had for the other meetings held by the NYVRP (i.e., Oversight and Advisory Committee meetings).

One of the key tasks of the Core Teams was to develop care plans. The casefile review revealed that care plans were available for 59% of the 97 consented youth. The biggest gap with respect to the care plans came from Deschambault Lake where only 42% of consented youth had a care plan on file; Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay had care plans available for approximately 67% and 71% of their clients, respectively. Other concerns that emerged with respect to the care plans were that they were fairly brief and simplistic and seemingly developed prior to the completion of the risk assessment tools. Further, there were no new care plans developed in 2019-20 (out of 12 new clients). While it is not problematic that the care plans were developed before the risk assessment tools were completed, they should be treated as dynamic documents and updated as new information becomes available (such as the results from various risk assessments); however, there was no evidence in the casefile review that they were treated in this manner.

Regardless of the challenges experienced with the care plans, the NYVRP has been successful in identifying and connecting youth with vast array of supports and services available in their communities, including those related to education, employment, mental health and addictions, cultural and land-based teachings, personal support and self-development, arts, meeting court-ordered conditions, sports, and other recreational activities. Moreover, numerous Elders and Mentors were identified to work with the youth in all three communities. Mentors were typically engaged to teach the youth a shared interest, while Elders offered the youth one-on-one counselling and cultural teachings. Cultural and land-based teachings, including learning from the Elders and Mentors, were identified by stakeholders and staff as some of the most valuable opportunities offered by the NYVRP. Moreover, many of the activities and supports the youth have been offered map onto the "central eight" criminogenic needs that are considered to be the most important to address to decrease the likelihood of future delinquency or antisocial behaviour (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). These criminogenic needs are family circumstances,

schools/work, leisure/recreation, substance abuse, antisocial behaviour, antisocial personality patterns, antisocial cognition, and antisocial associates.

The final evaluation also shed light on the success of the partnership between the NYVRP and Corrections. Several strengths of the partnership were mentioned. For instance, being able to share information about common clients was seen as being mutually beneficial, as was being able to reinforce the same messages each party was trying to instill in the youth. Corrections also valued the prosocial opportunities the NYVRP could offer youth (especially cultural activities and land-based learning), as these were areas where Corrections was not able to support the youth as much as they would like. Despite these strengths, there seemed to be friction in the NYVRP's and Corrections' relationship with both parties indicating that they did not view the other as a "good partner." The NYVRP's issues with organization seemed to be a primary contributor to Corrections' frustrations with the program. In addition to the organizational issues experienced with meetings, Corrections indicated that information they sent to the NYVRP often went missing (even though their records indicated it had been sent) or they were not always informed when a corrections-referred client had consented to participate in the program. Corrections perceived that there was a lack of accountability on the NYVRP's behalf to acknowledge and address these organizational issues. In addition, both parties struggled with the requests received by the others. For instance, the NYVRP perceived that the Corrections relied too heavily on them to perform check-ins with the youth, while Corrections indicated that the NYVRP experienced some role confusion with the POs and sometimes requested information to which they should not be privy. Finally, Corrections perceived a lack of reciprocity from the NYVRP as the NYVRP asked for monthly reports on their corrections-referred clients but indicated they did not have time to prepare monthly reports on their clients for Corrections. Many of these issues are not insurmountable and, if the partnership continues in the future, the NYVRP should arrange a meeting with the Creighton Corrections office to further discuss and address the issues raised in the evaluation.

Another important program component that was implemented for the first time in 2019-20 was using RPT to deliver mental health therapy to NYVRP clients. The NYVRP was able to successfully enter into a partnership with Indigenous Service Canada to allow youth to remotely access mental health therapists. Between six to thirteen youth were able to receive therapy via RPT. Overall, stakeholders questioned whether RPT was a worthwhile component of the NYVRP given: a) the cost of using RPT (~\$116,000 over the five years to provide service to 6 to 13 youth); and b) the level of engagement in RPT among the youth. Both the stakeholder interviews and youth participant surveys suggested mixed levels of satisfaction with receiving therapy by RPT. Staff indicated that youth were open to trying RPT, but were not very engaged by this modality, with most expressing a preference for in-person therapy. These perceptions were supported by the responses provided by the four youth who completed the RPT questions on the NYVRP participant survey, wherein half indicated a preference for in-person therapy. If RPT is used in the future, the modality may be more successful if in-person sessions are interspersed occasionally between RPT sessions.

A final component of the program delivery model that was considered in the evaluation was the completion of reports and casefiles. As is common among frontline staff (Ames, 1999; Blake, 2010), the HAWWs preferred working with the youth rather than completing paperwork.

Therefore, the casefiles were not as comprehensive and accurate as they could be. For instance, sometimes pertinent information was missing from the casefiles (e.g., corrections referral forms, chronological notes, dates clients became inactive) with casefiles from Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay being more robust than those from Deschambault Lake. There were also issues of data accuracy regarding the CDC tracking sheet where information in the spreadsheet did not correspond with the raw data available in the casefile; however, the CDC tracking sheet was more accurate each year the program was offered showing some improvement in staff's ability to use and comprehend this tool over time.

## 9.8 Satisfaction with NYVRP

### 9.8.1 Evaluation Questions

- How satisfied are youth, parents, staff, and other stakeholders with the NYVRP?

### 9.8.2 Indicators

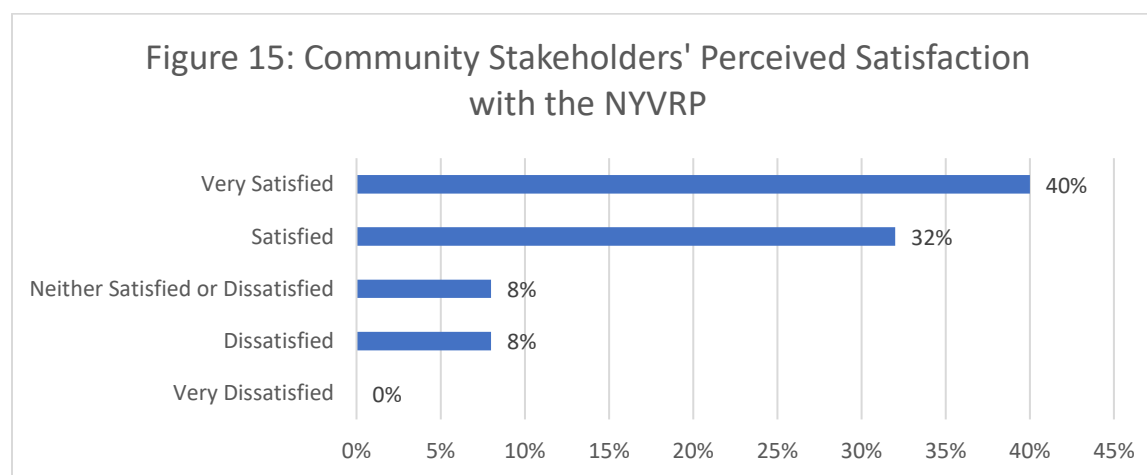
- Degree of NYVRP client satisfaction
- Degree of community agency (i.e., partner) satisfaction

### 9.8.3 Data Sources

- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- NYVRP Participant Survey

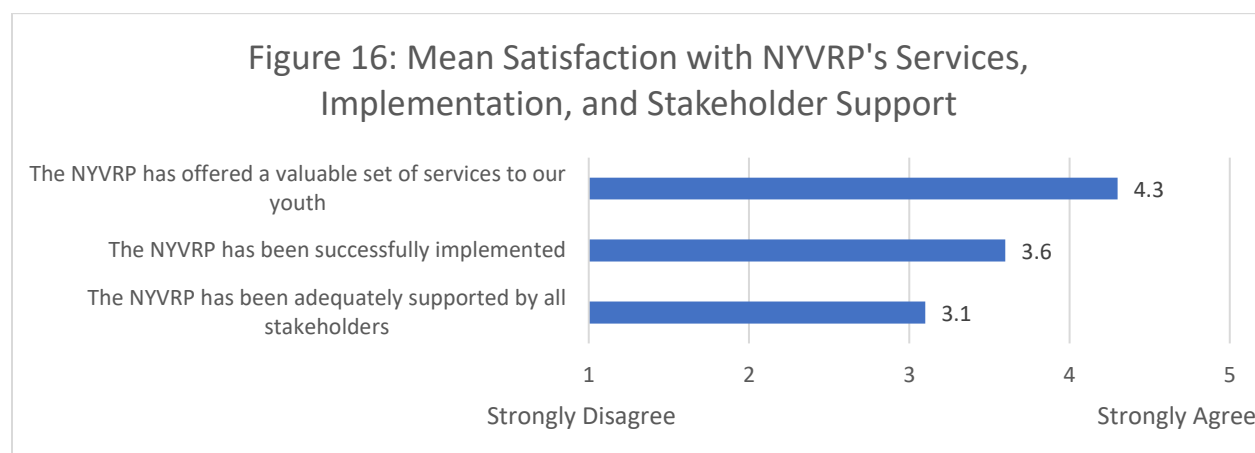
### 9.8.4 Results

**Community Stakeholder Satisfaction.** Several methods were utilized to determine how satisfied different stakeholder groups were with the NYVRP, including the Community Stakeholder Survey, Stakeholder Interviews, and the NYVRP Participant Survey. The Community Stakeholder Survey ( $N=25$ ) specifically asked agency stakeholders to rate the extent to which they were satisfied with the NYVRP on a 5-point scale ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. Approximately, 72% of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the NYVRP (mean response=4.2; see Figure 15). Notably, only two respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the program.



A handful of other rating questions were also included in the Community Stakeholder Survey to assess stakeholders' satisfaction with the NYVRP, including their perceptions on whether the initiative had been successfully implemented and adequately supported by stakeholders, as well as whether it offered a valuable set of services to youth. The mean scores to these questions are presented in Figure 16 (all items were answered on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Overall, stakeholders agreed that the NYVRP offered a valuable set of services to the youth—95% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed to this statement.

However, stakeholders were less satisfied with the program's implementation—66% strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, whereas 19% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Respondents were least satisfied with the level of support stakeholders provided to the project—here, only 38% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP had been adequately support by all stakeholders while an approximately equal proportion (33%) disagreed with this statement. Thus, stakeholders almost unanimously agreed that the NYVRP offered a valuable set of services, but were less satisfied with the implementation of the program and the amount of support stakeholders provided to it.



To further explore stakeholders' satisfaction with the NYVRP, a handful of open-ended questions were included in the survey asking respondents to identify what they liked and disliked about the program, as well any suggestions they may have for improving it. In terms of what respondents liked about the program, the most prominent themes related to the NYVRP addressing a need for services for youth in the community, the NYVRP's focus on directly engaging youth, beliefs that youth in the program have been successful, having a dedicated staff that serve as role models to the youth, opportunities for community engagement and community involvement in the program, and the incorporation of land-based learning (see Table 36).

**Table 36: Aspects of the NYVRP that Stakeholders Liked**

| Theme   | n* | Illustrative Quotations  |
|---|----|--|
| <b>Addresses a need for services for youth in the communities</b> | 7  | <p>I like that they provide outreach services to youth in communities which have significant gaps in services.</p> <p>The community of Deschambault has nothing local for resources or services that these youth can truly rely on.</p> <p>I think its important to have community run programs for at risk youth.</p> |
| <b>The NYVRP directly engages youth</b>                           | 7  | <p>It deals with the direct contact with the youth.</p> <p>The workers came to the school to help with their students and they were very much involved in their students lives</p>   |

| Theme  | <i>n</i> * | Illustrative Quotations  |
|--|------------|--|
| <b>Youth in the program have been successful</b> | 3          | <p>Successful outcomes with the youth, staff are hands on and informative, the youth enjoy the program and are more successful in the community.</p> <p>It gave participants some great opportunities to learn new skills, help out around the community and to learn about and engage in pro-social activities. I think participants became more motivated in areas such as school, leisure time, etc. from taking the program and met some great role models in working with the staff.</p> <p>That our youth are staying busy and staying away from getting into trouble. And also the numbers went down with youth getting into mischief and getting into trouble.</p> |
| <b>Staff are role models to the youth</b>        | 3          | <p>The mentorship and rapport building with the HAWWs who model appropriate behavior and goal setting; the support and counsel provided to the Youth by the HAWWs</p> <p>Give youth role models and guidance on a daily basis.</p>   |
| <b>Dedicated staff</b>                           | 2          | It works because of the commitment from [the staff].   |
| <b>Facilitates community engagement</b>          | 2          | The potential for community engagement   |
| <b>Opportunities for land-based Learning</b>     | 2          | <p>They take them out to do land-based teaching about the cultural way of life.</p> <p>The recruitment of elders in land-based recreation and learning,</p>  |
| <b>Staff are advocates for youth</b>             | 1          | The are great advocates for youth in their communities.  |

\*Number of respondents who mentioned a given theme; respondents may have contributed to more than one theme.

Stakeholders also identified several aspects of the program that they disliked. Here, many of the themes related to the disorganization of the program, poor recordkeeping, meetings being scheduled and/or cancelled at the last minute, meetings taking too long, not being invited to meetings, and accepting clients into the program before it was fully prepared to take on clients. Corrections stakeholders also found that the NYVRP was resistant to discussing these organizational issues. In addition, respondents indicated that community leadership needed to support the program more and more funding was needed for the program to be effective. Further, respondents were concerned about the staff's workload and susceptibility to burnout. Notably, seven respondents indicated that they did not dislike anything about the program and two disliked that the program was being discontinued (see Table 37).



**Table 37: Aspects of the NYVRP that Stakeholders Disliked**

| <b>Theme</b>  | <b><i>n</i>*</b> | <b>Illustrative Quotations</b>  |
|---|------------------|---|
| <b>Nothing</b>  | 7                | <p>Nothing they are doing a good job</p> <p>I am overall positive about the program.</p>  |
| <b>Disorganization of the program in terms of scheduling meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings scheduled and/or cancelled at the last minute</li> <li>• Participants not notified when meetings cancelled</li> <li>• Individuals not invited to meetings</li> <li>• Meetings took too long initially (has since been addressed)</li> </ul> | 4                | <p>The meetings at every level were disorganized. Front line meetings went off task. Meetings in the communities started late or were cancelled without notice being given to those traveling. Higher level meetings were also unorganized.</p> <p>One overall theme I have experienced and heard others say regarding the program and improvement would be organization. Lots of meetings were scheduled last minute and were also cancelled last minute. There have been several instances for the monthly phone meetings/updates, where they were cancelled and the participants did not know. In addition, not everyone who should have been invited to the meetings were invited. With that said, I will admit the previous feedback about organization was listened to and things did get better near the end of the program. This has been evident through email invitations and calendar invites to meetings. The meetings are also scheduled in advance.</p> <p>It took us a while to get the meetings down to a proper time. They used to take far too long. But it has been much improved.</p> |
| <b>Community leadership did not show strong for the program</b>   | 3                | The community leadership appears disengaged from the NYVRP initiative within the community and do not show strong support   |
| <b>Disorganization of the program in terms of maintaining records</b>   | 2                | <p>They are extremely unorganized, whether that be in scheduling meetings and maintaining records. Operationally, I found that throughout the process when there were issues they were quick to blame community corrections or other stakeholders (ex - we didn't do the assessments we should have, didn't send information they needed, etc.) When a lot of the time this was provided to them and they did not maintain the record.</p> <p>Disorganized w/ paperwork, concerns w/ then requesting the same paperwork that was documented and sent (ink marked NYVRP Copy)</p>  |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Resistant to discussion to resolve issues with Corrections</b>             | 2 | When trying to communicate this with them they were resistant to discussion. There was a lot of deflection of the real issues.   |
| <b>Not enough funding was provided</b>  | 2 | Not enough funding to be effective<br><br>That it was not provided enough funding or support from the band.  |
| <b>Program is being discontinued</b>  | 2 | Government cutting funding which means they cutting resources for our youth  |
| <b>Workload was too heavy for the staff</b>                                   | 2 | The workload is heavy for three to handle...They need more frontline workers.<br><br>One person can not manage everything that needs to be done and keep the youths engaged.   |
| <b>Low referral rate of youth to the program</b>                              | 1 | Very small sample of involved Youth from which to measure success, low referral rate/involvement rate  |
| <b>Was not invited to events after requesting to be invited</b>               | 1 | Not being invited to events, even after requesting multiple times.   |
| <b>Program accepted clients before all program components were determined</b> | 1 | There wasn't anything about the program in particular I disliked. I think it is a great program and was good for each of the communities. Near the beginning of it started, it took a while for it to get going which is expected. I think it started before the basics were figured out which made the transition into starting it more difficult. For example, clients were being accepted into the program while some of the logistics were still unknown (such as what assessments would be used, who would do assessments, what everyone's roles were, etc) and meetings were beginning regularly however there were not participants in the program yet so they were not as efficient as they could have been. |

\*Number of respondents who mentioned a given theme; respondents may have contributed to more than one theme.

Surveys respondent's suggestions for improving the NYVRP closely follow the aspects of the program that they identified as challenging. The most common suggestion was to continue the program. Other suggestions included hiring more frontline staff, hiring a local manager in each community, improved recordkeeping or organization (including training on these topics), more community support for the program, and locating the NYVRP office at the Youth Centre. There were also suggestions to involve parents more in the program, develop a peer mentorship program for graduates of the program to return to the program as peer mentors, and involve youth in decision-making.

**Table 38: Stakeholder Suggestions for Improving the NYVRP**

| <b>Theme</b>   | <b><i>n</i>*</b> | <b>Illustrative Quotations</b>   |
|--|------------------|--|
| <b>Program should be continued</b>                                 | 11               | <p>I believe this should be a more permanent program and on going as more young people need this.</p> <p>I wish this program could continue because it is so beneficial for the clients and more funding so field trips for clients and especially land based trips so clients can learn about the importance of land based learning.</p> <p>If I had a magic wand.... I would make it possible for this program to continue for many more years. Living problems will not always be free of drugs, alcohol, gambling, abuses, a lack of education brings poverty and in a community our size, there is a lack of jobs.</p> <p>This program is very important to the youth and is helping them to make better choices about life and the worker(s) do a job with their clients on this program and sure would like it to continue.</p> |
| <b>Better recordkeeping and organizational skills and capacity</b> | 3                | <p>Better record keeping by the HAWW's or more administration assistance to HAWW's to keep better records of information provided to them (referrals, client information, ect). More organizational skills from top to bottom.</p>   |
| <b>Training on confidentiality and recordkeeping</b>               | 3                | <p>They need further training on confidentiality and organization.</p> <p>Educate staff with managing their own youth paper files, organizational skills, scheduled calendars of events offered and who participated in the events,</p>  |
| <b>More community support for the program</b>                      | 3                | <p>Truthfully, I am disappointed in our community for not taking more of a role in supporting this program. I think it could have done a lot more than it did.</p> <p>More support and engagement in the community from leadership, more local resources recruited for Youth recreation, education, mental health and family support</p> <p>I think that the community needs to be more on board. I also think there needs to be more community understanding of mandate of the programme and its mission</p>  |

| Theme   | n* | Illustrative Quotations  |
|---|----|--|
| <b>More frontline staff should be hired</b>                             | 3  | Hire more frontline workers<br><br>There should be 2-3 staff to engage with the youths. 1 person for Deschambault lake doesn't even scratch the surface of providing the needed help   |
| <b>A local manager should be hired in each community</b>                | 2  | Local manager in each community.   |
| <b>More funding is needed for staff to provide programming to youth</b> | 2  | More funding so field trips for clients and especially land based trips so clients can learn about the importance of land based learning.  |
| <b>Parents need to be more involved</b>                                 | 1  | Parents need to get involved in this type of program because when it comes down to the core, it is really a family's needs and expectations that need to be identified and the needs implemented in proactive approaches towards behaviors and addictions of any kind. |
| <b>Better recruitment of youth into the program needed</b>              | 1  | Better recruiting of interested Youth.   |
| <b>Youth who graduate program should become peer mentors</b>            | 1  | More instead of cycling youths off the program they need to be brought back to the team as mentors we tried this in DL and it made a huge positive impact and show continued support to those that finish the program.   |
| <b>Youth should be more involved in decision-making</b>                 | 1  | More youth involved in decision making   |
| <b>NYVRP should host more community activities</b>                      | 1  | Put on activities for the community like fish derbies and such.  |

\*Number of respondents who mentioned a given theme; respondents may have contributed to more than one theme.

**Stakeholder Interviews.** Many of the same themes that emerged from the Community Stakeholder Survey also emerged in the interviews conducted with staff and stakeholders. Since much have this report has focused on the aspects of the program with which interviewees were satisfied as well those which they were dissatisfied, these themes will not be reviewed extensively in this section; however, a few of the themes that were not discussed in detail elsewhere will be highlighted. For instance, as in the stakeholder survey, interviewees valued the NYVRP's focus on helping the youth, particularly the relentless outreach approach the program took where they actively sought out the youth to participate in the program and then allowed them to remain in the program, even if the youth made a mistake. According to one stakeholder, the youth had a "safe place to fall."

*They looked at homes, they hunted the youth down, at the beginning of the youth's being involved, they got connected and stayed connected with the youth.*

*I had, too, actually avoidance from the youth. We don't give up on our kids even if they tell us to "F-off," or "No, I don't want to see you today." It's okay. Of if they say "I don't want*

*to be in the program.” Those are their words, but later on...they’re just having a bad day...Later on towards the week, they say “We’re so happy to see you.” “Oh, I’m so happy to see you.” They look forward to this program.*

Several of the interviewees also indicated a desire for the NYVRP to continue, with some recommending that even more resources be dedicated toward it.

*I think they should have extended this program because our community needed it. Its good to have something like this for our community.*

*I think its an awesome program, don’t get rid of it.*

*They shouldn’t shut it down, they should keep it going. It’s working here. It’s working everywhere. It works because it’s the work the NYVRP puts in. That’s where you need more staff and more resources to make easier.*

**NYVRP Youth Participant Satisfaction.** The NYVRP Youth Participant Survey, completed by 7 youth in Deschambault Lake, offered additional insight into the extent to which youth were satisfied with the program. The majority of youth who completed the survey (71%;  $n=5$ ) indicated that they liked the program “a lot”, while the remaining two participants liked the program “quite a bit” or “somewhat.” Some of the aspects the youth liked the most about the program were meeting new people, being able to go on trips, and opportunities to participate in traditional activities. One youth also liked that the program helped him focus. The verbatim comments offered by youth included:

- “The people you meet”
- “Trips and food”
- “I like that you can meet new people and go places”
- “Going to events and cultural things”
- “Activities like hunting and camping”
- “It keeps me focused on what I am doing”

Youth were also asked to describe what they disliked about the program. None of the youth disliked anything about the program. However, when asked how the program could be better, four youth made the suggestion to have more trips and events (e.g., fishing trips). Finally, when asked whether they would recommend the NYVRP to their friends or family, 86% ( $n=6$ ) indicated that they would. Their reasons for recommending the program included:

- “To make them listen to do good.”
- “Because it’s fun and active”

### 9.8.5 Interpretation

Overall, the different methods used to assess stakeholders’ perceptions of the program pointed to a high-level of satisfaction with the NYVRP. In particular, many stakeholders (both on the Community Stakeholder Survey and in the Stakeholder Interviews) indicated that the NYVRP provided a valuable set of services to the youth in these communities and meets an important service gap that exists (i.e., services directly targeted to youth). Other aspects of the program that

the stakeholders valued was the NYVRP's focus on directly engaging the youth, having a dedicated staff who are role models to the youth, opportunities for land-based learning, and the potential for community engagement.

The Community Stakeholder Survey revealed that stakeholders were only somewhat satisfied with the program's implementation and were least satisfied with the level of support community stakeholders offered the program. Some of the factors that contributed to stakeholders' dissatisfaction of the program including the disorganization of the program in terms of scheduling meetings and record-keeping, community leadership not demonstrating strong enough support for the program, insufficient funding to offer the program effectively, and staff's heavy workload. Many of the stakeholders' suggestions for improving the NYVRP were in response to these factors, and included calls for better recordkeeping and organization skills, training on confidentiality and recordkeeping, more community support for the program (including from leadership), and more frontline staff (especially communities with only one HAWW). Regardless, the majority of stakeholders (in both the surveys and the interviews) agreed that the program should be continued because of its success to date with helping the youth in their communities.

The NYVRP Participant Survey also revealed high levels of satisfaction with the program among the youth participants, with majority of youth liking the program "a lot" and indicating that they would recommend the program to a family member or friend. In particular, the youth liked the opportunity to meet new people, go on trips, and participate in (cultural) activities and events. Youth's only suggestions for the program was to have more trips and events. It is important to keep in mind that only a small proportion of youth completed the survey; however, it does offer some insight into the participants' perspectives on the program.

Taken together, there seems to be a high level of support for the continuation of the NYVRP, at least in terms of the level of satisfaction among the stakeholders and youth who participated in the final evaluation. While satisfaction is only one aspect to consider when making the decision to continue a program, it is important to recognize that many of the individuals that have been involved in the program endorse its continuation. Further, a critical factor that seems to be contributing to calls for the program's continuation (which should not be overlooked) is that, by directly providing services to high risk youth, the NYVRP appears to be providing a unique service in the communities. Without the NYVRP, there may be no other services specifically targeting this population in the communities.

## 10. FINAL EVALUATION: IMPACT FINDINGS

### 10.1 Individual-level Intended and Unintended Outcomes Achieved

#### 10.1.1 Evaluation Questions

- Did the program produce the intended outcomes in the intermediate and long-term?
  - Have the youth demonstrated a decrease in bullying, aggressive, and violent behaviour?
  - Have the youth demonstrated a decrease in their abuse of alcohol and drugs?
  - Have the youth demonstrated an increase in their school attendance and improved school performance?
  - Have the youth demonstrated an increase in their involvement in prosocial activities and peers?
  - Is there greater involvement in employment-related activities by the youth?
  - Is there greater attachment to prosocial support systems, including their familial and service provider supports as demonstrated by the youth?
- What unintended outcomes, both positive and negative, did the NYVRP produce?
- Are the positive impacts experienced by youth sustainable?

#### 10.1.2 Indicators

- Intended outcomes achieved
  - Reduced bullying, aggressive, and violent behaviour
  - Reduced usage of alcohol and drugs
  - Increased school attendance
  - Improved school performance
  - Increased involvement in prosocial activities and peers
  - Increased involvement in employment-related activities
  - Greater attachment to prosocial support systems (i.e., familial and service provider supports)
- Unintended outcomes that occurred
- Proportion of youth demonstrating change pre-post program
  - Pre-post risk assessment
- Magnitude of change demonstrated by youth
- Sustainability of impacts experienced by youth

#### 10.1.3 Data Sources

- Pre-post risk assessment data
- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Photo-elicitation Study

#### 10.1.4 Results

A number of qualitative and quantitative data sources that considered both NYVRP youth's and stakeholders' perspectives of the program were used to determine the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended outcomes. The NYVRP program logic model had identified several areas in which change was expected among involved youth, including:

- Increased prosocial attitudes and interpersonal skills
- Decreased bullying, aggressive, and violent behaviour
- More prosocial attitudes toward authority figures
- Increased mental health (including better understanding of psychosocial conditions and better coping skills)
- Decreased alcohol and drugs
- Increased school attendance and performance
- Increased employment-related activities
- Increased prosocial peer and family activity
- Participating in prosocial community events and activities
- Being engaged with Elders, Cultural Mentors, and cultural activities.

We will explore the extent to which each of these outcomes were achieved by presenting relevant information from a: a) photo-elicitation study with NYVRP youth; b) NYVRP Participant Survey; c) pre-post program risk assessment analysis; d) Community Stakeholder Survey; and e) stakeholder interviews.

#### *Youth's Perceptions of Outcomes Achieved*

**NYVRP Photo-elicitation Study.** Youth's perceptions of the impact the NYVRP had on them personally was obtained through two methods: a photo-elicitation study and the NYVRP Participant Survey. The same youth from Deschambault Lake who participated in the photo-elicitation study also completed the NYVRP Participant Survey. Focusing first on the photo-elicitation study, each youth was asked to select a photo, provide a written description of what the photo meant to them, and then discuss the photo and its perceived meaning as a group. The following six photos were selected by the youth. The written caption presents the written description the youth provided for their selected photo.

The majority of the photos the youth selected were taken by the HAWW during a hunting trip that had occurred earlier in the winter. Youth were relatively brief in their commentary about the photos, both in their written description and group discussion about the photos, yet the photos and the youth's perceptions of them offer important insight into the aspects of the program that were meaningful to them and the way in which the program helped them. Moreover, the youth's interactions with each other during the group discussion offered additional insight into the impact the program had on them.





*“The moose that we killed and feed all our family’s and it’s beautiful. It means a lot of beautiful food for our family’s a while now. Couple of ups and downs, but it’s good. It shows the success on what we do for NYVRP.”*

*“It’s about killing a moose. Nice moose meat”*



*“This photo is about cutting some moose meat.”*

<sup>25</sup> Photo 2 has been cropped since it was not possible to verify that all individuals in the photo gave their permission for the photo to be included in the report.



*“Going out hunting for a tasty moose.  
Hunting is enjoyable when you’re not  
getting very cold. Moose meat tastes good.  
It was fun – good.”*



*“Hunting. My first time going hunting.  
Some good activities.”*

Photo 6 (Not Shown):  
Group Photo at MaryAnn’s Culture Camp with Elders, Mentors, HAWWs,  
and NYVRP Youth Participants<sup>26</sup>

*“Culture camp with NYVRP for all three sites. Had good time and good  
laughs with the group. The NYVRP really enjoyed their time plus the  
beautiful view.*

<sup>26</sup> Photo 6 is not included in the report since it was not possible to verify that all individuals in the photo gave their permission for the photo to be included in the report.



The photos from the hunting trip showcased several steps in the process of taking and preparing a moose, including a picture of the moose where it had first fallen after being shot, cleaning the moose, loading the moose onto a sleigh to take it back home, and preparing the moose meat for eating. In nearly all of the photos, youth described the moose in terms of it being “*nice*,” “*good*,” or “*beautiful*” moose meat emphasizing that it’s a food source valued by the youth. Importantly, one youth described that it was “*moose for our family*.” This youth was pleased that he was able to contribute food to keep his family fed “*for a while*”. In the group discussion, food security emerged as an issue for the youth. When this same youth was asked what he liked best about the NYVRP, he commented “*The food. Anywhere we went there was food. With NYVRP, every place we went, there was food.*” Taken together, food security seemed to be a significant concern for this individual and he valued that the NYVRP provided him with opportunities to have food, either at NYVRP events or by helping him learn hunting skills that he, in turn, used to help feed himself and his family.

Two of the youth who selected pictures from the hunting trip stated that it was their first time hunting; one commented that “*it was fun. A good experience.*” Thus, the NYVRP was able to provide the youth with new, prosocial opportunities to which they had not previously been exposed. When one of these youth was asked what he learned through the experience, he commented “*I learnt how to cut a moose.*” While the youth struggled to articulate any deeper lessons that they learned from the hunting trip, it was clear based on the pride and enthusiasm in their voices that the hunting trip was a meaningful experience for them.

The final photo was the only photo that was not taken during the hunting trip. This photo was taken at Maryann’s Culture Camp; the photo was selected by two youth and the culture camp had been attended by three youth in the group. While the youth did not necessarily have a lot of words to describe what their time at the Culture Camp meant to them, it was clearly an overwhelming positive experience for the youth as all three who attended had wide smiles on their faces as soon as the photo was displayed on the screen. The written comments about the photo and the group discussion suggested that the youth enjoyed a sense of community and camaraderie at the culture camp. In fact, the physical affection that is captured in the final photo, where one youth has his arms around a friend, is an explicit symbol of the camaraderie the youth alluded to with his words. The youth also noted that there was “*no alcohol and no phones*” at the camp. According to the HAWW (who was presented during the group discussion), this meant the youth “*actually had to talk to each other, play games.*” Indeed, the youth commented that they valued the opportunity to meet new friends (as well as old friends from other communities) at the camp and that they “*had a little fun at Bingo.*”

Notably, the camaraderie the youth alluded to via the Culture Camp photo was also apparent during their interactions in the group discussion. The youth were all very respectful to each other throughout the session and took turns helping a youth who struggled with reading and writing. No comments were made about the youth’s literacy struggles, they just simply started helping him.

Another valuable component of the Culture Camp that was identified by the youth was the opportunity to spend time with the Elder. The Elder took them “*hunting for chickens*” and “*fishing out on the lake.*” They also did “*some traditional medicine picking.*” The youth also

commented that the Elder “*told us stories, that we have to be respectful.*” This led to a broader discussion of the role of Elders in the NYVRP where, again, the youth’s non-verbal behaviours suggested this was an important component of the program. The youth commented that it was mostly through the program that they were able to spend time with the Elder and that the Elder would help them with “*speaking Cree*” and “*picking out medicines.*” The emphasis on cultural activities in the NYVRP seemed to be one of the main features of the program that captured the youth’s interest.

The group discussion concluded with two broad questions about the NYVRP: 1) What’s been the best part of the NYVRP?; and 2) What’s been the greatest lesson you have learned from the NYVRP? In terms of what the youth liked best about the NYVRP, the youth most enjoyed “*meeting new people,*” “*driving around,*” “*the food,*” “*going on trips,*” “*culture camps,*” and “*the staff.*” One youth indicated that they are not able to leave their communities very often, which was likely the case for some of the other youth and may be one of the reasons why the youth enjoyed the NYVRP trips so much.

It was more difficult for the youth to identify the greatest lessons they have learned from the NYVRP, with only two of the youth providing answers to this question. The first youth indicated the lesson he learnt was to “*be a good role model.*” The second youth commented “*It kept me out of trouble. That’s for sure. Learned how to do stuff on the trips, like hunting.*”

The stakeholder interviews suggested that the NYVRP youth, in general, are not accustomed to articulating their thoughts. As a result, the photo-elicitation study may have been a difficult activity for them. In addition, some of the participants may have been reluctant to express their thoughts as they did not have an established relationship with the evaluator. Even so, the photo-elicitation study did lead to a greater understanding of the aspects of the program that youth most enjoyed, such as hunting trips, culture camps (including both the opportunity to participate in cultural activities and enjoy leisure time with others), opportunities to learn from Elders (e.g., hunting, fishing, medicine picking, stories), meeting new friends, spending time with the NYVRP staff, and having access to food. Several of these opportunities mapped directly onto the key outcome areas of the NYVRP including: a) increased prosocial attitudes and interpersonal skills; b) increased prosocial peers; c) increased participation in prosocial activities; and d) greater engagement with Elders and cultural activities.

**NYVRP Participant Survey.** Results from the NYVRP Participant Survey, which was conducted with 7 youth from Deschambault Lake, offered additional insight into the way in which the NYVRP helped the youth enrolled in the program. Youth were asked to self-report whether the NYVRP has helped them make improvements in a number of the outcome areas the program intended to target. The survey results suggested that the program was able to help the youth in a number of outcome areas.

Specifically, the youth believed the NYVRP helped them with a number violence-related outcomes: 86% believed they were less involved in fights and violence, 86% perceived they were getting in less trouble with the police, 57% indicated that they were less involved in bullying, 43% self-reported being less involved in gangs, and 29% indicated they were doing less tagging/graffiti (see Table 39).

Youth also believed that the program helped them become more connected to their cultures. For instance, the youth self-reported that they were doing more cultural activities (86%) and had stronger connections with Elders (74%). One youth also noted that the program helped with speaking Cree. In addition, 43% of the youth indicated that the NYVRP helped them become more involved in recreational activities.

Further, the youth perceived that the program helped with their familial and peer relationships—86% reported stronger family relationships and 74% indicated they had more positive friends. In addition, 43% felt more supported by the community after participating in the community. Importantly, one youth also indicated the program taught him how to help one another (which was explicitly observed during the photo-elicitation study).

Youth also perceived improvements in their school performance and attendance. Here, 74% self-reported getting better grades and 57% were attending school more often. Finally, the youth indicated some improvements in their mental health and addictions, including having better coping skills (74%), using drugs and alcohol less often (57%), and having better mental health (43%). Thus, from the vantage of the seven youth who completed the survey (which albeit is a limited sample size), they believed that the NYVRP had helped them in a number of domains.

**Table 39: Self-reported Outcome Areas in which NYVRP Participants (N=7) Believed the Program Helped Them**

| Areas in which the NYVRP has Helped the Youth | <i>n</i> (%) |
|---|--------------|
| Be less involved in fights and violence       | 6 (85.7%)    |
| Get in less trouble with the police           | 6 (85.7%)    |
| Have stronger family relationships            | 6 (85.7%)    |
| Do more cultural activities                   | 6 (85.7%)    |
| Get better grades                             | 5 (74.4%)    |
| Have better coping skills                     | 5 (74.4%)    |
| Have stronger connections with Elders         | 5 (74.4%)    |
| Have more positive friends                    | 5 (74.4%)    |
| Use drugs or alcohol less often               | 4 (57.1%)    |
| Be less involved in bullying                  | 4 (57.1%)    |
| Attend school more often                      | 4 (57.1%)    |
| Be less involved in gangs                     | 3 (42.9%)    |
| Do more recreational activities               | 3 (42.9%)    |
| Have better mental health                     | 3 (42.9%)    |
| Feel more supported by the community          | 3 (42.9%)    |
| Do less tagging/graffiti                      | 2 (28.6%)    |
| Other: Helping one another                    | 1 (14.3%)    |
| Other: Speaking Cree                          | 1 (14.3%)    |

Finally, while not formally a part of the NYVRP Participant Survey dataset, two Sandy Bay youth provided comments to their HAWW describing how the program has helped them. Both of these youth attributed their involvement in the NYVRP to putting them on a better path in life, with one of the youth indicating that she is no longer suicidal.

*This program really made me open my eyes and put me back into the right path.*  
(NYVRP Participant)

*It helped me control my emotions and how to cope with them. I was feeling suicidal and hopeless when I first joined and now I love life and I'm looking forward to the future.*  
(NYVRP Participant)

### ***Pre-Post Program Risk Analysis***

It was intended that a rigorous quasi-experimental design involving a comparison of youth's risk assessment scores upon entering the program to their scores at program exit and again at a 6- to 12-month follow-up period would comprise an important component of the impact evaluation. Unfortunately, only a limited pre-post program analysis is possible. Post-program YLS/CMI: SV scores were available for six youth (5 from Pelican Narrows, 1 from Sandy Bay). Similarly, post-program POSIT scores were available for 5 youth (1 from Pelican Narrows, 4 from Sandy Bay). Only one youth completed both a post POSIT and YLS/CMI: SV. No 6- or 12-month follow-up assessments were available for any youth. Further, among the youth who had completed pre- and post- YLS/CMI: SVs, two of the youth were considered "graduates" at the conclusion of the program, while three of the youth with pre-post-POSIT scores were considered program graduates. Given the small number of youth deemed program graduates by staff, these two subsamples seem to be comprised youth who may have been more successful than the average NYVRP youth. Finally, the length of time between the first and second YLS/CMI: SV scores for each participant as completion dates were not recorded when the YLS/CMI: SV was first conducted with the participants. Therefore, the length of time between the two measurement points is unknown. The number days between the completion of the first and second POSIT were available. The second POSIT was completed an average of 260 days or a median of 319 days after the first POSIT.

Keeping these limitations in mind, a paired-samples *t*-test of youth's pre-post YLS/CMI: SV scores revealed a significant decrease in the youth's risk levels after their participation in the NYVRP,  $t(5)=3.73$ ,  $p=.015$ . Upon starting the program, youth's mean scores on the YLS/CMI: SV ( $M=6.67$ ) suggested that they were high risk; however, after the program concluded, their mean scores ( $M=4.50$ ) suggested they were moderate risk (see Table 40). An examination of each of the items that comprise the YLS/CMI: SV revealed there was a significant change on one risk factor pre-post program: alcohol/drug problems. The risk assessment scores indicated that the none of the six youth had alcohol/drug problems following their involvement in the program.

**Table 40: Pre-Post-Program Comparisons of YLS/CMI: SV Risk Scores**

|                                | Pre / Post<br>Scores | Mean | Mean<br>Difference | <i>t</i> | df | Sig. |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|------|--------------------|----------|----|------|
| YLS/CMI: SV Total<br>Score     | Pre                  | 6.67 | 2.17               | 3.61     | 5  | .015 |
|                                | Post                 | 4.50 |                    |          |    |      |
| History of Conduct<br>Disorder | Pre                  | 1.00 | .17                | 1.00     | 5  | .36  |
|                                | Post                 | .83  |                    |          |    |      |
| School/ Employment<br>Problems | Pre                  | 1.00 | .33                | 1.58     | 5  | .18  |
|                                | Post                 | .67  |                    |          |    |      |
| Some Criminal<br>Friends       | Pre                  | 1.00 | .17                | 1.00     | 5  | .36  |
|                                | Post                 | .83  |                    |          |    |      |
| Alcohol/Drug<br>Problems       | Pre                  | .83  | .83                | 5.00     | 5  | .004 |
|                                | Post                 | .00  |                    |          |    |      |
| Leisure/Recreation             | Pre                  | .80  | .40                | 1.63     | 5  | .178 |
|                                | Post                 | .40  |                    |          |    |      |
| Personality/<br>Behaviour      | Pre                  | .83  | .50                | 2.24     | 5  | .076 |
|                                | Post                 | .33  |                    |          |    |      |
| Family<br>Circumstances        | Pre                  | 1.67 | .00                | .00      | 5  | 1.00 |
|                                | Post                 | 1.67 |                    |          |    |      |
| Attitudes/Orientation          | Pre                  | 1.67 | .17                | .42      | 5  | .695 |
|                                | Post                 | 1.50 |                    |          |    |      |

A paired-samples t-test of youth's pre-post POSIT scores also revealed a significant decrease in the youth's total POSIT score after their participation in the program,  $t(5)=3.73$ ,  $p=.015$ . The youth at a mean score of 92.30 on their first POSIT and a mean score of 59.80 on their second POSIT (see Table 41). Consistent with the YLS/CMI: SV, a review of the subscales revealed a significant pre-post difference on the Substance Use subscale where youth reported less substance use following their participation in the program (pre- $M=8.4$ ; post- $M=2.2$ ). In terms of their risk on this subscale, youth went from being high risk to moderate risk. There was also a significant difference on the mental health subscale (pre- $M=15.8$ ; post- $M=10.6$ ), where youth reported better mental health at the end of the program. They were still high risk in this domain at the program's end, but significantly less so. Finally, youth had significantly lower scores on the aggressive behaviour/delinquency subscale upon completion of the program (pre- $M=10.6$ ; post- $M=3.8$ ). Here, youth went from being high risk to moderate risk.

**Table 41: Pre-Post-Program Comparisons of POSIT Risk Scores**

|                                      | Pre / Post<br>Socres | Mean  | Mean<br>Difference | <i>t</i> | df | Sig. |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-------|--------------------|----------|----|------|
| POSIT Total Score                    | Pre                  | 92.60 | 32.80              | 3.10     | 4  | .036 |
|                                      | Post                 | 59.80 |                    |          |    |      |
| Substance Use                        | Pre                  | 8.40  | 6.20               | 5.36     | 4  | .006 |
|                                      | Post                 | 2.20  |                    |          |    |      |
| Physical Health                      | Pre                  | 3.80  | 1.00               | 1.58     | 4  | .19  |
|                                      | Post                 | 2.80  |                    |          |    |      |
| Mental Health                        | Pre                  | 15.80 | 5.20               | 4.06     | 4  | .015 |
|                                      | Post                 | 10.60 |                    |          |    |      |
| Family Relationships                 | Pre                  | 8.60  | 5.8                | 2.61     | 4  | .059 |
|                                      | Post                 | 2.80  |                    |          |    |      |
| Peer Relations                       | Pre                  | 7.80  | 2.60               | 1.81     | 4  | .144 |
|                                      | Post                 | 5.20  |                    |          |    |      |
| Educational Status                   | Pre                  | 17.20 | 4.40               | 2.37     | 4  | .077 |
|                                      | Post                 | 12.80 |                    |          |    |      |
| Vocational Status                    | Pre                  | 7.80  | .80                | .43      | 4  | .693 |
|                                      | Post                 | 7.00  |                    |          |    |      |
| Social Skills                        | Pre                  | 6.00  | 1.60               | 1.55     | 4  | .195 |
|                                      | Post                 | 4.40  |                    |          |    |      |
| Leisure/Recreation                   | Pre                  | 6.60  | .40                | .22      | 4  | .840 |
|                                      | Post                 | 6.20  |                    |          |    |      |
| Aggressive Behaviour/<br>Delinquency | Pre                  | 10.60 | 6.80               | 3.67     | 4  | .021 |
|                                      | Post                 | 3.80  |                    |          |    |      |

### ***Stakeholder's Perceptions of Outcomes Achieved***

Results from the Community Stakeholder Survey and stakeholder interviews will be presented together as there was a substantial amount of overlapping information between the two data sources.

**Enhanced self-esteem and confidence.** Before examining each of the intended outcomes, the stakeholder interviews revealed an important unintended outcome of the NYVRP: enhanced self-esteem. Improved self-esteem or self-confidence was not captured by the program logic model, yet it appeared to be an important precursor for many of the changes that were observed to occur among the youth. Indeed, the NYVRP staff in particular considered one of the successes of the program to be youth's willingness to "show" themselves to the HAWWs and others in the community and to leave behind part of the "shell" they had created to protect themselves from all the negativity in their lives. A respondent on the Community Stakeholder Survey also commented that the NYVRP youth "*talk more openly*" compared to before they



were in the program, while another commented that “*most are more willing to speak to someone (Elder, counsellor) than they ever have. More respectful of this process.*”

*They still, some of them still put up that persona of being tough, but that’s because they still face that. People still regard them as little shit disturbers, that’s just their way of dealing with that, it’s daily, they deal with that daily. That’s their shell. Once you get to work with them, they show you a completely different side, and they’re more willing to show you their skills. When you work on those skills and praise them, it makes them brave.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*We had kids that were so horrible. When we had the last community night here, those same kids were up on the stage singing. Bringing them out from that shell, that ugly shell that they placed around themselves, because they’re so beaten, so downtrodden and letting them come out and have happiness. To start doing things like singing karaoke, to start having full-on sentences, communicating. They’ve changed. These kids have changed.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*They’re more able to voice themselves. They come and tell you. This is how I’m feeling today. It’s not like before where you have to dig, dig, dig. I see confidence in them.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

Entwined in having a greater sense of confidence in themselves is that the youth also seem to have more optimism for their futures. One HAWW perceived that because the youth have “*more confidence, they believe in themselves that they can do better.*” There was also some anecdotal evidence through the following example one HAWW recalled with a youth that this greater sense of self-worth also buffered the youth from suicidal ideation.

*They used to post on Facebook that they wanted to die. Now, what you see is, I am who I am, whether you like or not, it’s best for me. You know I have struggles, but I’ll overcome them. That’s not how they write it, but that’s the message behind them.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

**Established trusting relationship with HAWW.** Another outcome of the program that does not fit well within the intended outcomes that were originally established in the program logic model, yet was identified by NYVRP staff as important outcome achieved by the program was the youth’s ability to establish a positive, trusting relationship with the HAWW. In some cases, having a positive relationship with the HAWW was one of the few times youth experienced a trusting relationship. For instance, one HAWW recalled a youth saying the following to her, “*I trust you and you’re the only person that I trust right now.*” This trust manifested itself at first by the youth being willing to express themselves to the HAWW (when they were unwilling to share their thoughts with others) and then progressed to the youth actively seeking out the HAWWs, as well as asking them for advice and guidance. In fact, some of the youth valued their relationship with the HAWW (and their involvement in the NYVRP) so much that they started to get into trouble when their contact with the program was reduced to transition them out of the program (this prompted the development of the Phasing Out process to allow youth to gradually adjust to having more limited involvement with the HAWW and the

NYVRP). This theme is revisited in a discussion on the sustainability of outcomes towards the end of this section.

*About 25% are not shy. The other 75% are totally shy. They'll talk with me, they'll open up but with other people, they will talk to me about it, a person will ask them a question and they will come and tell me what they think. I have to interpret the answers to them. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Where there was once resistance, it got to the point where the kids were going to the offices on their own and seeking the staff. Even when I or the HAWWs were out in the community, they would come seek us out and initiate those visits on their own. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*We've had youth that were really angry, really aggressive, youth who would hide from us. If they've seen us coming, they would hide. We had youth that were getting into trouble, who today, we have youth looking for us, asking if they can do something. If we can go for a ride, if we can go snaring, fishing. And youth that are not getting into trouble anymore, or that got into trouble because they don't want to leave the program. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*So the youth...they would show at her office, even if they didn't have an appointment, they would show just because it was safe. (Community Stakeholder)*

*Once they know that they have your support, that lifeline, they know to phone. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

**Prosocial attitudes and interpersonal skills.** One of the key themes that emerged with respect to whether the NYVRP led to improved prosocial attitudes and interpersonal skills is that, after participating in the program, youth became better at communicating or, perhaps more accurately, started to communicate more with others. It was perceived that youth have gone from not talking much to others to communicating and sharing complete thoughts.

*To start doing things like singing karaoke, to start having full-on sentences, communicating. They've changed. These kids have changed. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*The youth that I've worked with past and present, they've all been more, like social. They talk to people now. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Another important interpersonal skill the NYVRP staff believed the program helped the youth develop was compassion. For instance, they found that youth sometimes would get upset at them, yet they would later apologize for their behaviour. The staff also observed youth apologize to their peers after a disagreement or argument. Apologizing for negative behaviour was believed to be a new skill for some of the youth.

*You know, sometimes we have to go to them and talk to them to reinstall that, to reinforce it. Like okay, you can't be doing that. At one point, they'll tell you to fuck off, but then*

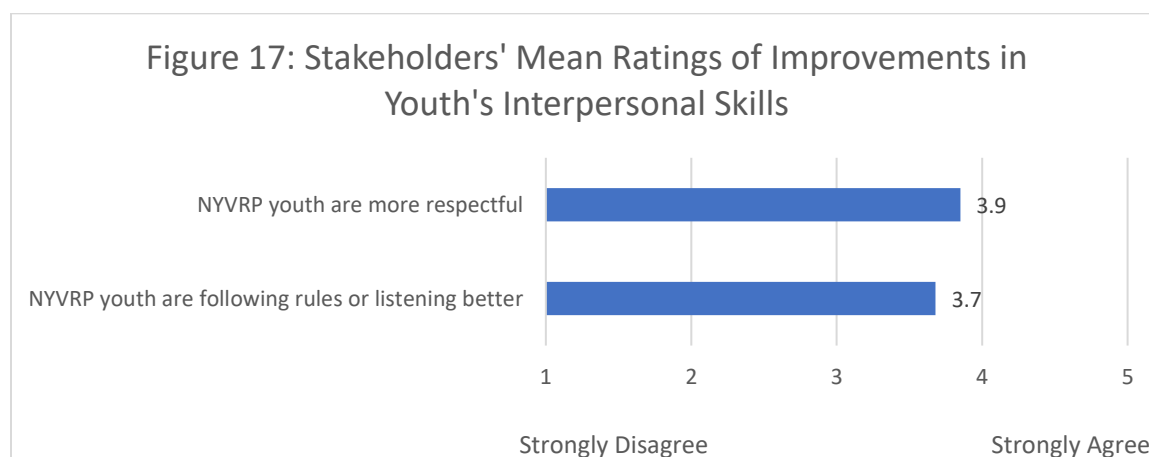
*later they'll say I know I did wrong and they're apologetic. Even getting them to say sorry, they would have never done that before. They show compassion to one another.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

It was also observed that youth who participated in the program had a better understanding of why rules are important. One NYVRP staff member commented, *“they're starting to understand—when we provide them structure, I know that they understand that rules are important so that mayhem doesn't occur and you can see it in the behaviour.”*

A handful of stakeholders also observed that the group cultural activities in which the youth participated also contributed to the development of the youth's interpersonal skills, as youth were required to work together and get along. It was noted that, despite these trips consisting of several high-risk youth, no incidents ever occurred on these trips and youth learned to share responsibilities (e.g., participating in chores) for maintaining the camp. Thus, the cultural activities were helpful for not only teaching youth about their culture, but also for helping them develop their relationship skills.

*They loved going out camping, learning how to hunt, prepare wildlife, and getting along with each other and learning how to work together.* (Community Stakeholder)

Respondents on the stakeholder survey also perceived that the NYVRP had led to some enhanced interpersonal skills among the youth. Specifically, 84% agreed (on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agreed) that youth were better at following rules or listening better, while 85% agreed or strongly agreed that youth were more respectful (see Appendix Q for a full breakdown of the survey responses). The mean scores on these items (see Figure 17) suggests moderate improvements in these areas.



**Decreased bullying, aggressive, and violent behaviour.** One of the most emphasized outcomes of the NYVRP was a decrease in bullying, aggressive, and violent behaviour. When asked in the interviews whether stakeholders perceived changes in this area, they considered this topic more broadly and included any type of antisocial/criminal activity in which the youth may be involved (e.g., mischief, breaking and entering). A majority of staff and stakeholders

commented that youth were “*staying out of trouble now*” and that many of the youth were “*off the radar of the RCMP.*” RCMP stakeholders (in both the interviews and stakeholder survey) also perceived a decrease in the frequency of youth crime in the communities where the NYVRP was implemented and attributed these decreases to the NYVRP. In particular, one RCMP stakeholder attributed the program’s success to continuing to work with the youth, even if they get into trouble after joining the program.

*The RCMP have notified us that they are in a better situation with us working with them. They’ve been acting different and off the radar of the RCMP.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*I know that when we have a community incident, something happens in the community crime-wise, none of our youth are involved.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*Crime rate, especially with these youth, has dropped.* (Community Stakeholder)

*We’ve [the RCMP] had less and less interaction with youth...Here, youth crime barely comes on our radar...the NYVRP has quite a bit to do with that. It’s not that they didn’t get in trouble anymore, they still did, but the NYVRP helped lessen it. And the NYVRP helped them get back on track and get focused. So they didn’t give up on them, and they do whatever they do that kept them focused and going in a different direction. Without that, our youth crime would have been much worse. Of course, it starts with drugs and alcohol, and then the assaults and property crime. And we’re already starting to see it creep up.* (RCMP)

In addition to reducing the frequency of crime, it was perceived that the severity of the crimes in which the NYVRP participants were involved had reduced following their participation in the program. It was also perceived by the RCMP that, when the youth do come into contact with the police, “*they seem to be easier to deal with.*” The RCMP stakeholders in particular considered these to be positive outcomes of the program.

*Well, I guess very bluntly it took some of the problems off our plate. We had a lot to deal with and it kept a lot of things from having us to deal with or, if it did, it was at a much lower level that it didn’t have to take a lot out of us to deal with...some cases...could have really gone off the rails, [the youth are] decent to deal with, and they both could have gone in a different directions. And it would have been that way if the NYVRP wasn’t here for a while to help steer him in another way.* (RCMP)

Corrections stakeholders also noted a reduction in breaches (especially those related to curfew and report), suggesting that those enrolled in the NYVRP were better at following their conditions, in part due to the support provided by the NYVRP.

*We are seeing a lot less breaches, kids weren’t just randomly picking up curfew breaches, reporting – reminding kids to report, bringing them, encouraging them to report.* (Corrections)

With respect to the youth's involvement in gang activity, the extent to which gang activity was a problem in the first place seemed to vary by community, with only Pelican Narrows being identified by stakeholders as having a prominent gang problem. That being said, there was some involvement in gangs among youth in Deschambault Lake and Sandy Bay as well. Stakeholders' perceptions of whether the NYVRP contributed to reduced gang involvement was mixed. For instance, one staff had observed that couple of youth have dropped their gang associations while other youth have maintained their gang affiliations. Consequently, the NYVRP may have resulted in reduced gang-involvement on a case-by-case basis, but this likely was not a widespread outcome of the program.

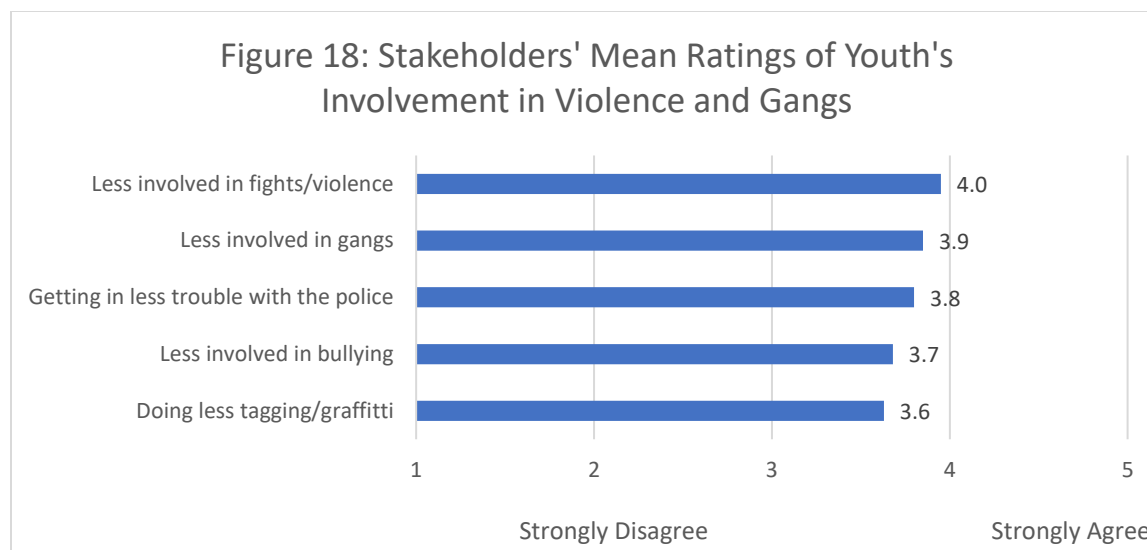
*I know the one boy, the brother is with the Terror Squad...and some of the deaths that happened in the families, opened their eyes, we've walked with them around this path, we know their story, let us know we have their support. They've really changed over from wearing gang colors to not. And its because they have that good positive support.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

*A lot of them, I know are still representing what they represent, but a couple of them have totally just dropped it. You know, that's not the life they want to live.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

Some staff also noticed small decreased in tagging in their community; however, the extent to which that was attributable to the NYVRP is unclear.

*There wasn't really much of gang involvement in the program, but it went down. There was a little bit of tagging TS, they're just wannabes. But it's died down. I told them: You don't have to call yourself gangs. You guys are friends, you can call yourself buddies. I see it in the community as well that there used to be a lot more tagging on buildings. It's kind of died down on buildings.* (NYVRP PMT/Staff)

The Community Stakeholder Survey also explored the extent to which stakeholders' perceived that the NYVRP contributed to reduced violence and gang activity among the youth. Consistent with the stakeholder interviews, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that, after joining the NYVRP, the youth were less involved in fights/violence (74%), less involved in gangs (65%), getting in less trouble with the police (75%), and were less involved in bullying (63%). Just over half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP or doing less tagging/graffiti (53%) after participating in the program. One limitation of these items is that we do not know how much youth were engaging in these activities before joining the program and the magnitude of the changes observed. Please see Figure 18 for mean scores on these items, which again suggest moderate changes were observed in these areas.



**More prosocial attitudes toward authority figures.** Several stakeholders perceived that some youth's attitudes toward the police have improved as a result of their participation in the NYVRP. In particular, it was observed that having opportunities to interact with the RCMP through the NYVRP reduced the hostility that youth had for the police and allowed them to develop a better understanding of the RCMP's role in the community in terms of keeping the community safe.

*Because we got to work so closely with the RCMP that the kids, the kids began to respect the RCMP and what they did. They realized that ....they were keeping them safe. Once they understood that, why they did their job, that sense of hostility that was there initially it kind of morphed into a friendship or a respect. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

Results from the Community Stakeholder Survey also suggested that youth had more positive attitudes toward the police with 68% agreeing or strongly agreeing the youth had improved attitudes (mean score =3.7). One respondent on the survey also indicated that the NYVRP had contributed to youth more respect for authority figures within the school as well: *"I believe they have helped their targeted audience. The kids seem better with authority at the school."*

**Increased mental health** (including better understanding of psychosocial conditions and better coping skills). The most prominent theme that emerged from the stakeholder interviews with respect to changes to the mental health of the youth who participated in the NYVRP is that none of the youth committed suicide while in the program, even though youth suicide (and attempted suicides) was prevalent in the communities throughout the duration of the NYVRP.

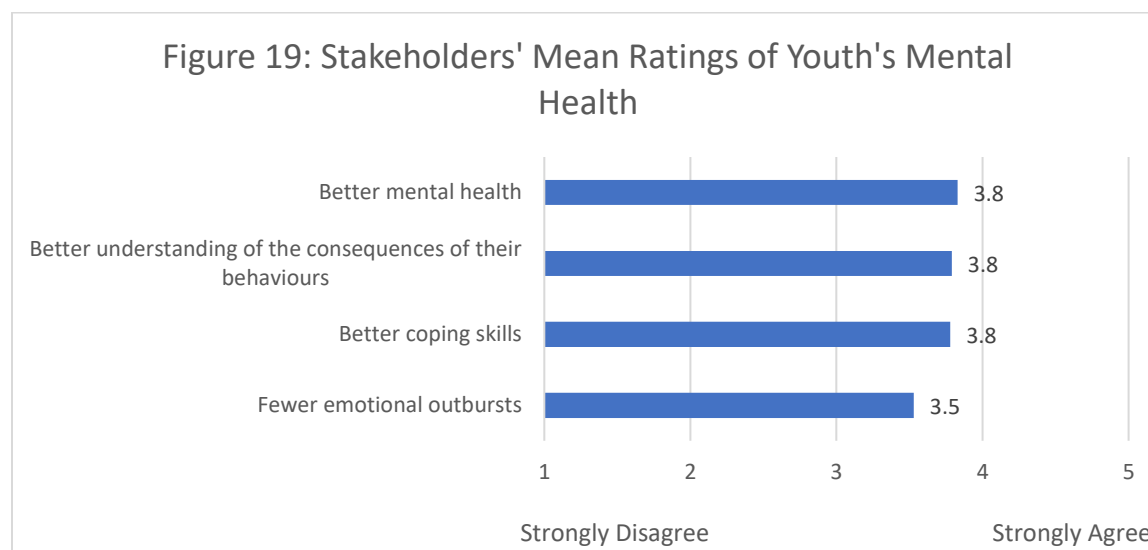
*On a weekly basis, there are suicide attempts at all three sites, some do not even get reported....last year, in Deschambault Lake, there were four suicides...In Pelican Narrows, since 2016, there have been a total of 21 suicides, last year alone there was a total of 6. Sandy Bay has not had any in recent years, but there have been countless attempts. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

NYVRP staff that commented that it was an important achievement of the program that none of youth enrolled in the NYVRP committed suicide over the three years in which the program was delivered, especially since the youth they target are high risk. Thus, reduced suicide ideation seems to be another unintended outcome of the program that was not initially conceptualized in the program's logic model.

*Not one of them, even though they're all high risk and don't have a reason to stick around because of their situations, not one of them has committed suicide. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*These youth can check out at any time. And not one of them has. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

The Community Stakeholder Survey more broadly assessed stakeholders' perceptions of the extent to which the NYVRP has led to improved mental health. The majority of stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that, after participating in the NYVRP, youth had better mental health (78%), a better understanding of the consequences of their behaviour (79%), and better coping skills (78%). Stakeholders perceived approximately equivalent gains in each of these areas. Fewer respondents perceived fewer emotional outbursts in the youth—here, only 63% of respondents agreed that the youth had fewer outbursts. Figure 19 presents the mean scores for each of these items. One respondent also offered the following comment on the survey with respect to youth's coping skills: *"I think they have found some ways to help deal with their stresses."*



**Decreased alcohol and drug use.** Stakeholders' perceptions of whether the NYVRP led to decreased alcohol and drug use was mixed. A handful of stakeholders perceived that the youth's alcohol and/or drug use has *"slowed down"* (NYVRP PMT/Staff) but individual success stories were often mentioned in making statements such as this. It was noted that some these youth drank smaller quantities of alcohol, while other drank alcohol less often. In contrast, other stakeholders perceived that there was no difference in the youth's alcohol and drug use: *"No difference there. Just the same every now and then"* (NYVRP PMT/Staff). Thus, the NYVRP may have helped some youth reduce their alcohol and drug use, but not others.

Results from the Community Stakeholder Survey paint a similar picture of ambivalence with respect to reduced alcohol and drug use not being a major achievement of the NYVRP. Just over half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed (53%) that youth used drugs or alcohol less often; a nearly equivalent number of respondents (47%) neither agreed nor disagreed that youth reduced their alcohol or drug use after joining the NYVRP (mean score on this item was 3.5).

**Increased school attendance and performance.** In general, stakeholders noted that there was not an increase in school attendance or performance (e.g., GPA) among youth enrolled in the NYVRP. It seemed that a number of issues influenced youth's interest and willingness in attending school, such as whether they got along with their school peers (i.e., had enemies at school), a lack of encouragement from home, and whether they were able to understand the material.

*They were fighting other peers at the school and they weren't didn't want to go back because of it. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*I think a lot of the issues with the youth who aren't going to school that I work with is – people who they don't get along with, rivals, other gang members, potential fights in school. (Corrections)*

*Some that were challenging were the ones that even though they were being encouraged to attend school, to continue their education, but I guess with little encouragement from home that they didn't finish high school or middle school. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

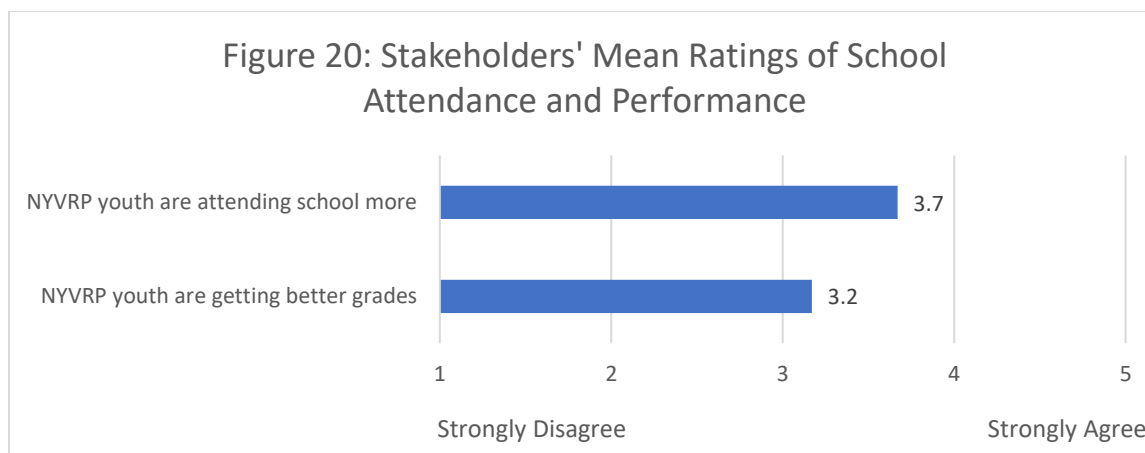
*No changes in school attendance. We would usually keep track of their attendance. Most of them were in high school and they would register and then drop out. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*Some of the kids I think are affected by FAS. They struggle so much with reading and any type of school work that I think they're discouraged or ashamed and they don't want to go to school, they feel embarrassed. I think that's another reason they won't go. (Corrections)*

The Community Stakeholder Survey results provided a slightly more positive perceptions of youth's school attendance (see Figure 20). Approximately 78% agreed or strongly agreed that youth attended school more after joining the NYVRP. However, respondents generally did not think the NYVRP led to better school performance—44% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.



Figure 20: Stakeholders' Mean Ratings of School Attendance and Performance

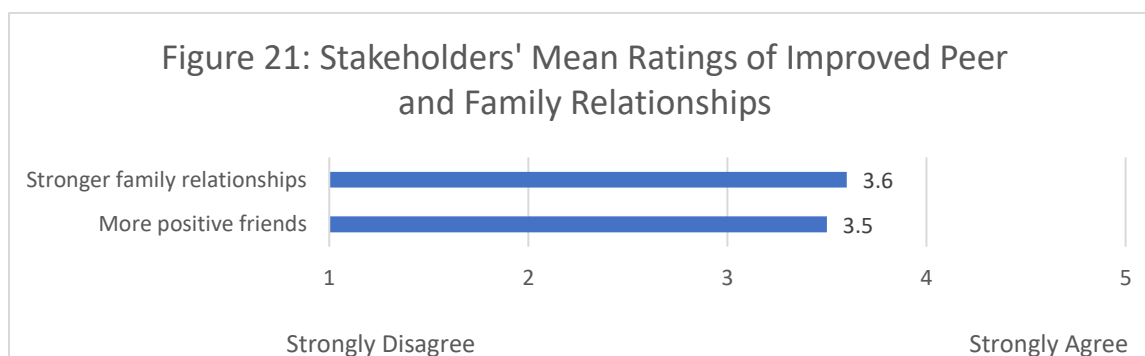


**Increased employment-related activities.** Few stakeholders mentioned any outcomes achieved by the youth with respect to employment-related activities. A small number of individual success stories were mentioned (i.e., one youth left the community and found employment, one youth maintained part-time employment); however, this did not seem to be a major outcome area, likely because the vast majority of youth were between the ages of 12 to 17 years. The Community Stakeholder Survey also supported this observation, as an equal number of participants (44%) strongly agreed/agreed or neither agreed nor disagreed that youth involved in the NYVRP gained employment-related skills (mean score = 3.3).

**Increased prosocial peer and family activity.** A handful of stakeholders commented that allowing the youth to interact with peers in prosocial setting was a positive outcome of the program. For instance, one Corrections interviewee stated, *“And just having them hang out with other kids is good and doing positive things.”* However, this outcome appeared more consistently in youth’s explanations of how the NYVRP has helped them.

Results from the Community Stakeholder Survey suggested that involvement in the NYVRP was perceived to lead to the youth having more positive friends (61.2% agreed or strongly agreed, although 17% disagreed with this statement). Respondents were split as to whether they agreed or strongly agreed (50%) that they NYVRP contributed to stronger family relationship or neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (44%). Figure 21 presents the mean scores for these items. Interestingly, one respondent commented that they believe that youth enrolled in the program have become role models to younger youth. This person commented, *“they’ve become role models and they assist the program as guest speakers to the younger ones”*

Figure 21: Stakeholders' Mean Ratings of Improved Peer and Family Relationships



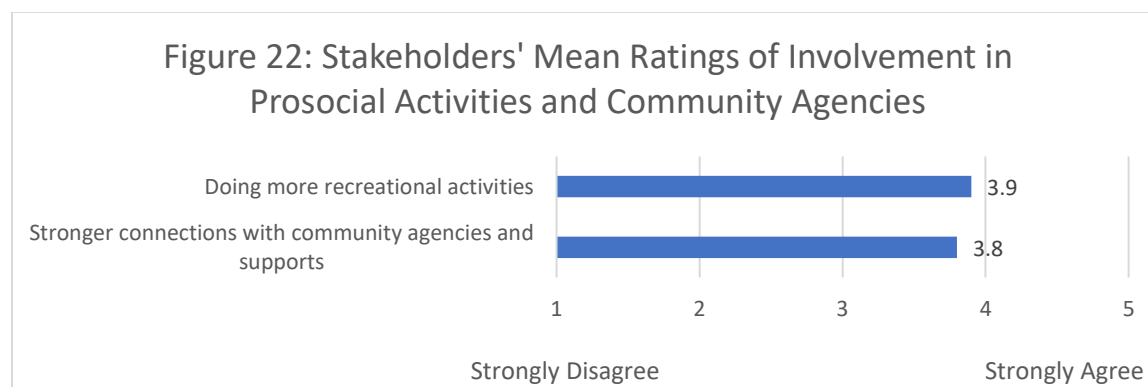
**Participating in prosocial community events and activities.** The majority of stakeholders acknowledged that the NYVRP youth were more involved in prosocial activities as a result of participating in the program and that this was an important outcome achieved by the program. The type of activities that the youth were involved in were detailed in Section 9.7; therefore, we will not review them in detail here. It was also observed that youth became involved in community events through their participation in the program.

*They were more engaged in leisure activities. They got opportunities to go out of communities that they wouldn't normally get. It would give them different experiences they wouldn't normally get. That was really good for our kids. (Corrections)*

*We've had kids be part of the community functions where their assisting – serving food, or cleaning up afterwards – they're apart of that. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

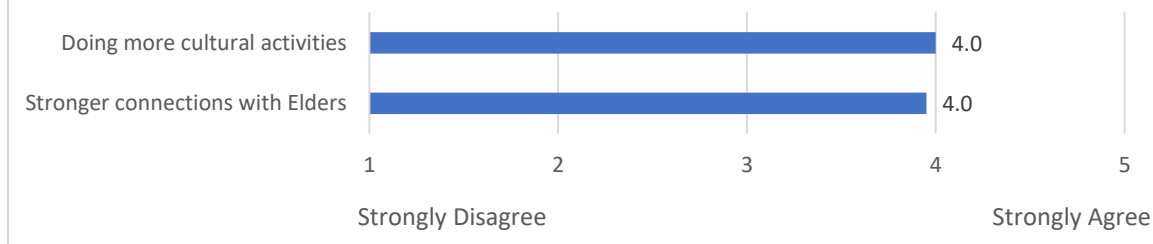
*And a lot of our youth, when we have community suppers and dances, they are always willing to volunteer. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

In line with the perception that youth became more involved in community events and prosocial activities as a result of participating in the program, the Community Stakeholder Survey results indicated that the majority of respondents perceived that, after joining the NYVRP, youth were doing more recreational activities (83% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement) and had stronger connections with community agencies and supports (74% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement). See Figure 22 for mean scores to these items.



**Being engaged with Elders, Cultural Mentors, and cultural activities.** Involving the youth in cultural activities, including being connected with Elders and Mentors, was widely acknowledged by stakeholders as an outcome that was achieved. Much of the discussion about the value of incorporating Elders and land-based learning in the NYVRP has been incorporated into previous sections (see Sections 9.1 and 9.7); therefore, results from the Community Stakeholder Survey will be focused on in this section. The majority of respondents (84%) agreed or strongly agreed that, after becoming involved in the NYVRP, youth were doing more cultural activities, while 80% agreed or strongly agreed that the youth had stronger connections with Elders. Figure 23 presents the mean scores for these items.

Figure 23: Stakeholders' Mean Ratings of Involvement in Cultural Activities and Connections with Elders



**Sustainability of outcomes.** While many stakeholders believed that the NYVRP had led to positive changes among the youth, there were concerns about the sustainability of these changes once the supports offered by the program are removed from the youth. For instance, RCMP detachments in two of the three communities noted an increased in criminal involvement during periods of time when NYVRP staff were unavailable and, therefore, less involved with the youth. It was understood that a return to high levels of criminal involvement was influenced by the fact that the youth had few, if any, other positive supports in the community. It had also been observed by the RCMP that some youth who were told that they were going to be exiting the program started to “*get in trouble*” again. It was believed that one of the reasons the youth started to get in trouble was so they could remain in the NYVRP.

*They youth crime is quite low. I think NYVRP involvement has a lot to do with that. We notice a spike when there less interactive opportunities between youth and NYVRP workers. (RCMP)*

*When NYVRP was not running over Christmas 2018, we saw almost 100% criminal involvement/substance abuse with the youths that were not able to be engaged with almost every youth during this time was arrested as they had no positive supports in the community. (RCMP)*

In fact, the lack of positive supports that youth may have in their lives led some stakeholders to believe that youth may only be able to temporarily sustain the positive changes they made in their lives while in the NYVRP. Some were concerned that the negative living environment in which so many of the youth live may work against the positive outcomes achieved through the NYVRP. It was also thought that this environment contributed to some of the youth maintaining a “persona” that may not easily be shed due to a need to protect themselves in their usual living environment. In this regard, one Corrections stakeholder commented that these challenges “*are just bigger than what the NYVRP can fix.*”

*The kids have a desire to be healthy, they want to be healthy, but what is happening on the homefront hinders that process. (NYVRP PMT/staff)*

*I think some of them still take on that persona of being a criminal and they almost don't want to hear what she has to say because it kind of goes against their persona. (NYVRP PMT/staff)*

In the future, if the NYVRP is discontinued, stakeholders believed that they would see youth crime start to rise again in their communities; however, some were optimistic that youth who had participated in the NYVRP would be able to maintain the positive gains they had made.

*I think without it, we're going to see the youth go down hill. We're going to see the crime escalate again, because the youth, especially the males that I'd seen, the males, their criminal activity lessened big time. (Community Stakeholder)*

*I'm thinking the connection, the connection, if the program is gone, I think we're going to see the youth, not necessarily the ones that have been worked with already...the ones that have been worked with have gained a lot more insight and they are staying out trouble. I think they've set more positive goals for themselves. (Community Stakeholder)*

The Community Stakeholder Survey results also supported the perception that youth will be able to maintain any positive gains made, as 90% agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP had sustainable, positive impacts on the clients (mean score=4.1).

### **10.1.5 Interpretation**

Data about the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended individual-level outcomes came from a variety of sources, including from the youth directly through a photo-elicitation study, the NYVRP participant survey, and a pre-post-program risk assessment analysis and from stakeholders through interviews and the Community Stakeholder Survey. Before delving into analysis vis-à-vis the extent to which the NYVRP achieved its intended outcomes, several unintended outcomes were identified by the staff, stakeholder, and youth participants of the evaluation, many of which serve as precursors to the main outcomes areas of interest to the NYVRP. For instance, enhanced self-esteem and confidence among the youth was identified by staff and stakeholders as an important achievement among the youth. It was perceived that this enhanced self-esteem allowed the youth to be more open with others and to communicate their thoughts and feelings more freely (e.g., to the HAWWs, to a counsellor, family and friends). As a result of this confidence, it was also perceived that they were more optimistic about themselves and their futures.

Another important outcome achieved by many of the youth that is not necessarily reflected in the program logic model was being able to establish a positive, trusting relationship with the HAWW. Many of the youth lacked positive, trusting relationship with others in their lives; as such, being able to establish such a relationship with the HAWW was an accomplishment. In fact, it was noted that the youth came to rely on the HAWWs and actively sought them out. Another unintended outcome of the NYVRP was that it helped the youth meet their basic needs. The photo-elicitation study revealed that food security is an issue for some of the youth, as a youth indicated that they appreciated that the NYVRP offered food at its various events and

included opportunities for the youth to go hunting (where they could provide food for their families).

Moving on to the anticipated outcomes of the program, there was evidence that the NYVRP led to reduced violence and fewer interactions with the police. On the NYVRP Participant Survey, nearly all (86%) of the youth indicated that they were less involved in the violence and were getting in less trouble with the police since they've been in the NYVRP. Stakeholders held similar perceptions of NYVRP youth's involvement in violence. Similarly, most stakeholders perceived that youth were having fewer interactions with the RCMP and, if they did come into contact with the police for criminal activity, the severity of their crime was reduced. Indeed, the majority of respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey agreed or strongly agreed that youth were less involved in fights/violence (74%), getting in less trouble with the police (75%) and less involved in bullying (63%). Corrections also perceived there to be fewer breaches about the youth enrolled in the NYVRP. Further, the pre-post risk assessment also supported reduced violence among the youth, as the POSIT subscale for aggressive behaviour/delinquency showed a significant decrease in aggressive/delinquent behaviour at program completion for the five youth who had completed two POSITs.

A related area in which the NYVRP was anticipated to bring about change was reduced gang involvement. The results were less clear that the NYVRP achieved this outcome. Youth violence seemed to be a bigger problem in the communities than gang involvement; therefore, much of the focus in the interviews and surveys was on violence rather than gang involvement. Even so, there was some indication that the program did help some of the youth reduce their involvement with gangs. For instance, 43% of youth who completed the NYVRP Participant Survey 65% of stakeholders on the Community Stakeholder Survey agreed that the NYVRP helped the youth be less involved in gangs. Overall, the stakeholder interviews suggested that the NYVRP may have resulted in reduced gang-involvement on a case-by-case basis, but this was likely not a widespread outcome of the program.

The NYVRP was also expected to lead to more prosocial attitudes toward authority figures. Results from the Community Stakeholder Survey suggested that youth did have more positive attitudes towards both the police and school staff. Youth were also expected to develop more prosocial attitudes and interpersonal skills. In line with this outcome area, staff and stakeholders perceived that youth were communicating better, developing compassion, and beginning to understand the importance of rules. It was also suggested that youth involved in culture camps developed their interpersonal skills on these trips, as they had to share responsibilities (i.e., chores) with their fellow peers to maintain the camp and had to get along with the other youth present on the trips. Overall, 84% of stakeholders agreed that the youth were better at following rules and 85% believed that the youth were more respectful.

Decreased alcohol and drug use was an additional outcome the NYVRP was expected to achieve. Stakeholders' perceptions of whether the NYVRP led to reduced alcohol and drug use was mixed, with a handful perceiving that some youth had "slowed down" their drug and alcohol use with others noting there was no difference in their drug and alcohol use. However, the pre-post analysis suggested that there was a significant reduction in substance use among the youth who completed both the YLS/CMI: SVs and POSITs. Given that the pre-post analysis was comprised

of a very limited sample size, it is unknown how many of the youth exhibited reduced substance abuse; however, it is clear that the 10 youth who completed post-YLS/CMI: SV and POSITs experienced improvements in this area.

Increased mental health was another key outcome area of the NYVRP. Here, one of the most notable outcomes identified by NYVRP staff and stakeholders was that there had been no completed suicides among youth enrolled in the NYVRP. Suicide was prevalent in all three communities during the time the NYVRP was being delivered and, despite the youth in the program being high risk, none of them took their lives. The program logic model does not specifically identify reduced suicidality as an anticipated outcome; however, it seems that the NYVRP buffers against suicide ideation/attempts. Overall, stakeholders agreed that, after the youth participated in the NYVRP, they had better mental health (78%) and better coping skills (78%). Conversely, a smaller proportion of youth (43%) on the NYVRP Participant Survey attributed the NYVRP to helping them to have better mental health, but a sizeable proportion (74%) agreed that the NYVRP helped them develop better coping skills. The POSIT pre-post analysis indicated that mental health was an area where youth demonstrated significant improvements over the course of the program. Overall, the various data sources suggest that the NYVRP did lead to better mental health.

The NYVRP was also expected to help youth improve their school performance and attendance, as well their employment-related activities. In general, stakeholders did not believe the NYVRP led to the youth achieving better grades. The findings were mixed as to whether they believed the NYVRP led to better attendance. The stakeholder interviews suggested it did not; while respondents of the Community Stakeholder Survey tended to agree that youth were attending school more after joining the NYVRP (78% agreed). From the perspective of the NYVRP youth, 74% of the youth who completed the Participant Survey believed the NYVRP helped them get better grades, while only 57% perceived it helped them attend school more. School data would have allowed us to determine whose perceptions were correct; however, this data was unavailable for the evaluation due to the COVID-19 pandemic wherein all schools were closed before the data could be obtained. Overall, stakeholders suggested that extraneous factors beyond the control the NYVRP influenced students' willingness to attend school including conflicts with peers, a lack of encouragement from home, and being unable to understand the material being taught. In terms of the youth's employment-related activities, stakeholders generally did not believe that the NYVRP had much impact in this area. This is likely due to the age of the youth involved in the program; the majority were between the ages of 12 to 17 years.

Increased prosocial peer and family activity was another key outcome area for the NYVRP. From the perspective of the NYVRP youth, this was an area where nearly all who participated in the photo-elicitation study and Participant Survey agreed they benefited from. Specifically, meeting new people was identified by the youth as one of the best parts of the program, with 74% indicating that they had more positive friends after joining the NYVRP. The photo-elicitation study also suggested that developing positive relationship with other youth was one of the reasons why the youth enjoyed the culture camps. The majority of youth (86%) also believed that the program helped them develop stronger family relationships. Stakeholders were less likely to believe that the NYVRP led to more positive friendships and stronger family

relationships; only 61% agreed that youth had more positive friends after joining the NYVRP and 44% neither agreed nor disagreed that the NYVRP led to stronger family relationships.

In addition to having more prosocial relationships, the NYVRP was also expected to help the youth become involved in prosocial community events and activities. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the youth were doing more recreational activities (83%) and had stronger connections with community agencies and supports (74%). Youth were less likely to believe that they were involved in more recreational activities and were more connected to the community. Here, only 43% indicated that they NYVRP helped them get involved in more recreational activities; 43% also reported that they felt more supported by the community.

Another outcome area in which the NYVRP was expected to have an impact was on increasing youth's connection to Elders/cultural Mentors and cultural activities. There was widespread agreement among youth and stakeholders that the NYVRP accomplished this objective. Cultural activities (e.g., hunting trips, culture camps, spending time with Elders) featured prominently in the photo-elicitation study where youth expressed that these were the best aspects of the NYVRP. They appreciated the opportunity to spend time with the Elders, listen to their stories, improve their ability to speak Cree, and learn skills such as hunting, fishing, and picking medicine. Further, on the NYVRP Participant Survey, 86% of youth said they were doing more cultural activities since joining the NYVRP and 74% had stronger connections with Elders. Similarly, the majority of stakeholders agreed that, after joining the NYVRP, youth were more involved in cultural activities (84%) and had stronger connections with Elders (80%).

Finally, the NYVRP was expected to lead to lower risk ratings among the youth enrolled in the program. The pre-post-analysis did find that youth had lower risk scores on the YLS/CMI: SV after the program ended wherein youth were found to be 'high risk' upon starting and 'moderate risk.' Similarly, the youth's post-POSIT scores were significantly lower than their pre-scores, with significant decreases occurring in the domains of substance use, mental health, and aggressive behaviour/delinquency. However, the limited number of youth who had pre-post assessments (6 had pre-post YLS/CMI: SVs and 5 had pre-post POSITs) limits the extent to which these findings are generalizable to the program as a whole. Another limitation of this analysis is that no 6- or 12-month follow-up assessments are available; therefore, it is unknown how long the NYVRP youth are able to sustain the gains they made while in the program. Several stakeholders were skeptical that youth will be able to maintain the outcomes they achieved in the program, as they recognized that the youth experience a lot of negative influences in their lives (e.g., poor parental supervision, poverty, anti-social peers) and that, in many cases, the HAWW was one of the only positive supports they had. In fact, when the HAWWs were unavailable one Christmas, the RCMP noted that several youth became involved in criminal activities. Thus, the sustainability of the outcomes achieved by the youth is a real concern for the NYVRP.

In conclusion, the available evidence suggests that the NYVRP has achieved many of the intermediate outcomes it expected to achieve. In particular, reducing youth's involvement in violence and increasing youth's connection to Elders and cultural activities emerged as the two most prominent areas in which both stakeholders and youth agreed positive changes occurred. In general, stakeholders and youth also agreed that the NYVRP led to improved mental health,

more prosocial attitudes toward authority figures, increased prosocial attitudes, and improved interpersonal skills. Further, youth believed that the NYVRP led to better school performance, more prosocial peers, and stronger family relationships; however, stakeholders were less likely to perceive that changes had occurred in these areas. Conversely, stakeholders perceived the NYVRP led to greater participation in recreational activities, but youth were less likely to believe so. There was also tentative evidence that participation in the NYVRP led to lower risk scores among the youth (i.e., youth went from being high to moderate risk). Thus, despite the limitations affecting the strengths of the conclusions that can be drawn (i.e., small sample sizes for the photo-elicitation study, NYVRP participant survey, and pre-post analysis; lack of follow-up data from pre-post analysis), the results from various data sources were largely consistent, suggesting that the NYVRP achieved many of its intended outcomes.



## 10.2 Recidivism and Desistance Analysis (Remand and Custody)

### 10.2.1 Evaluation Questions

- Did the NYVRP prevent recidivism and reduce contact with the criminal justice system?

### 10.2.2 Indicators

- Number of participants taken into custody and/or remanded after starting the program,
- Amount of time passed since the program start time of participants until the first custody or remand order by the court,
- Amount of time that the participants who recidivated spent in the program,
- Frequency of contact with the criminal justice system before and after the program.

### 10.2.3 Data Sources

- Criminal Justice Information Management System

### 10.2.4 Results

The analysis of the court orders for the participants showed that 21 out of 97 NYVRP participants (22%) were taken into custody after they started the program (see Table 42). Among these 21 participants, there were participants who were taken into custody only once while there were those who were taken into custody up to 20 times. The mean frequency of being taken into custody was 4.14. Further, 16 participants were remanded after they started the program. The range for the number of times participants entered remand was the same as the range for the number of times participants were taken into custody. The average frequency of being remanded was 4.63.

**Table 42. Frequency of Custody and Remand After Starting Program**

|   | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean |
|---|----|---------|---------|------|
| Taken into custody after starting program | 21 | 1       | 20      | 4.14 |
| Remanded after starting program           | 16 | 1       | 20      | 4.63 |

The earliest contact with the criminal justice system among the participants was 10 days after starting the program (see Table 43). The time length between the program start date and first custody order date ranged between 10 and 1,014 days. The range was between 10 and 679 days for the remand orders. The mean number of days in program for the participants who were taken into custody was 436.72 (Min:26, Max: 963) and the mean number of days for those remanded was 495.07 (Min:53, Max: 963).

**Table 43. Number of Days to First Court Order and Days in Program**

|   | Minimum | Maximum | Mean   |
|---|---------|---------|--------|
| <b>Participants Taken into Custody after Starting the Program</b> |         |         |        |
| Days from program start date to first order                       | 10      | 1014    | 365.48 |
| Days in program   | 26      | 963     | 436.72 |
| <b>Participants Remanded after Starting the Program</b>           |         |         |        |
| Days from program start date to first order                       | 10      | 679     | 341.47 |
| Days in Program   | 53      | 963     | 495.07 |

Among the participants who came into contact with the criminal justice system after starting the program, 6 were taken into custody and remanded once (see Table 44). Ten participants were taken into custody between 2 and 4 times, while four were remanded between 2 and 4 times. There were two participants taken into custody and three participants who were remanded between 8 and 20 times.

**Table 44. Frequency of Custody and Remand After Starting Program**

| Frequency     | Number of Participants Taken into Custody | Number of Participants Remanded |
|---------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Once          | 6   | 6                               |
| 2 to 4 times  | 10  | 4                               |
| 5 to 7 times  | 3   | 3                               |
| 8 to 20 times | 2   | 3                               |

Table 45 shows the number of participants who were taken into custody or remanded within various time ranges between the program start date and court order. The highest frequency of contact with the criminal justice system was between 1 and 2 years after the program start date. Almost all of the participants who came into contact with the criminal justice system after starting the program did so within the first 2 years.

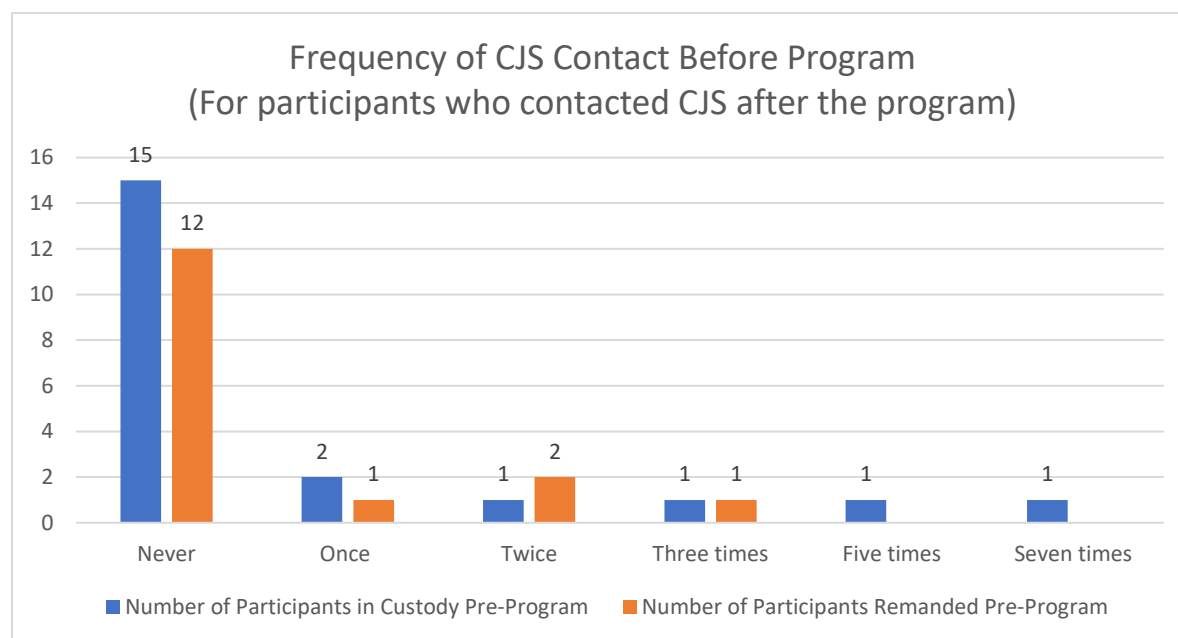
**Table 45. Time from program start date to first order**

|                   | Number of Participants Taken into Custody | Number of Participants Remanded |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Within 1 month    | 1   | 1                               |
| 2-3 month         | 4   | 2                               |
| 4-6 month         | 3   | 2                               |
| 7-<12 months      | 4   | 3                               |
| 1-2 years         | 7   | 7                               |
| More than 2 years | 2   | 1                               |

Among the 21 participants who were taken into custody after starting the program, 15 had never been taken into custody before they started the program (Figure 24). Similarly, twelve out of 16 participants who were remanded after starting the program had never been remanded before the

program. Figure 24 shows the frequencies of contact of the participants who were remanded or taken into custody after starting the program with the criminal justice system before the program.

**Figure 24. Frequency of Contact with the Criminal Justice System Before Program**



The recidivism rate among the NYVRP participants was calculated based on the number of participants who were remanded or taken into custody for any type of offense. Two types of recidivism were included in these numbers: (1) those who were remanded or taken into custody both before and after they started the program, and (2) those who were remanded or taken into custody multiple times after they started the program although they had no records before the program. We found that the recidivism rate was 15.4% based on the custody rates, and 11.3% based on the remand rates (see Table 46).

**Table 46. Recidivism rates based on remand and custody orders**

|                | Both before and after starting program | Multiple times after starting program | Total (Recidivism) |      |
|----------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------|
|                | <i>N</i>                               | <i>N</i>                              | <i>N</i>           | %    |
| <b>Custody</b> | 6                                      | 9                                     | 15                 | 15.4 |
| <b>Remand</b>  | 4                                      | 7                                     | 11                 | 11.3 |

### *Desistance*

The analysis of the remand and custody orders of the court for the program participants also indicated the number of participants who desisted from crime after starting the program. Twelve out of 16 participants (75%) who were remanded before the program were not remanded after starting the program. Similarly, 9 out of 15 participants (60%) who were taken into custody

before the program were not taken into custody after starting the program. Among the participants who were not remanded or taken into custody after joining the NYVRP, the average frequency of being taken into custody before program was 3.22 (Min: 1, Max: 9) and the average frequency of remand was 3.83 (Min: 1, Max: 15) (see Table 47).

**Table 47. Pre-Program CJS Contact Frequency of the Participants who Desisted**

|                     | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean |
|---------------------|----|---------|---------|------|
| Custody Pre-Program | 9  | 1       | 9       | 3.22 |
| Remand Pre-Program  | 12 | 1       | 15      | 3.83 |

Among the participants who desisted from crime, the days spent in the program was recorded in the database for 8 participants, and the average number program days for those participants was 399.91 (Min: 14, Max: 895; see Table 48).

**Table 48. Days in Program of the Participants who Desisted**

|                 | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean   |
|-----------------|---|---------|---------|--------|
| Days in Program | 8 | 14      | 895     | 399.91 |

### 10.2.5 Interpretation

The analysis of the court order data (remand and custody) indicated that nearly 22% of all NYVRP participants were taken into custody and/or remanded after they started the program. The recidivism rate among the participants was 15.4% based on the custody rates, and 11.3% based on the remand rates. In a study that examined the recidivism rates of 328 young offenders at different risk levels, it was found that 26% of youth in the sample re-offended within 12 months (Onifade et al., 2008). The recidivism rates ranged in the sample based on the risk levels assessed through the YLS/CMI scores as following: 11% ( $n=82$ ) of low-risk youth, 26% ( $n=167$ ) of moderate-risk youth, and 39% ( $n=79$ ) of high-risk youth. Based on this finding, it can be said that the recidivism rate of NYVRP participants was lower than what was found in this study. It is noteworthy that the vast majority (92%) of the NYVRP participants included in this analysis were found to be at high-risk based on their YLS/CMI: SV scores. Thus, the recidivism rate of the high-risk youth in Onifade et al.'s (2008) study is two times higher than the rate of NYVRP participants. On a positive note, 12 NYVRP participants desisted from crime after starting the program. That is, they have not been in contact with the criminal justice system since they started the program (even though they did have contact before the program).

Among the participants who were taken into custody after starting the program, the average number of days spent in the program was higher than a year. Indeed, there were participants who spent up to three years in the program but then were taken into custody. In a study that analyzed the state criminal-history repository in the United States to estimate the average time to rearrest, Blumstein and Nakamura (2009) found that those who committed robbery, burglary, or aggravated assault crimes in the past have the highest probability of reoffending within a few years after the first crime, and the probability of reoffending steadily declines afterward. In a similar vein, our analysis of the court order data revealed that approximately 95% of the participants who were remanded or taken into custody relapsed within the first two years after

they started the program. This finding suggests that, if the program can lead to the prevention of relapse within the first few years, the probability of reoffending will be significantly decreased.

It is important to note that 78% of the NYVRP participants ( $N=97$ ) have not been in contact with the criminal justice system since they started the program although nearly all were at high risk in terms of offending when they started the program according to their initial risk assessment scores. Also, 75% of the 16 participants who were remanded before the program and 60% of the 15 participants who were taken into custody pre-program did not recidivate after starting the program. Therefore, overall, the program was successful at preventing recidivism or initial offending for the majority of the participants. To identify the long-term impact of the program, a follow up analysis on the records of the participants is required.

Recidivism rates have been used to measure criminal justice success for a long time. However, recent discussions in the literature suggest that recidivism should not be used as the sole measure of success of community-based justice programs as it is not a robust measure of effectiveness (Butts & Schiraldi, 2018). In that sense, focusing only the recidivism rates of the participants in such programs might lead policymakers and the public to mistakenly compare dissimilar populations and put more emphasis on negative outcomes. It also allows for the possibility that other important positive impacts made by the program (e.g., personal growth, improved attitudes, enhanced skills and relationships) are overlooked. Moreover, when recidivism rates are calculated based on police arrests, the results will be more misleading as police arrests might be partially a result of differential policing practices in minority communities (Goff et al., 2016). Given the fact that the NYVRP program was implemented in predominantly Indigenous communities, our findings on the recidivism rates and their implications for the program's effectiveness should be taken with caution.

### 10.3 Police Encounters among NYVRP Youth

#### 10.3.1 Evaluation Questions

- Did the NYVRP reduce contact of the youth with the law enforcement?
- Did the NYVRP reduce the severity of crimes that the youth were involved?
- Did the NYVRP reduce the victimization of the youth?

#### 10.3.2 Indicators

- Reduced number of police encounters per year
- Reduced number of incidents in the broad categories “crime against persons” and “crime against property” per year
- Reduced frequency of contact of the participants with police per year
- Role of the youth in the incidents (suspect/subject, victim, witness)

#### 10.3.3 Data Sources

- De-identified RCMP data

#### 10.3.4 Results

The analysis of the RCMP data on police encounters with the NYVRP youth indicated that the average number of incidents per youth decreased in the first year of the program and remained stable in the second year (Figure 25). However, there was an increase in the average number of incidents in the last year of the program. In the year before the program started, there were 5.89 incidents per youth where the NYVRP youth encountered the police as the suspect or subject (perpetrator) of the crime, and this number decreased to 4.76 when the program started but increased to 5.73 by Year 3.

**Figure 25. Average Number of Police Encounters of Youth as Suspect/Subject (per Year)**

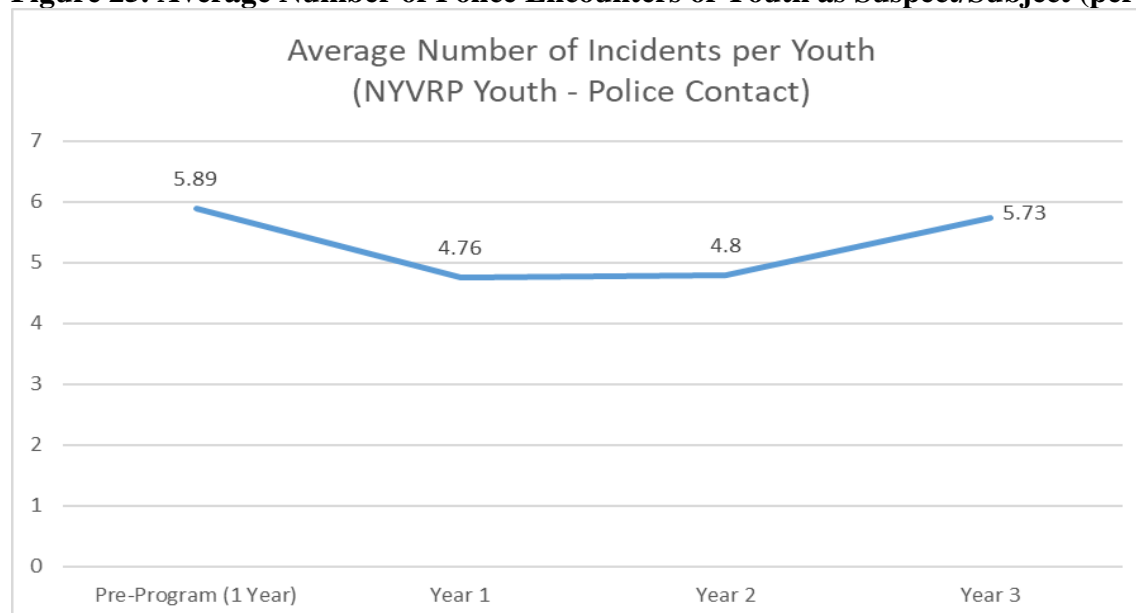


Table 49 indicates the frequencies of police encounters of the NYVRP youth as suspect/subject. In the year before the program started, 23 (of 42) participants captured within this time period had no encounters with police. Nearly 39% of the youth encountered the police between 1 and 3 times in the same year. There were substantially fewer youth who had no encounters with the police during the program years. In year 1, there was 9 youth with no police encounters whereas this number increased to 10 and 12 in year 2 and 3, respectively. Similarly, there was an increase in the number of youth with very frequent encounters with police (i.e.,  $\geq 10$  times) throughout the program years when compared with the year prior to the NYVRP's implementation. Remarkably, during the last 6 months of the program, 30 youth did not have encounters with the police as a suspect/subject.

**Table 49. Frequencies of Police-Youth Encounter as Suspect/Subject of Crime Per Year**

|                      | Never | 1-3 times | 4-6 times | 7-9 times | $\geq 10$ times |
|----------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Pre-Program (1 year) | 23    | 32        | 8         | 10        | 7               |
| Year 1               | 9     | 31        | 21        | 9         | 10              |
| Year 2               | 10    | 27        | 22        | 8         | 13              |
| Year 3               | 12    | 33        | 8         | 12        | 15              |
| Last 6 months        | 30    | 32        | 8         | 6         | 6               |

The data was also analyzed by examining the broad categories of crime (i.e., crimes against persons and property) in which the youth were involved and their roles in the incidents (see Table 50). In total, there were 421 criminal incidents against persons perpetrated by the NYVRP youth and 515 incidents against property. For 755 of the incidents, the type of crime was not given in the data. In the last year of the program, there was a slight decrease in the crimes against property perpetrated by the NYVRP youth; however, crimes against persons increased.

Further analysis of the types of crime revealed that 68 out of 82 youth (83%) were involved in both crimes against persons and property as subject or suspect of the crime. Seven participants were involved only in crimes against property and the same number of participants were only involved in crimes against persons.

There was also an increase in the number of victimizations the program youth experienced throughout the years. The number of cases where the youth were witnesses was similar to the number of victimization cases across the four years. When youth were victimized, the majority of the incidents were related to crimes against persons.

**Table 50. Roles of the Youth in the Police-Youth Encounter Incidents Per Year**

| Crimes against Persons  |             |        |        |        |       |
|-------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Role of the Youth       | Pre-Program | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Total |
| Suspect/Subject         | 80          | 94     | 98     | 149    | 421   |
| Victim                  | 21          | 28     | 24     | 33     | 106   |
| Witness                 | 26          | 23     | 31     | 25     | 105   |
| Crimes against Property |             |        |        |        |       |
| Suspect/Subject         | 121         | 154    | 133    | 107    | 515   |
| Victim                  | 1           | 2      | 2      | 2      | 7     |
| Witness                 | 6           | 8      | 8      | 12     | 34    |
| Total                   |             |        |        |        |       |
| Suspect/Subject         | 201         | 248    | 231    | 256    | 936   |
| Victim                  | 22          | 30     | 26     | 35     | 113   |
| Witness                 | 32          | 31     | 39     | 37     | 139   |

Figure 26 shows the average number of incidents per youth for different types of crime. The average number of crimes against property remarkably decreased once the NYVRP was implemented and continued to steadily decrease throughout the program years. There was also a decrease in the crimes against persons in the first two years of the program; however, in the last year of the program, this number reached to a level which was higher than the year before the program was implemented.

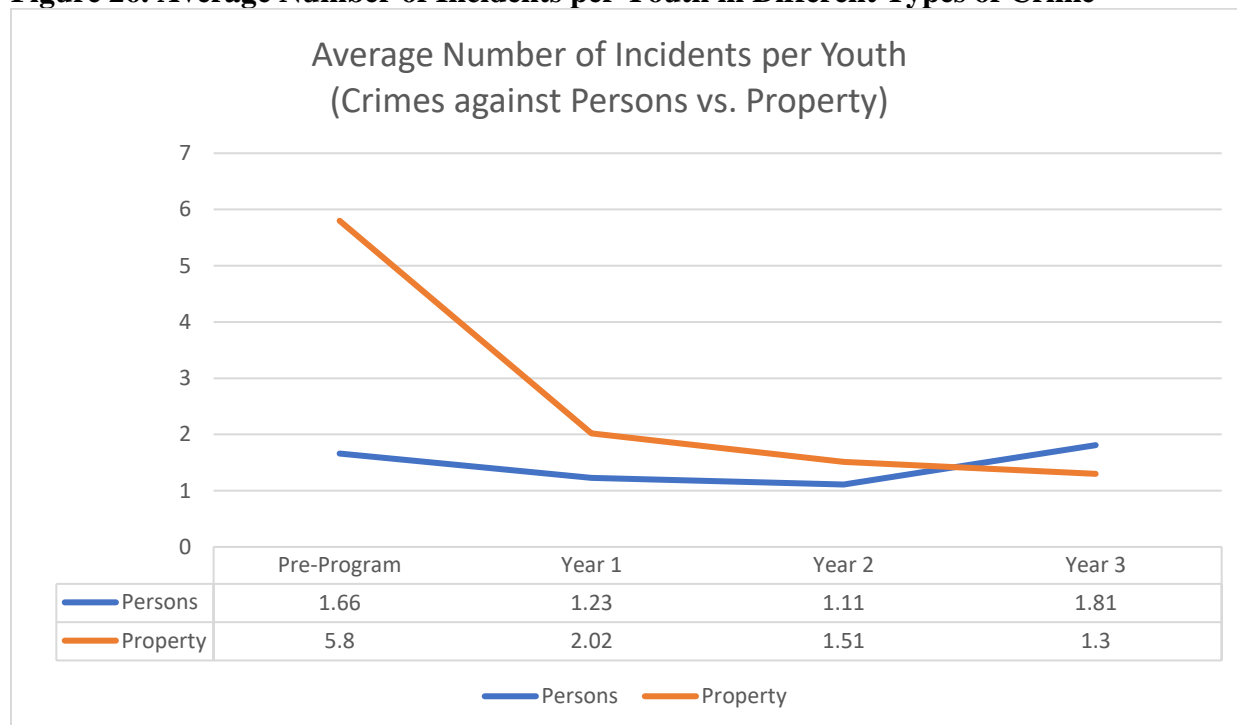
**Figure 26. Average Number of Incidents per Youth in Different Types of Crime**



Table 51 shows the frequency of victimization among the youth throughout the four years included in the dataset. Nearly 30% ( $n = 23$ ) of the youth never had an encounter with the police as a victim during this period. Conversely, 64% of the program youth had an encounter with the police as a victim between 1 and 3 times during the same period. Five participants were victimized between four and seven times.

**Table 51. Frequency of Victimization of the NYVRP Youth (March 2016 – April 2020)**

|                 | Never | 1-3 times | 4-7 times |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|-----------|
| Number of Youth | 23    | 53        | 5         |
| % of Youth      | 30%   | 64%       | 6%        |

### 10.3.5 Interpretation

The NYVRP program delivery model focused more on support and rehabilitation rather than on strict supervision by police and probation officers. The goal of the program was to prevent violence and other related problems among the program youth, which should, therefore, reduce contact between the youth and the criminal justice system. An aggregate level analysis of the RCMP data on the program youth indicated that the average number of interactions between the youth and police decreased in the first two years of the program but increased in the last year (yet was still slightly below the average number of incidents documented the year before the program began). Among these incidents, the increase was more visible in the crimes against persons than those against property, which is somewhat unexpected given that the NYVRP was intended to target violent behaviours. However, it is possible that some of the gang-related behaviours (e.g., tagging) that the NYVRP was also expected to influence may be captured by the decrease in property crimes. Without knowing more details about the crimes in which the youth were involved, it is difficult to comment further on this trend. The frequency of contact with police for some of the youth also increased. Indeed, the number of youth who had encounters with police more than 10 times a year doubled in the last year of the program when compared with the year before the program began.

The increased average number of incidents in the final year of the program may be a reflection of how long changes made while in the NYVRP can be sustained by the youth. Given that the last year of data largely reflected data from youth who had already exited the program, it may be that the effects of participating in the program had started to wear off by this time. That is, the lower average number of encounters in Year 1 and 2 when the majority of youth were actively participating in the program may indicate that the NYVRP reduces the youth's involvement with the police while youth are active in the program or in the short-term following program completion but may be less effective at reducing police encounters in the long-term.

Although the increasing average number of police contacts among the program youth in the last year of the program, specifically in the crimes against persons, is concerning, the findings should be considered with caution because of three limitations of the data used in the current analysis. First, the data only allowed us to analyze the police contact information at the aggregate level. Therefore, we could not conduct an individual level analysis that could have more precisely indicated whether the police encounter was before or after the youth attended the program. Second, the latest available data on police encounters of the youth was from the end of March

2020 which was the last month of the program. The impact of the program may have not been apparent in such a short period for some youth. To better understand the program impact on the last cohort of the program, data from the one- to two-year period following their exit from the program needs to be analyzed. Further, the timeframe used to analyze the impact of the program on the youth from different cohorts (i.e., program years) needs to be consistent (e.g., within 6 months after attending the program). The current data does not allow such a consistent analysis. Third, the age of youth is an important factor for police encounters both for legal reasons and differential impacts of developmental factors on criminality at various ages. The data did not provide the information on at what age the youth encountered the police. The ages of NYVRP youth ranged between 12 and 24 years. The factors behind the police encounters of a 12-year-old child and 24-year-old young adult might be very different and, without knowing this detail, it is difficult to comment on the impact of the program on police encounters and identify whether the desistance of older youth from crime is partially because of their maturity level.

An important finding of the current analysis was the high rates of victimization of the program youth. More than two-thirds of the youth were a victim of a crime at least once between 2016 and 2020. This rate is higher than the victimization rate among the youth in the NYVRP communities. In the community youth survey that we conducted for the 2018-19 process evaluation of the NYVRP, 47% of the community youth who completed the survey ( $N = 100$ ) reported that they were physically assaulted in their communities (Jewell et al., 2019). The high levels of victimization both among the NYVRP participants and the community youth can be attributed to the high level of criminality and gang involvement in the communities. Further, research has shown that the youth who are at high risk in terms of violent behaviours and who are involved in the juvenile justice system are at especially high risk for exposure to violence (Kretschmar et al., 2017). In line with this previous research, the fact that almost all NYVRP clients are at high risk partially explains the high rates of victimization among them.

## 10.4 Community-level Intended and Unintended Outcomes

### 10.4.1 Evaluation Questions

- Did the program produce the intended outcomes in the intermediate and long-term?
- What unintended outcomes, both positive and negative, did the NYVRP produce?

### 10.4.2 Indicators

- Intended outcomes achieved
- Unintended outcomes that occurred

### 10.4.3 Data Sources

- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Key Stakeholder Interviews

### 10.4.4 Results

#### *Stakeholder's Perceptions of Community-level Outcomes Achieved*

There were a number of community-level outcomes the NYVRP was expected to achieve, including:

- Increased community involvement/mentorship to address gangs and violence
- Increased family participation in community activities
- Increased agency collaboration
- Increased community cooperation with policing
- Sustained linkages between community agencies, RCMP, and Corrections
- Greater sense of belonging as community members
- Increased community capacity to address youth violence and gangs

Many of these outcomes have been explored in detail in previous sections. For instance, Section 9.2 outlined the extent to which community agencies participated in the NYVRP's Oversight and Advisory Committees, while Section 9.7 examined their participation in the Core Teams. It was noted that participation in all of these committees/meetings had declined over the past year and the reasons for those declines were explored extensively. Further, Section 9.7 also discussed in detail the number of Elders and Mentors that have supported the program and the ways in which they have done so. As a result, in this section, we will examine stakeholders' broad perspectives on the extent to which these outcomes were achieved by focusing on results from the Community Stakeholder Survey.

**Family participation in community activities.** There was limited support that the NYVRP led to increased family participation in community activities. On the Community Stakeholder Survey, only 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the program had resulted in increased family participation in community activities; the remaining respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (31%) or disagreed (19%). The mean score for this item was 3.4. See Appendix R for a full break down of level of endorsement of the survey items.

**Agency collaboration.** A number of desired community-level outcomes related to improved or increased agency collaboration. Accordingly, the Community Stakeholder Survey examined respondents' interest and ability to collaborate with other agencies, as well the community ability to cooperate with the RCMP and Corrections specifically. The majority of respondents indicated that participating in the NYVRP increased both their interest and ability to collaborate—79% agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP increased their interest in collaborating with other agencies to address violence in their community, while 80% agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP increased their ability to collaborate with other community agencies (see Figure 27 for mean scores).

Slightly lower levels of agreement occurred with respect to the community's increased ability to cooperate with the police and corrections. Here, 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP led to increased community cooperation with the police and 59% agreed or strongly agreed it led to increased cooperation with Corrections. Thus, the NYVRP did seem to stimulate some interest in, and increased ability to, collaborate with other agencies, as well as some slight improvements in terms of cooperating more with police and corrections.



Stakeholder interviews offered additional insight on the extent to which the NYVRP influenced agencies' willingness to collaborate. Several interviewees noted that the agencies did not provide as much support to the NYVRP as they should have. At times, the NYVRP staff believed that the communities left them to tackle issues on their own. Others perceived that the community agencies often spoke about taking action but did not follow through. As a result, a several stakeholders indicated that no changes occurred at the community-level with respect to agency collaboration.

*No changes – they leave everything up to us, which is a big thing. Sometimes it's not for us to address. It needs to be addressed by the community itself. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

*I think each community was different. I think that they tried to work together. I don't know how that changed anything though. Like directly on the frontline. Its always a lot of talk and talk and no action. (Corrections)*

*They keep trying to come up with solutions and they do really good, they're all in it. Let's stop the violence, stop the gang activity, stop all this stuff. Then after awhile there will be like nothing. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

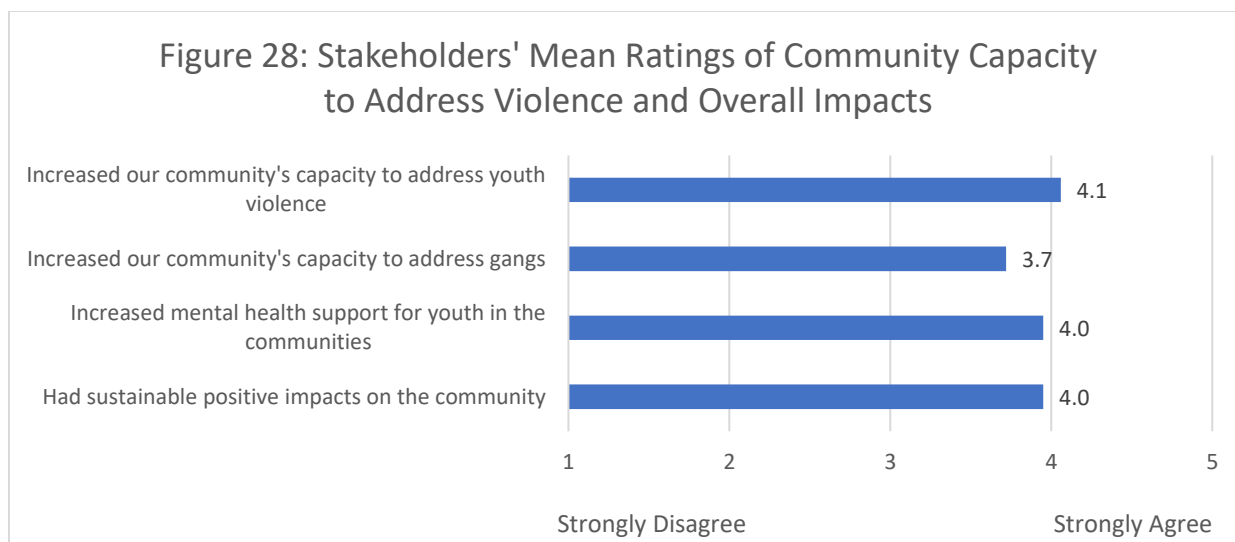
That being said, there were a handful to stakeholders who suggested that the NYVRP helped strengthen partnerships with other agencies, including the potential for developing additional partnerships with the various agencies involved in the NYVRP. In fact, some considered the strengthening of partnerships to be one of the greatest strengths of the program.

*I think a lot of our strengths have to do with community partnerships with the other agencies in the community. The RCMP and Education. And especially with corrections. We relay a lot of information to each other regarding our mutual clients. Sometimes in an emergency it helps quite a bit because we share that information of the usual hang outs and stuff like that. That way, if we know they're hiding, we know their hideout spots. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

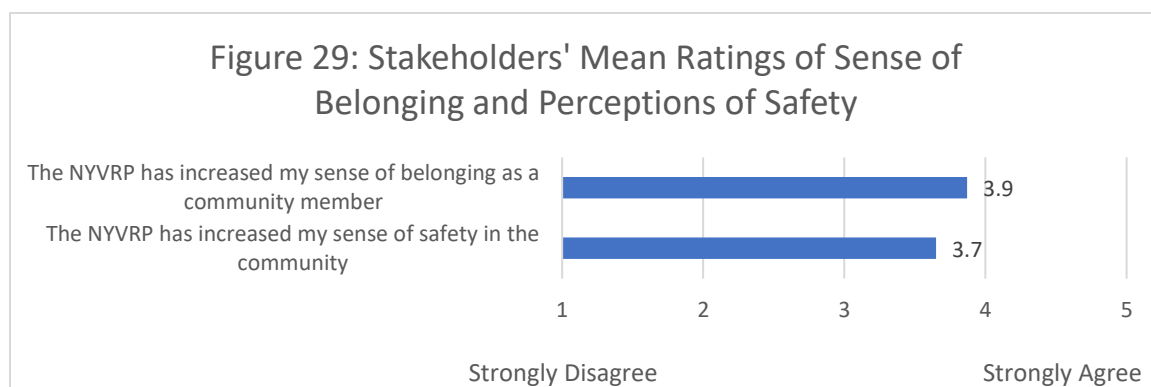
*Attending the meetings you met allowed for other potential partnerships through the school and RCMP, not that you weren't talking to them before but you have more contact with them. (Corrections)*

*In all those communities, the RCMP struggle to build relationships. If they see the RCMP working the kids in this different light, it helps with building relationships in a different light. (NYVRP PMT/Staff)*

**Capacity to address youth violence and gangs.** A majority of respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey indicated that the NYVRP had increased their community's capacity to address youth violence (89% agreed or strongly agreed) and gangs (72% agreed or strongly agreed). Further, 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP had led to increased mental health support for youth in the communities. Moreover, 89% agreed or strongly agreed that the NYVRP had made positive sustainable impacts on their community (see Figure 28 for mean scores). Overall, these results suggest that the NYVRP increased the communities' capacity to address youth violence (and gangs, to a lesser extent) and was considered to have sustainable, positive outcomes for the communities.



**Sense of belonging and safety.** The final outcomes areas that the NYVRP was anticipated to lead were an increased sense of belonging and safety in the community. Respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey more readily agreed that the NYVRP led to an increased sense of belonging as a community member (67% agreed or strongly agreed) than to an increased sense of safety (59% agreed or strongly agreed; see Figure 29 for mean scores). Given that these outcomes are long-term outcomes of the NYVRP and, in some ways, somewhat peripheral to the program's main objectives, it is not too surprising that there was only moderate endorsement of these items.



#### 10.4.5 Interpretation

In general, there was less discussion of the impact that the NYVRP had at the community-level across the various evaluation methods compared to the impact that the initiative had on the youth involved. This is not too surprising considering that the main objective of the NYVRP was to reduce youth violence. Even so, there were certain elements of the NYVRP's program delivery model (e.g., case management, having multi-agency participation and collaboration in the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committee, and Core Teams) that were intended to lead to increased capacity in the communities to address youth violence and gang involvement.

There is some evidence from the Community Stakeholder Survey and Stakeholder Interviews that the NYVRP did contribute to some gains in the capacity of community agencies to work together, as well as the community's overall capacity to address youth violence and, to a lesser extent, gang involvement. For instance, survey respondents agreed that the NYVRP both increased their interest in collaborating with other agencies, as well as their ability to do so. The stakeholder interviews suggested that one of the strengths of the NYVRP was that it allowed for agencies to strengthen their relationships with other agencies involved in the NYVRP (e.g., relationships to corrections, the RCMP, or Education). Even so, survey respondents only moderately agreed that the NYVRP led to increased cooperation with the police and corrections. In terms of whether the NYVRP led to greater capacity to address youth violence versus gang involvement, the program placed a greater emphasis on youth violence, as that seemed to be the more prevalent problem in the communities. As a result, it was not surprising that fewer individuals endorsed that the NYVRP led to a greater ability to address gang involvement in the communities compared to youth violence.

Despite some of these positive indicators of increased community capacity, some stakeholders perceived that the NYVRP did not lead to changes in community agencies' ability to work together. The NYVRP staff indicated that they often felt that it was left up to them to address the youth violence issues in their communities on their own, while other stakeholders noted that there tended to be a focus on "talk" rather than "action" when it came to addressing issues in the community. There was also dissatisfaction with the level of involvement in some the collaborative activities of the NYVRP (i.e., the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams), with a noted decrease in the number agencies participating in these various meetings as well as in the frequency of their participation over the last three years. It is likely these factors that contributed to some individuals' perceptions that the NYVRP did not change the community's capacity to address youth violence; however, the fact that the NYVRP was more or less able to hold regular Oversight Committee, Advisory Committee, and Core Team meetings over the past three years suggests that there was an increased capacity to work together to collaborate (at least to some extent), since (according to NYVRP staff) other inter-agency meetings in the community have not been able to successfully maintain a regular meeting schedule.

In terms of whether the NYVRP led to increased family participation in community activities, stakeholders' ambivalence about whether families had greater participation was expected. NYVRP staff indicated that they have struggled throughout the program to involve families, as some family members were not ready to heal themselves, whereas others were believed to have competing priorities that prevented them from getting involved with the NYVRP. As a result, it is unlikely that any outcomes were achieved in this area in any substantive manner.

Other community-level outcomes that the NYVRP had aimed to achieve were an increased sense of belonging and an increased sense of safety in the community. Based on survey respondents' perceptions, the NYVRP did seem to make gains in these areas, as there was moderate support for survey items indicating that the NYVRP had led to a great sense of belonging and an increased sense of safety. However, since these are rather long-term outcomes of the NYVRP, it is not be expected at this time that the NYVRP would have led to strong increases in these areas.

Overall, nearly all stakeholders had identified some merit or worth in the NYVRP. There was widespread agreement that the NYVRP had a positive impact on the youth involved in the program and most perceived that the program had also resulted in positive sustainable impacts in their communities.



## 10.5 Features of the NYVRP that Made a Difference

### 10.5.1 Evaluation Questions

- What were the particular features of the NYVRP that made a difference?
- What helped or hindered the NYVRP to achieve the desired impacts?

### 10.5.2 Indicators

- Type of program features identified

### 10.5.3 Data Sources

- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Photo-elicitation Study
- NYVRP Participant Survey
- Document review
- Observation

### 10.5.4 Results and Interpretation

These research questions have largely been answered in other sections. Therefore, a short summary of the answers to these questions will be provided in this section. Two of the key features of the NYVRP that stand out as making difference are the: a) HAWWs serving as positive role models to the youth; and b) cultural and land-based learning activities incorporated into the program. In several sections of this report (see Section 9.3, 9.7, 9.8), it was identified that one of the strengths of this program was having dedicated, core group of HAWWs who were willing to go “above and beyond” in their roles to be available to the youth whenever the youth needed them, regardless of the time of day. Further, the HAWWs were considered to be positive role models to the youth, by helping them live healthier lifestyles while setting boundaries for them. They also maintained regular contact with the youth. Indeed, several stakeholders commented that, for some of the youth, the HAWW may be the most positive person in their lives. As such, it was these features of the relationship the HAWWs had with the youth that seemed to lead to them being able to successfully build relationships with the youth and work with them to address their risk areas.

The integration of cultural and land-based learning activities also emerged as an important aspect of the program. In the photo-elicitation study and NYVRP Participant Survey, most youth noted that the best parts of the NYVRP were the “trips” (including hunting trips and culture camps) and being able to spend time with the Elder (see Section 9.8, 10.1). Similarly, staff believed that the working with Elder and engaging in land-based activities were important components of the program as it provided youth with an alternative to gangs in terms of developing a sense of belonging (see Section 9.1). Corrections stakeholders in particular valued the opportunity the NYVRP provided to youth to engage in land-based learning as they recognized that these are important skills and opportunities for youth living in those communities (and were not opportunities that their own Probation Officers were able to offer to the corrections-involved youth). Essentially, the incorporation of cultural and land-based activities ensured the relevance of the NYVRP to the three communities where it was being offered.

In terms of factors that hindered the NYVRP's ability to achieve its outcomes, a small staff that was experiencing burnout affected the extent to which the program could be fully implemented. By the end of the program, only 1 MOPO and 4 HAWWs were in place (compared to the original staffing model of 1 Program Manager, 1 MOPO, and 6 HAWWs). Therefore, staff were carrying a higher workload, including shouldering a higher administrative burden (see Section 9.2). Moreover, the burnout staff were experiencing was believed to be affecting their emotional and physical wellbeing.

Another aspect of the program that hindered its ability to achieve its outcomes was a lack of understanding of the RNR principles and the need to use the risk assessments to inform the care plans developed for the youth (see Section 9.5). After the first 1.5 years of program delivery, staff became adept with the completing the revised risk assessment process; however, there is no evidence that staff formally used those risk assessments to update the youth's care plan. They also did not necessarily have actions in place in the care plans to address each of the risk factors that were identified. Thus, staff became adept at "identifying" the youth's risk level and needs but did not fully realize the responsivity principle of the RNR model. Importantly, it was perceived that inadequate training on core correctional theories and evidence-based practices (which was supposed to be provided by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing) was a contributing factor to the staff's lack of understanding of the RNR principles (see Section 9.4).

A third aspect of the program that hindered the NYVRP's ability to achieve its desired outcomes was the context in which it was delivering services. It was suggested in the stakeholder interviews that the problems faced by the youth enrolled in the program are "*bigger than what the NYVRP can fix.*" The poverty, negative living environment, poor parenting practices, lack of amenities for youth, and high suicide and addictions rates characterizing the communities emerged as some of the most prominent factors that were counterproductive to the goals of the NYVRP.

The final element of the program that stands out as hindering the NYVRP's ability to achieve its desired outcomes is waning support from community agencies and leadership throughout the initiative. Community support for the NYVRP started off strong; however, over the final two years of the program, fewer agencies were participating in the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and Core Teams (see Section 9.2). As a result of this lack of support, it was perceived that the program was not readily able to achieve some of the broader community-level objectives of the program, such as increased community capacity to address youth violence and increased agency collaboration (see 10.2).

## 10.6 Quality of Programming Between Sites

### 10.6.1 Evaluation Questions

- What has been the quality of programming between sites?

### 10.6.2 Indicators

- Similarities across sites
- Differences across sites

### 10.6.3 Data Sources

- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Document review
- Observation

### 10.6.4 Results and Interpretation

Overall, the NYVRP seemed to be delivered fairly consistently across sites; however, minor differences between the sites can be identified. For instance, the review of the program's governance structure (See Section 9.2) indicated that approximately the same number of Advisory Committee meetings were held in all three communities in 2017-18 and 2018-19, but Pelican Narrows held fewer meetings in 2019-20 due to what seemed to be a greater drop off in community agency participation in that community than in the other communities. In terms of the number of community agency representatives attending Advisory Committee Meetings, Sandy Bay tended to have more members in attendance at the meetings (one to five attendees) compared to Deschambault Lake and Pelican Narrows (where it was common to have a single member attend).

A similar picture emerged with respect to Core Team meetings (see Section 9.7). Sandy Bay held the most Core Team meetings ( $n=40$ ) over the three years in which program delivery occurred followed by Deschambault Lake ( $n=32$ ) and Pelican Narrows ( $n=28$ ). In particular, there was a notable drop off in Core Team participation in Pelican Narrows in 2019-20. Further, Sandy Bay typically had a greater number community agencies present at Core Team meetings (three to five attendees) compared to Deschambault Lake and Pelican Narrows (where one to three attendees was common). Thus, Sandy Bay seemed to have the strongest amount of community agency support followed by Deschambault Lake and then Pelican Narrows.

Over the last year of the program (2019-20), it was also apparent that Deschambault Lake was conducting fewer risk assessments compared to Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay (see Section 9.5). However, Deschambault Lake had a much higher consent rate (86%) compared to the Pelican Narrows (55%) and Sandy Bay (57%; see Section 9.6). Another key difference across the sites specific to 2019-20 was that Deschambault Lake only had one HAWW throughout the final year of program delivery and Pelican Narrows only had one HAWW for the last six months of 2019-20, while Sandy Bay had two HAWWs throughout the initiative. Therefore, the remaining HAWWs in Deschambault Lake and Pelican Narrows were carrying higher than intended

caseloads (of 10 to 11 youth) and higher caseloads than the HAWWs in Sandy Bay. Overall, Sandy Bay seemed to be able to implement the NYVRP with slightly more fidelity to the program delivery model due there being greater community agency support in that community and having less staff turnover during the last 18 months of the program.

## **10.7 Other Programs with which NYVRP Worked in Conjunction**

### **10.7.1 Evaluation Questions**

- Did the NYVRP work in conjunction with other interventions, programs or services in the community?

### **10.7.2 Indicators**

- Number and type of interventions, programs, and services NYVRP worked in conjunction with

### **10.7.3 Data Sources**

- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Document review
- Observation

### **10.7.4 Results**

The NYVRP primarily worked with local community agencies to connect youth to the services they need. Section 9.7 outlines the types of supports with which the NYVRP connected the youth. This commonly included:

- addictions counselling (delivered by the local health centre or Saskatchewan Health Authority, depending on the community)
- mental health counselling (delivered by the local health centre, Saskatchewan Health Authority, therapists in Prince Albert, or through RPT)
- programming provided by Holistic Health (men's groups, women's groups)
- parenting / prenatal programs (offered by local family centres)
- school supports (i.e., worked closely with local schools)

The services that the NYVRP referred youth to were not systemically documented; therefore, it was not possible to provide the specific number and type of services with which it has partnered.

Many stakeholders commented that the NYVRP reflected a unique service in the communities with its focus on direct outreach with high risk youth (see Section 11). The only other known service operating in the communities that is similar to the NYVRP is the Serious Violent Offender Response (SVOR) program, which is a corrections program for individuals that are considered to be serious violent offenders (i.e., have at least one current and multiple previous serious violent offences) and have been sentenced to a community order for at least eight months. Three NYVRP youth were concurrently enrolled in the NSVOP and received services from both programs. One of these youth was considered a graduate of the NYVRP and Corrections stakeholders perceived that it was a combination of both programs that led to this individual's success.

## 10.8 Sustainability of the NYVRP

### 10.8.1 Evaluation Questions

- Has there been sustained linkages between community agencies?
- What plans are in place to sustain or expand the NYVRP?

### 10.8.2 Indicators

- Number and type of linkages between community agencies
- Perceptions of linkages between community agencies
- Type of plans in place to sustain or expand the NYVRP

### 10.8.3 Data Sources

- Community Stakeholder Survey
- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Document review
- Observation

### 10.8.4 Results and Interpretation

Section 10.2 outlines the extent to which stakeholders believe the NYVRP has led to greater linkages between community agencies. Specifically, 79% of respondents on the Community Stakeholder Survey believed that the NYVRP increased *their interest* in collaborating with other agencies, while 80% agreed that the NYVRP increased *their ability* to collaborate with other agencies. However, during the stakeholder interviews, some stakeholders commented that they did not believe that any meaningful changes had occurred with respect to stakeholders collaborating more to implement change. Conversely, other stakeholders believed that the NYVRP has allowed them to strengthen their relationship with other agencies and considered this to be a valuable aspect of participating in the NYVRP. Thus, there is mixed perceptions about whether the NYVRP led to sustained linkages between the community agencies involved.

In terms of plans in place to sustain the NYVRP, at the time this report was written, there were no plans in place to continue the NYVRP. The program was not able to secure additional funding following the initial five-year period funding was provided by Public Safety Canada. As a result, it stopped delivering services on March 31, 2020.

## 11. COST ANALYSIS FINDINGS

### 11.1.1 Evaluation Questions

- What is the total cost of the program?
- Do costs vary over time? If so, what are some potential explanations?
- What is the average cost per participant?
- Are there any activities / components with particularly high costs?
- How do the trends or commonalities compare to others reported in the literature?
- Was the program cost-effective based on the literature on cost of crime from a Canadian perspective?

### 11.1.2 Indicators

- Cost of program activities and components
- Yearly change in the program cost
- Average cost of program per participant
- Difference between the demonstrated impact of the program and the cost of the program.

### 11.1.3 Data Sources

- Cashflow templates
- Document review
- Cost of crime in Canada (Day, Koegl, & Oziel, 2015)

### 11.1.4 Method

This cost analysis aimed to document the true costs of service delivery in the NYVRP to enable the replication of the project elsewhere and provide context for the project results in terms of what it costs to produce the results achieved. Also, the findings provide documentation that will allow for further cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit analysis of the program. To this end, a descriptive cost analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis were conducted.

#### *Descriptive Cost Analysis*

The yearly costs of the program were identified through the analysis of the program expenditures documented in the cashflow templates. The cost of the first two years (April 2015 to March 2017) were deemed as the start-up costs of the program as the program started to be implemented in the third year of funding. Therefore, when calculating the cost per participant, the start-up costs were divided by three and equally added to the yearly costs of last three years (see Table 50). The cost per participants was calculated in two different ways. First, the total cost of the program was divided by the total number of program “completers;” that is, the total number of youth that have completed a pre-determined minimum number of days in the program (i.e., 365 days) based on the anticipated length of duration in the program. Second, the total cost was

divided by the total number of youths who consented to be involved in the program. The evaluation costs were deducted from the total costs when analyzing the cost per participant.

### *Cost-effectiveness Analysis*

To examine whether the demonstrated impact of the program exceeded the cost of the program, the yearly costs of program were compared with the cost of high-risk young offenders in the Canadian Criminal Justice System. Day et al.'s (2015) findings on the cost of crime were used in the current cost-effectiveness analysis. They analyzed the costs of criminal offending for a sample of 386 young male offenders between the ages of 12 and 26 years in Canada. The costs of those offenders were calculated for a 15-year period based on four components: 1) victim costs; 2) correctional costs; 3) other criminal justice system (CJS) costs (e.g., police, court, prosecution, and legal aid expenditures); and 4) costs associated with undetected crimes (i.e., the total of the estimated costs of the crimes committed by the offenders which did not come to the attention of legal authorities)<sup>27</sup>. Day et al.'s findings were appropriate to use in the current analysis for several reasons. First, they found the cost of crime across various risk groups and developmental periods (see Table 52). The target group in the NYVRP are within the same age range with the sample used in the study and were also a high-risk group in terms of violent behaviours. Thus, their findings enabled us to conduct an evidence-based cost-effectiveness analysis. Second, their findings represent the realities of Canadian criminal justice system and the cost of criminal behaviours of Canadian young offenders. Third, they found the cost of crime by analyzing a long follow-up period for the offenders in the sample which gives a much closer idea about the changing criminal behaviours across the lifespan of the offenders.

There are also some differences between Day et al.'s sample and the NYVRP participants; therefore, our findings based on the cost of crime estimations of Day et al. need to be taken with caution. Specifically, the sample in Day et al.'s (2015) study is entirely male, based in Toronto where the majority of the population is non-Indigenous, and consisting of all incarcerated youth. On the other hand, there were both male and female youth among NYVRP participants, all were based in predominantly Indigenous communities in Northern Saskatchewan, and some of them were not incarcerated at all. All of these differences have some implications for the identification of risk levels and factors, the corresponding needs of participants based on those risk factors, and therefore the estimated cost of crime which is used in the cost-effectiveness analysis of the NYVRP. For instance, the fact that the NYVRP participants are from Indigenous communities needs to be specifically taken into consideration when it comes to identifying the risk factors behind gang involvement and corresponding risk levels. The intergenerational trauma, historical and structural inequalities, and other challenges caused by these problems such as substance abuse and mental health problems require a differential approach when analyzing the cost of crime in Indigenous communities. However, to our knowledge, there is no such study that estimated the cost of crime by taking these aspects of Indigenous communities into consideration.

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<sup>27</sup> Day et al. (2015) argue that only a fraction of criminal offences ever come to the attention of legal authorities; thus, it is important to apply multipliers to criminal convictions to include undetected crime. When calculating the cost of undetected crime, they relied on the estimations in different studies for each type of crime and found a total cost for victims according to the age range of the offender. For more discussion on the multipliers and the reasons for the high estimations for undetected crimes, see Day et al. (2015).



**Table 52: Cost of Crime by Cost Category and Age Intervals (per person per year)**

|  | 12-14 years      | 15-17 years      | 18-20<br>years   | 21-23<br>years   | 24-26<br>years   |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Type of Cost                                   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Victim Costs                                   | \$7,816          | \$50,145         | \$45,540         | \$38,044         | \$16,142         |
| Correctional Costs                             | \$3,748          | \$50,354         | \$29,783         | \$12,509         | \$9,117          |
| Other CJS Costs                                | \$11,243         | \$151,061        | \$89,348         | \$37,526         | \$27,351         |
| Undetected crime<br>(cost for victims)         | \$95,660         | \$529,207        | \$373,772        | \$247,330        | \$126,077        |
| <b>Total Cost without<br/>Undetected Crime</b> | <b>\$22,807</b>  | <b>\$251,560</b> | <b>\$164,671</b> | <b>\$88,079</b>  | <b>\$52,610</b>  |
| <b>Total Cost of<br/>Crime</b>                 | <b>\$118,467</b> | <b>\$780,767</b> | <b>\$538,443</b> | <b>\$335,409</b> | <b>\$178,687</b> |

Source: Day, Koegl, and Oziel (2015)

In the cost-effectiveness analysis of the NYVRP, the cost of the program was compared with the estimated criminal justice system cost of young offenders at the same age intervals and risk levels as the NYVRP participants<sup>28</sup>. The estimated costs of the participants for the criminal justice system per year were calculated based on Day et al.'s findings across different age categories (see Table 52). As the findings of Day et al. (2015) were based on the 2013 financial year numbers, the inflation rates of Bank of Canada were used to calculate the corresponding costs for each program year. Then, the final estimation of yearly costs of program participants for the criminal justice system were compared with the yearly program costs. The evaluation costs were deducted from the total costs when analyzing cost effectiveness of the program. A second comparison was made by deducting the undetected crime costs from the total estimated cost of crime.

### 11.1.5 Results

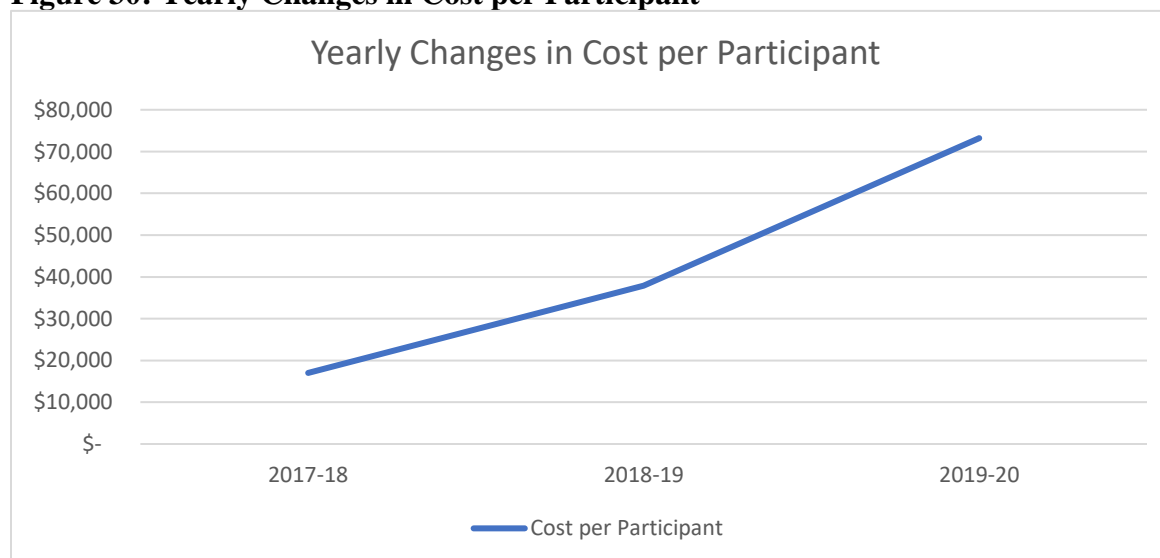
In the initial two years of the program, the yearly costs were substantially lower than the last three years when the program was fully active (see Table 53). The component with the highest cost in the first years was the expenditures. For the remaining four years, the majority of the program costs consisted of the personnel salaries (for the Program Manager, MOPO, and HAWW positions). Transportation costs was also relatively higher than the expenses for other components in the last three years. Given the distance between the three program sites and the distances from those sites to the major cities and services, high transportation costs are expected.

<sup>28</sup> The number of NYVRP participants in each age group was determined and this figure was multiplied by Day et al.'s cost of crime estimates to arrive at the NYVRP cost of crime figures.

**Table 53. NYVRP: Total Yearly Costs: 2015-2020**

|                      | 2015-16          | 2016-17          | 2017-18          | 2018-19          | 2019-20          | Total              |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Expenses</b>      |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                    |
| Admin Costs          | \$611            | \$56,267         | \$60,738         | \$64,516         | \$58,465         | \$240,597          |
| Elder Honorariums    | -                | -                | \$15,825         | \$9,000          | \$8,625          | \$33,450           |
| Equipment            | \$130,524        | \$16,725         | \$20,635         | \$70,068         | \$48,502         | \$286,454          |
| Evaluation           | \$80,000         | -                | \$62,000         | \$62,000         | \$87,000         | \$291,000          |
| Specialized Services | -                | \$2,473          | -                | -                | \$530            | \$3,003            |
| Materials / Supplies | \$5,305          | \$8,784          | \$6,674          | \$8,934          | \$6,698          | \$36,395           |
| Personnel            | \$14,550         | \$183,048        | \$525,663        | \$541,346        | \$424,655        | \$1,689,262        |
| Program Supplies     | \$5,008          | \$2,280          | \$6,192          | \$3,165          | \$2,591          | \$19,237           |
| Rent / Utilities     | \$15,200         | \$6,917          | \$35,300         | \$34,688         | \$36,281         | \$128,386          |
| Training             | -                | \$17,003         | \$28,329         | \$25,164         | \$9,515          | \$80,011           |
| Transportation       | -                | \$51,347         | \$98,260         | \$131,669        | \$110,563        | \$391,839          |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>\$251,198</b> | <b>\$344,844</b> | <b>\$859,616</b> | <b>\$950,549</b> | <b>\$793,425</b> | <b>\$3,199,632</b> |

The average cost of the program per participant was \$29,986 and the average cost per program completer was \$63,231. The cost of the program per participant increased throughout the last three years of the NYVRP (see Figure 30 and Table 54). This trend continued in the last year although the total cost of the program substantially decreased. This can be explained with the decreasing number of participants involved in the program. The increase in the cost per program completer was much higher than that of the cost per program participant as the number of participants who completed the program substantially decreased in the fourth and fifth years of the program.

**Figure 30: Yearly Changes in Cost per Participant**

**Table 54. NYVRP: Costs Per Participant: 2015-2020**

|  | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019   | 2019-2020 | Total       |
|--|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Participants<sup>1</sup></b>        | 57        | 28          | 12        | 97          |
| <b>Program Completers<sup>2</sup></b>  | 27        | 13          | 6         | 46          |
| <b>Expenses</b>                        |           |             |           |             |
| Admin Costs                            | \$60,738  | \$64,516    | \$58,465  | \$183,719   |
| Elder Honorariums                      | \$15,825  | \$9,000     | \$8,625   | \$33,450    |
| Equipment                              | \$20,635  | \$70,068    | \$48,502  | \$139,205   |
| Specialized Services                   |           |             | \$530     | \$530       |
| Materials and Supplies                 | \$6,674   | \$8,934     | \$6,698   | \$22,306    |
| Personnel                              | \$525,663 | \$541,346   | \$424,655 | \$1,491,664 |
| Program Supplies                       | \$6,192   | \$3,165     | \$2,591   | \$11,947    |
| Rent / Utilities                       | \$35,300  | \$34,688    | \$36,281  | \$106,269   |
| Training and Staff Development         | \$28,329  | \$25,164    | \$9,515   | \$63,008    |
| Transportation                         | \$98,260  | \$131,669   | \$110,563 | \$340,492   |
| Start-up costs <sup>3</sup>            | \$172,014 | \$172,014   | \$172,014 | \$516,043   |
| <b>Total Cost Per Year<sup>4</sup></b> | \$969,631 | \$1,060,564 | \$878,439 | \$2,908,634 |
| <b>Cost Per Participant</b>            | \$17,011  | \$37,877    | \$73,203  | \$29,986    |

<sup>1</sup>The number of participants represent the number of new clients that consented to join the NYVRP in a given year.

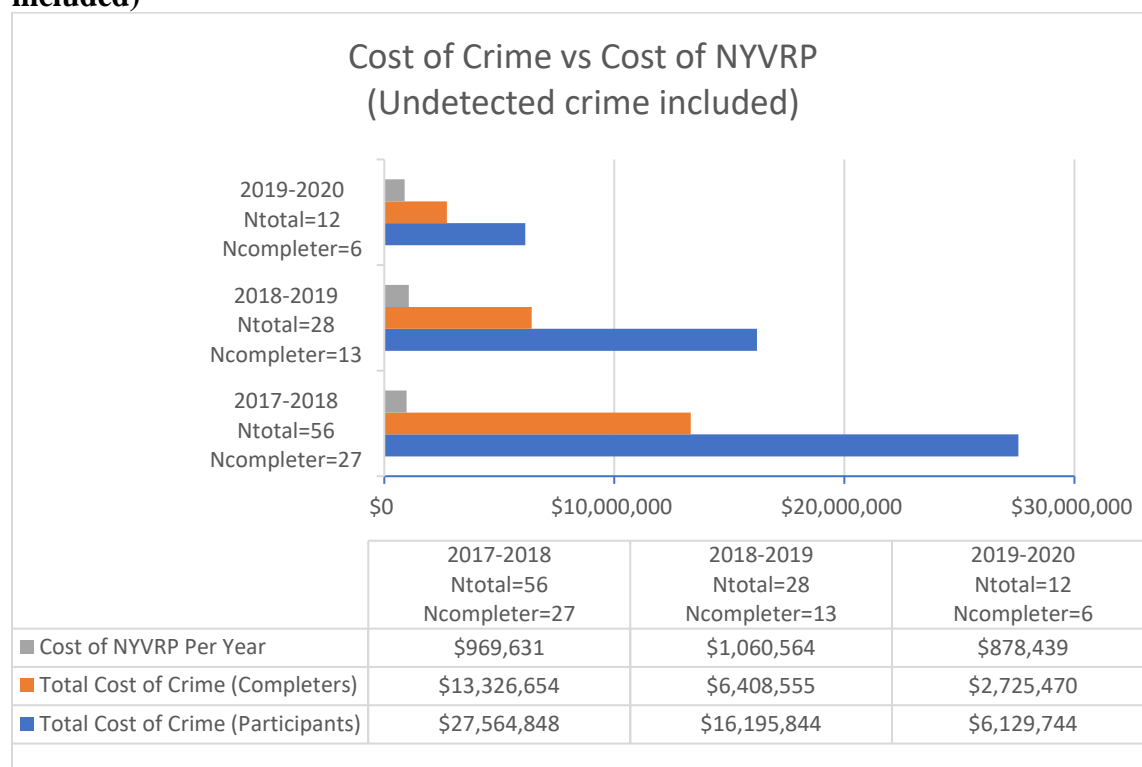
<sup>2</sup>A client is considered a program completer either if they were graduated or stayed in program for 365 days or more.

<sup>3</sup>The total cost of first two years were considered as the start up costs. The total cost of first two years was divided by three and added equally to the years where the program started to enroll participants.

<sup>4</sup>The evaluation costs were deducted from the total costs when calculating the cost per participant

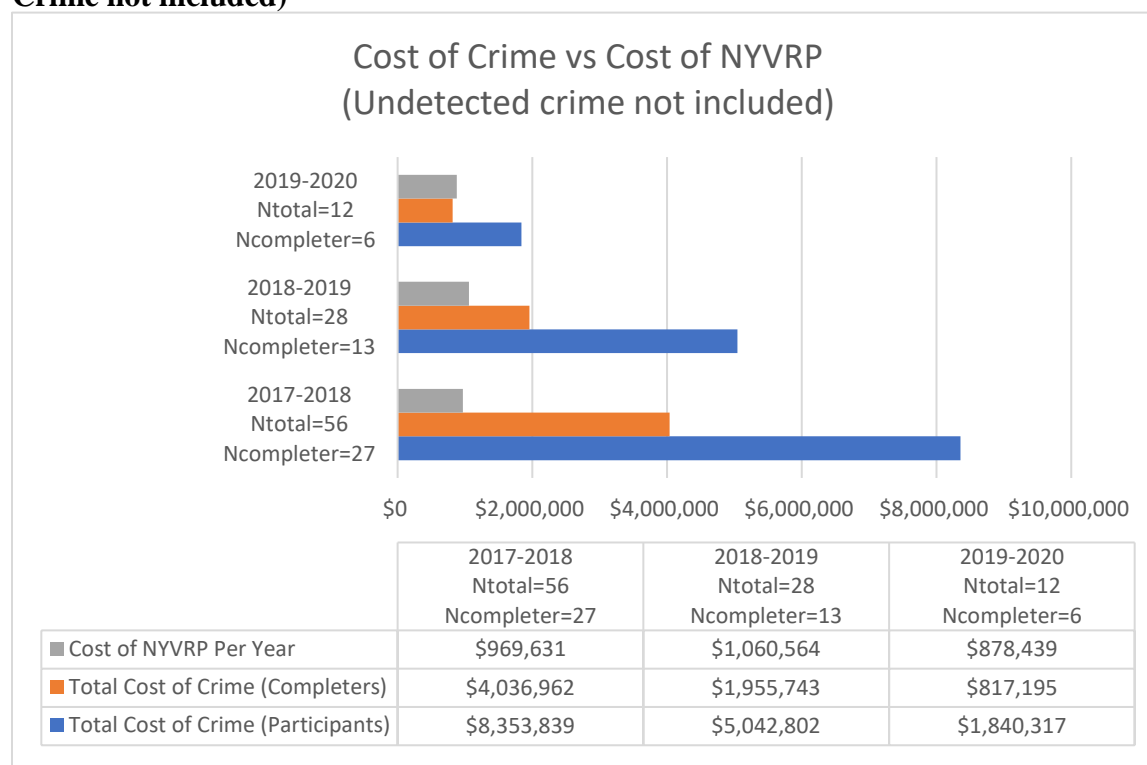
The cost-effectiveness analysis indicated that the estimated criminal justice costs of the young offenders at the same age intervals and risk levels with the NYVRP youth are substantially higher than the NYVRP program costs (see Figure 31). In the first program year, the yearly total estimated criminal justice costs were approximately 27 times higher than the program costs. When only the program completers are taken into consideration, the criminal justice costs were approximately 13 times higher than program costs. These rates decreased in the second and third program years; however, the estimated criminal justice costs were still significantly higher than program costs. In the third program year, although the number of newly consented participants ( $N = 12$ ) and program completers ( $N = 6$ ) were very low, the estimated criminal justice costs were 2 times and 6 times higher than program costs, respectively.

**Figure 31: Comparison of the Yearly Cost of Crime and Cost of NYVRP (Undetected crime included)**



When the undetected crime costs were deducted from the estimated criminal justice costs, the program was still cost-effective (see Figure 32). In the first and second program years of program delivery, the estimated criminal justice costs were approximately 7 times and 4 times higher than program costs, respectively. In the third year, however, the criminal justice costs only doubled the program costs. When only program completers were considered, in the third year, the cost of NYVRP was slightly higher than estimated criminal justice costs without undetected crime costs. In the first and second years, the estimated criminal justice cost for program completers were still higher than the program costs although the rates were lower than those when all program participants were considered.

**Figure 32: Comparison of the Yearly Cost of Crime and Cost of NYVRP (Undetected Crime not included)**



### ***Cost of Remote Presence Technology (RPT)***

One of the aims of the current cost analysis was to identify the activities or services of the program with particularly high costs. RPT units were purchased at the end of the 2015-16 fiscal year to connect the NYVRP youth with the mental health treatment they require. However, the units could not be used until the last year of the program due to some technical problems and difficulties with identifying a service provider. The casefile review indicated that 6 youth definitely received mental health services via RPT; there is also some unconfirmed information that 7 other youth might have used the unit. Therefore, we calculated the cost of RPT per user for both scenarios. The yearly cost of licence and hardware support for the RPT was \$23,070 and the total cost of units was \$116,874 (see Table 55). The cost of RPT per participant was \$19,479 ( $N=6$ ). When the second scenario is considered ( $N=13$ ), the cost per participant dropped to \$8,990. In both scenarios, the cost of RPT for the program was critically high. A cost-effectiveness analysis could not be conducted because the number of times the RPT units were used by each participant was not documented in the files provided to the evaluation team<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> The RPT costs are captured under the equipment costs in Table 53 and Table 54.

**Table 55: Cost of RPT**

| <b>Expenses</b>                        | <b>Cost</b>      |
|--|------------------|
| Network Access License (5 years)       | \$82,800         |
| Hardware Support (5 years)             | \$29,550         |
| Single User License (5 years)          | \$3,000          |
| Single User License (1-time)           | \$1,524          |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>\$116,874</b> |
| <b>Cost per Participant-1 (N = 6)</b>  | <b>\$19,479</b>  |
| <b>Cost per Participant-2 (N = 13)</b> | <b>\$8,990</b>   |

### 11.1.6 Interpretation

Overall, the cost analysis of the NYVRP indicated that the program was cost-effective. Although the cost per participant increased in the later years of the program due to a smaller number of clients being involved in the program, the estimated criminal justice costs remained dramatically higher than the program costs. Research has shown that the criminal justice system saves considerable amounts of resources even with a modest level of reduction in crime rates (McCollister, French, & Fang, 2010). For example, in the cost analysis of the Stop Now and Plan (SNAP) program, a 9-year follow-up of Canadian high risk juvenile offenders showed that for every \$1.00 spent in the intervention program, the criminal justice system saved between \$2.05 and \$3.75 in the long run (Farrington & Koegl, 2015). These savings become higher when a program targets high risk populations as shown in our analysis through the comparison of the cost of NYVRP with the estimated cost of the young offenders at the same age intervals and risk levels derived from Day et al.'s (2015) findings. Even when the undetected crimes (i.e., the estimated costs of the crimes which did not come to the attention of legal authorities) were deducted, the NYVRP was cost effective. The only exception was the last year of the program where the number of clients were significantly lower than the first two years. The cost of the NYVRP in the last year was slightly higher than the estimated criminal justice cost for program completers.

These findings suggest that, even if the number of clients are low in an intervention program, allocation of resources to such programs specifically for high-risk youth might lead not only to reduced recidivism rates and positive behavioural changes in youth, but also to savings in the use of criminal justice system resources. One limitation of the current cost-effective analysis was the assumption that the clients have desisted from criminal activities and will not be involved in the criminal justice system in the future. A follow-up evaluation of the NYVRP participants in the future might enable a more approximate estimation of their criminal justice costs, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the NYVRP.

The itemized analysis of the expenses in the program indicated that the cost of RPT units were especially high given the low usage of the technology in the program due to some technical issues, as well as delays in finding a service provider. The RPT units could not be used until the final year of the program although the software licences were renewed each year since the beginning of the program. As a result, very few participants used the units. The evaluation data did not include the information on the amount of times that the RPT was actively used by the

participants. Therefore, it was not possible to analyze the cost-effectiveness of the units. However, the inactivity of the units during the initial years despite the yearly renewal of licences indicates that the RPT was not effectively used until the last year.

## 12. RELEVANCE

### 12.1.1 Evaluation Questions

- Does the need for the program continue to be in the communities?

### 12.1.2 Indicators

- Perceptions of program need

### 12.1.3 Data Sources

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Literature Review

### 12.1.4 Results

The NYVRP is a timely and needed intervention in the three communities in which it is being implemented: Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay. Violence continues to be a pressing issue in almost all aspects of the community life in these communities as reflected by the crime and socioeconomic statistics presented in Section 2.1 describing the need for the project and recent serious assault, homicide, and attempted murder involving young adults in the communities of Sandy Bay (November 2019<sup>30</sup>), Pelican Narrows (March 2019<sup>31</sup>), and Deschambault Lake (January 2019<sup>32</sup>), respectively. Other homicides of young adults in the communities of Sandy Bay (October 2017<sup>33</sup>) and Pelican Narrows (May 2015<sup>34</sup>, February 2017<sup>35</sup>) also occurred earlier in the program's tenure. In at least one of these instances, gang involvement seemed to be a factor in the homicide. Further, the needs assessment activities conducted by the NYVRP and the evaluation team (see Section 8.1.7 for a summary), revealed numerous factors underlying the high rates of violence in the communities that are unlikely to dissipate in the short duration in which the NYVRP has been operational.

The stakeholder interviews also offered additional insight into the continued relevance of the NYVRP. Several stakeholders commented that there is a high need for NYVRP services within the communities. In fact, one stakeholder commented that a strength of the program is that *“they're within the targeted communities that need this service. The ones with the highest crime rates”* (NYVRP PMT/staff). Conversely, a second stakeholder commented that one of the greatest challenges faced by the NYVRP was not having enough staff available to meet the demand for the program's services.

*The demand for them... a whole bunch of kids who are needing them. They have nothing at home, no normalcy, no food in the cupboard. Not enough people to do the work is probably the biggest challenge. (Community Stakeholder)*

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/sandy-bay-serious-assault-1.5373413>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2019/pelican-narrows-homicide-charges-laid>

<sup>32</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/4808117/attempted-murder-deschambault-lake-stabbing/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/3797488/youth-charged-with-second-degree-murder-in-sandy-bay-sask-death/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/2804205/7-charged-in-2015-pelican-narrows-sask-death-heading-to-trial-next-spring/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/3530154/murder-pelican-narrows-saskatchewan-homicide/>



Corrections stakeholders in particular commented that one of the most valuable aspects of the NYVRP is that it fills service gaps in the community and in a way that is complementary to the services offered by Corrections and the RCMP. In fact, it was suggested that the NYVRP was a vital service to the youth.

*I think just having those service gaps filled and with the different roles, probation officers have one role, HAWWs have a role, and RCMP has a role. They're all different and they can all keep up with each other where others aren't able to. (Corrections)*

*The NYVRP is basically intensive outreach and none of these communities have that and they need it. They would probably be a vital service to the youth. (Corrections)*

It was also observed that there are few amenities for the youth in the community; thus, the opportunities provided by the NYVRP to participate in prosocial activities were deemed to be beneficial for providing youth with alternatives to engaging in criminal activity.

*A lack of resources in that community is heart-breaking for me because these kids I think are bored a lot of the time and they find trouble. There's no gym, hockey rink is closed, no sports team to my knowledge. So what do you expect kids to do, a lot of them if they're not doing the [criminal activities], you can say they're not getting into trouble, they're just playing video games. I don't think that's too healthy to do a lot. (Corrections)*

*Idle time is the worst for kids in those communities. Especially in communities where there isn't a whole lot of structure. Where I grew up, I stayed out of trouble because I was playing organized sports all the time. But that's not an option for the kids. (Corrections)*

Finally, stakeholders were concerned about what will happen to the youth if the NYVRP ends. One interviewee questioned:

*If it's discontinued, where does the youth go. I think then we lose them, either through alcohol or drugs or suicide. And we don't want to do that... Because they fall to alcohol and drugs, and gangs, and all the negative crap...they need supports, kids need supports, safe places to fall. (Community Stakeholder)*

### **12.1.5 Interpretation**

Taken together, the review of socioeconomic and crime statistics characterizing the three communities combined with stakeholder perceptions about the need for the NYVRP suggest that the NYVRP is indeed a highly relevant program in these locations. Further, given that the NYVRP allows for a multi-faceted, culturally appropriate, strengths-based approach to be taken to reduce the risk of violent offending by offering individualized interventions intended to target various criminogenic risks and needs (i.e., antisocial cognitions, attitudes, and behaviours; education; employment; mental health and addictions; and prosocial recreational activities), it is a suitable intervention for meeting the needs of youth in these communities. Moreover, there are no other community-based programs in the three locations that are specifically designed to

intervene with youth/young persons between the ages of 12 to 24 years at high risk for violence or gang-involvement. As such, the NYVRP fills an existing gap in the communities by offering a holistic intervention to this age group.

## 13. CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

A number of positive and negative lessons learned emerged from the evaluation both with respect to program delivery and the evaluation itself. These lessons learned are presented below, with an eye towards discussing opportunities and challenges that would be informative to others implementing similar projects or evaluations.

### 13.1 Program Delivery Lessons Learned

#### 13.1.1 Lessons Learned about Adapting the YVRP and RIAP Models

One of the most substantial adaptations of the original YVRP model made by the NYVRP was a focus on support and rehabilitation rather than on a combination of support and strict supervision. Due to the remote location of the communities, neither the police nor corrections had the capacity to enact the strict supervision model described in the original YVRP model. Thus, the geographic location of the communities played an important role in the degree to which the YVRP model could be followed in terms of strict supervision.

Another lesson that was learned in the process of implementing the NYVRP is that the length of time a participant can be in the program should be informed by the level of trauma in the target population. After the first 12 months of program delivery, it was quickly identified that the original program length of 12 months was not inadequate for many of the youth, as they had either not achieved a sufficient level of healing or been connected with an adequate number of supports. Indeed, the ACE-Q assessments shed additional light on the high levels of trauma experienced by the youth—all youth who completed ACE-Qs met the criteria for referral to mental health treatment with 80% of the youth having more than double the number of traumatic experiences that warrant referral to mental health treatment. In retrospect, a program length of 12 months was not responsive to level of trauma experienced by the youth and a program length of 24 to 36 months may be appropriate for some of the youth enrolled in the program depending on their level of trauma and the number of supports they have in their lives. Further, it is important to ensure that youth are not phased out of the program too early, as there was concern that the withdrawal of program supports may have a negative impact on the youth (i.e., there was evidence that some youth started to act out when HAWWs were unavailable or they were asked to exit the program too early).

The complexity of the program model, particularly the reliance on risk assessments, was also a major point of learning for the NYVRP. An important lessons learned in this regard is that if a risk assessment protocol is included in a community-based program, the protocol needs to match the capacity (i.e., knowledge and skills) of the staff expected to implement the risk assessment tools. The streamlined risk assessment protocol comprised of the YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q (versus original protocol where program staff were expected to complete YLS/CMIs for community-referred youth and Corrections staff were expected to complete LSI-SKs/SPRAs for corrections-referred youth) was much more successful approach to assessing risk in terms of the number of assessments completed; however, beyond completing the instruments with the youth, there was little evidence suggesting the staff formally used these tools to inform the youth's care

plans. Therefore, programs attempting to formally integrate risk assessment tool(s) into their program delivery models need to provide adequate training and support to staff to ensure that they understand how effectively use these tools to inform their case management practices. Moreover, this training may also need to be provided to the community partners involved in the Core Teams who are supposed to be involved in the case planning process. It was identified that community agencies in the three communities were unfamiliar with case planning and would have benefit from training as well.

Another area of learning for the NYVRP was that, despite an interest in involving parents in the program, this was only possible to the extent that parents are interested in being involved in the program. It was noted that some parents were not ready to heal themselves or had other commitments or responsibilities that prevented their involvement. Some stakeholders called for greater parent involvement/engagement in the NYVRP; however, this would be a difficult goal for the NYVRP to accomplish if a parent is not prepared to heal him/herself.

A final characteristic of the NYVRP program delivery model that reflects an opportunity for other communities to learn from is the incorporation of land-based learning and cultural teachings into its program delivery activities. The inclusion of land-based learning in the NYVRP was not considered a true adaptation of the model; it was viewed as a form of support that is appropriate and relevant for the communities where it was being offered. The success of this component of the program underscores the need to enact a program in ways that are meaningful to the target population. In this case, opportunities to participate in cultural activities and to learn from Elders enabled youth to become more connected to their culture, learn skills relevant to their cultural backgrounds, facilitate healing, and foster a sense of belonging. Given the value that stems from these activities, some staff argued that an even greater focus should be placed on land-based learning in the future.

### **13.1.2 Lessons Learned about Staffing and Training**

Staffing has been an area of strength and challenge for the NYVRP. The NYVRP has learned the value of having a core dedicated staff that are highly committed to the program, are living healthy lifestyles, and have a passion for working with youth. The MOPO and one HAWW in each community have been with the program since the beginning (another HAWW who joined in 2018 has been equally committed to the program), which has allowed the program to offer services consistently over the past three years and benefit from the familiarity and knowledge the long-term staff have of the program delivery model. Hiring staff who were respected in their local communities also had a number of positive outcomes, such as parents permitting their children to join the program, HAWWs being invited into the home for one-on-one visits, and garnering respect from local community agencies.

The program has experienced some drawbacks, however, for hiring NYVRP staff for their personal qualities and not for their formal education and experiences. In particular, staff's lack of familiarity with delivering a corrections-oriented, evidence-based model hampered their ability to deliver the NYVRP program delivery model, especially as it pertained to ensuring adherence to RNR principles. Upon reflection, NYVRP management and staff agreed that additional training, including refresher sessions, on correctional principles and practices should have been

provided by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing throughout the initiative (and, ideally, comprehensive training should have been provided to staff when they were first hired into the program). Time also should have been spent helping staff integrate the knowledge and skills they learned from different training opportunities to allow them to apply their training in a comprehensive manner.

Some of the HAWWs also had poor computer skills and experienced difficulties with completing the administrative components of their positions (e.g., completing paperwork, filling in the CDC tracking sheet). The staff have demonstrated growth over the duration of the program in relation to both their administrative and program delivery skills, but administration is still an area that requires additional attention. As a result, projects hiring staff with limited formal education and experience need to be prepared to offer staff formal and informal training on the administrative aspects of the positions, as well as on the program delivery model. It should begin with basic training (e.g., how to use various computer programs, how to type), if needed, to ensure that staff have a strong foundation and be followed up by training at more intermediate and advanced levels (e.g., taking chronological notes, developing care plans, scoring risk assessments). In addition, the program would benefit from having a program manual that documents all aspects of the work that the HAWWs are expected to perform.

Another lesson also emerged with respect to administration—it is necessary to ensure that adequate resources are available support program administration. The NYVRP could have benefited from a dedicated Administrative Assistant position throughout the initiative to assist with the required paperwork and reporting, human resource tasks, and scheduling (e.g., Oversight and Advisory Committee meetings, Core Team meetings). Following the departure of the Program Manager and a part-time Administrative Assistant in early 2019, these duties fell solely to the MOPO and HAWWs, which took time away from delivering services to the youth.

Perhaps the most important lesson that has emerged over the last year is that the NYVRP staff are at high risk for burnout. Since the staff both live and work in these small communities, they are never really “off.” Staff have also indicated that the time they spend on their jobs is taking a toll on their own children and families. Moreover, staff are subjected to the effects of colonization on a regular basis, both through their jobs (by constantly hearing the stories of the youth they serve) and in their personal lives. There are a large number of tragedies in these communities, which affect all community members, including the staff. Therefore, programs like the NYVRP need to be prepared to provide staff and their families with adequate forms of support and debriefing to ensure that they are able to remain physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy and productive in their positions. For instance, it was suggested that a mental health worker be available to support the staff. This may also mean modifications to the staffing model to ensure that staff have an appropriate workload and caseload. Some suggestions offered to address this need were hiring more staff at part-time or having three HAWWs in each community which alternate between doing programming, one-on-one visits with clients, and administration.

### **13.1.3 Lessons Learned about Required Elements to Support the Implementation of the NYVRP**

A number of lessons were learned about the level and types of support that needed to be in place throughout the five-year pilot project period for which the NYVRP was funded to increase the likelihood of fidelity to the program delivery model. The Ministry of Corrections and Policing had proposed to support the NYVRP in three ways: 1) providing training; 2) implementation assistance; and 3) quality assurance support to the communities. As ascertained in Section 9.3, the NYVRP staff believed that they did not have adequate training in the correctional theories and practices they were expected to apply, which compromised the extent to which they could deliver the aspects of the program delivery model related to conducting and using risk assessments to inform their work with the clients. In addition to more training on correctional theories and practices, it was suggested that the program would have benefited from having regular interactions with a Clinical Director to help them better understand how to apply the risk assessment protocol.

In terms of implementation assistance, a program manual outlining all of the program's processes, procedures, and required forms was not developed prior to commencing program delivery. In fact, a program manual was never completed for the program. Further, some of the procedures and forms were being developed as program delivery occurred, which led to new forms being introduced throughout the program and caused confusion among the staff. For instance, involvement summary forms were introduced to staff during the last month of the program whereas these forms should have been developed and in place at the time program delivery commenced (or at least by the end of the first year). In the future, new programs, such as the NYVRP, should strive to develop a program manual and the program's expected documentation prior to beginning program delivery.

With respect to quality assurance, one of the greatest limitations that affected the ability to monitor the fidelity to the program delivery model was a lack of reliable program data. The Ministry was supposed to develop a database for the project, but due to several issues encountered within the government (e.g., delays in receiving permission to use a particular version of the proposed database), the development of the database was delayed so much that it was never completed. As a result, staff were asked to complete an Excel Community Data Collection (CDC) Tracking Sheet, which they found difficult to use and understand. If it was not possible to develop a database for the project, additional effort should have been put into designing a CDC Tracking Sheet that would lend itself to useable, reliable data being collected, as well as teaching staff how to accurately complete it. It is important to consider the user's knowledge and skill level with respect to recording data and to design a tracking sheet in a way that matches that skill level (e.g., using clear, defined terms).

Another factor that affected both implementation assistance and quality assurance is that the amount of time Ministry personnel dedicated to the NYVRP decreased over the five-years the program was implemented. It would have been best to maintain a constant (high) level of support throughout all five years to ensure that all program components were in place and that any issues that emerged could be addressed quickly and effectively. It can take two to four years of development, adjustments and modifications before a new program can be implemented with

good fidelity (Bertram, Blase, & Fixen, 2015), and this should be considered when planning how much support should be provided to a pilot project. It is also necessary to take the context in which a pilot project is occurring into consideration. In this case, the NYVRP communities had limited, if any, experience with implementing corrections, evidence-based models. As such, it should have been expected that a high level of support may have been required throughout the pilot project.

Overall, many of the lessons in this section pertain to: a) having the program delivery model as fully developed as possible before program delivery commences, including the program's procedures and protocols, necessary forms, and a data tracking system; and b) ensuring staff's knowledge and skills levels are accounted for in the level of support provided to the program, as well as in the program design, including offering additional training to offset gaps in knowledge and ensuring paperwork and data tracking systems can be easily understood.

#### **13.1.4 Lessons Learned about Oversight and Advisory Committees**

In principle, it was agreed that a two-tiered governance structure of the NYVRP comprised of an overarching Oversight Committee of senior-level decision makers and local-level Advisory Committees comprised of local managers was an adequate and comprehensive governance structure for the NYVRP. In practice, however, staff and stakeholders found the Oversight Committee to be helpful in learning about the overall direction of the program and its intended outcomes, but the value of the monthly management update calls and Advisory Committees was questioned. Further, issues were identified with the functioning of both committees that hindered their effectiveness. For instance, stakeholders indicated that the purpose of the various Committees/meeting types (i.e., Oversight, monthly update calls, and Advisory Committees) needed to be clarified, including who is invited to participate in each Committee/meeting. Related to this, there was also a need to ensure that new and/or different information was being shared at each meeting to avoid repetitive information from being shared across meetings. Accordingly, the NYVRP may consider reducing and consolidating meeting types to achieve this goal. For example, in-person Advisory Committee meetings could be held once every three months with monthly update phone calls in between as required. The meetings should also be re-structured to focus more on problem-solving rather than on reporting back on activities undertaken by the NYVRP to elicit more participation from partner agencies. It also became clear that attention needs to be paid to the organization of the meetings, including ensuring that adequate notice is provided when inviting attendees to meetings, providing as much notice as possible if meetings are cancelled, ensuring teleconference information is available to those attending from afar, and determining in advance who will be moderating the meetings. Thus, there are many strategies the NYVRP could implement to increase the effectiveness of the Oversight and Advisory Committee meetings, which would ideally lead to increased agency participation in the meetings.

Beyond issues related to the structure and organization of the various Committee meetings, the evaluation findings also suggested that the Advisory Committees in particular were affected by broader issues, such as a lack of interest among local agencies to support the NYVRP, lack of participation by community leadership, tendency of the communities to only come together in response to negative incidents, and lack of experience with evidence-based models. These more

systemic issues affected the extent to which the program could be delivered in a collaborative, multi-sectoral manner and are more difficult for the NYVRP to address on their own. As such, an important lesson learned is that a community's level of readiness to work in a collaborative manner needs to be considered when implementing an intervention such as the NYVRP and, if agencies are expected to collaborate to support the program, specific components of the intervention may need to be developed to explicitly stimulate, and remove barriers to, collaboration.

### **13.1.5 Lessons Learned about Core Teams**

In general, Core Teams were viewed as a valuable component of the NYVRP, as they facilitated information sharing about youth who are common clients to the agencies involved, as well as information about possible programming and other opportunities in which the youth can be involved. The Core Teams are supposed to play a critical role in developing care plans for youth and devising strategies for youth to receive the supports they required to address their criminogenic needs; however, there were mixed perceptions of whether the Core Teams actively contributed to the development of care plans. Based on the evaluation findings, it seemed that the agencies did actively describe the programming and supports they could offer the youth, but that the youth's risk factors were not explicitly discussed or were only discussed informally. Having NYVRP staff who better understood the role that risk assessments play in the case planning process (and potentially extending this training on RNR principles to Core Team members) likely would have led to more explicit discussions of risk factors and the best ways to meet each youth's needs (i.e., responsivity).

An important issue that was identified with respect to Core Teams related to concerns about the confidentiality of the information shared at the meetings. Specifically, it was noted that sometimes individuals who were not directly involved with the youth being discussed were present at the meetings. It is unclear whether these concerns were directly raised with the NYVRP staff or the project management team, suggesting that the program may benefit from developing a mechanism to allow program staff and partners to report confidentiality concerns to the project management team. In addition, the program would likely benefit developing a policy about how to address situations where confidential information is shared with individuals who should not be privy to that information, including alerting youth about any confidentiality breaches.

Core Team meetings also experienced some of the same structural/organizational issues as the Oversight and Advisory Committee meetings. To enhance their functioning in the future, it was suggested that the meetings: a) have more structure (i.e., have an agenda, avoid off-topic discussions); b) place a greater focus on discussing care plans and identifying solutions for the youth rather than discussing what they have done; c) only have agency representatives directly involved with the youth present at the meetings to better protect the youth's confidentiality; and d) provide a teleconference number in advance to members attending by telephone and be facilitated with telephone participants in mind (e.g., starting the teleconference on time, providing notice if meetings are cancelled). Overall, there was clear support that Core Teams should continue to be apart of the NYVRP in the future.



### **13.1.6 Lessons Learned about Partnering with Community Corrections**

As part of the original program design, it was expected that the NYVRP would work closely with the Creighton Community Corrections office, as it was anticipated that many of the youth referred to the program would be formally involved in the justice system. The final evaluation offered insight into the success of this partnership. Overall, the partnership was characterized by friction with both parties indicating that they did not view the other as a “good partner.” Corrections was frustrated by the organization issues associated with the various NYVRP meetings. In addition, they found that the information they sent to the NYVRP often went missing. Importantly, Corrections perceived that there was a lack of accountability on the NYVRP’s behalf to acknowledge and address these organizational issues. Thus, there is an opportunity for the NYVRP to initiate discussions with the Creighton Corrections office to explicitly address these concerns and developing strategies to resolve them.

In addition, both parties struggled with the requests made by the other. For instance, the NYVRP perceived that the Corrections relied too heavily on them to perform check-ins with the youth, while Corrections indicated that the NYVRP experienced some role confusion with the POs and sometimes requested information to which they should not be privy. Finally, Corrections perceived a lack of reciprocity from the NYVRP as the NYVRP asked for monthly reports on their corrections-referred clients but indicated they did not have time to prepare monthly reports on the NYVRP clients for Corrections. Accordingly, both parties should work together to develop clear, transparent expectations of each other, including what constitutes a reasonable request in terms of reports for mutual clients. If these issues go unaddressed, the partnership may falter further.

Despite these challenges, it should be noted that strengths of the partnership were also identified, such as being able to share information about common clients and reinforcing common messages to the youth. Corrections also valued the prosocial opportunities the NYVRP could offer youth (especially cultural activities and land-based learning), as these were areas where Corrections was not able to support the youth as much as they would like.

### **13.1.7 Lessons Learned about Supporting NYVRP Youth**

A positive lesson learned with respect to program delivery is that, despite the limited availability of formal services in the three NYVRP communities, it is possible to provide the youth with a wide array of supports to address their risk factors and needs. Further, having the opportunity to develop a positive, trusting relationship with a HAWW was an important feature of the program. In addition, the evaluation offered insight into the specific types of activities that were perceived as most beneficial by youth—cultural and land-based activities, as well as the opportunity to learn from Elders and Mentors. Indeed, it was noted that a particular success of the NYVRP was the extent to which it was able to engage Elders and Mentors in the program, as it was suggested that other programs have struggled to do this in a meaningful way. Thus, this is an important lesson that can be learned from the NYVRP.

### **13.1.8 Lessons Learned about Phasing Out**

Following the 2017-18 program year, the NYVRP realized that they need to slowly transition youth out of the program, as the full removal of supports from some youth who were initially deemed ready to exit the program led to a relapse in their behaviour (i.e., they acted out to remain in the program). Based on the available documentation, it is unclear how the Phasing Out process was implemented and the specific criteria that youth had to meet to be transitioned from one phase to the next (i.e., 75%, 50%, 25%). It is also concerning that a number of youth were phased out of the program, yet were not considered graduates of the program. In the future, explicitly identifying the criteria that youth must meet in order to move from one level of programming to the next, as well as to graduate from the program, would help increase the program's transparency.

Further, it was suggested that graduates of the program should have the opportunity to return to the program as peer mentors. This would help the youth maintain a connection to the program, while being able to serve as a role model to others. Moreover, a graduate in Deschambault Lake successfully transitioned into the role of Mentor. As a result, the NYVRP should consider making this opportunity available to all graduates and making this a formal component of the program.

### **13.1.9 Lessons Learned about RPT**

The incorporation of RPT into the NYVRP reflected a novel component of the program delivery model and many lessons were learned in the four years it took to the program to be able to offer RPT services to its youth. First, after lengthy difficulties in identifying a service provider, the NYVRP successfully entered into a partnership with Indigenous Services Canada, who had a shared interest in delivering mental health services to the NYVRP youth, in part, due to their shared clientele (i.e., First Nation persons). In the future, programs exploring the provision of remote mental health services in First Nation communities should consider Indigenous Services Canada as a potential agency to enter into a partnership.

Second, the program learned that RPT units can become obsolete quite quickly. After acquiring the units at the end of the 2015-16 fiscal year, they became obsolete in early 2020 (less than five years). The licenses for the units are also costly to maintain on an annual basis. Thus, programs considering incorporating RPT into their services should be aware of the costs of the units, as well as the potential for the equipment to become obsolete relatively quickly.

Finally, the RPT units were used with only a handful of NYVRP youth (our best estimates range from 6 to 13 youth); thus, this reflected an extremely costly component of this program (i.e., \$19,479 to \$8,990 per participant depending on whether it was used with 6 or 13 youth). As a result, some stakeholders believed that money could have been used more effectively on other aspects of the program. Further, staff and stakeholders were critical of the effectiveness of receiving mental health therapy remotely. They noted that the youth were willing to try receiving therapy via RPT, but ultimately did not seem very engaged. Youth who participated in an initial in-person "meet and greet" sessions seemed to fare somewhat better in terms of their level of engagement. Youth also offered mixed perceptions about RPT. Two youth who completed the

NYVRP Participant Survey indicated that RPT was helpful and were comfortable with this modality whereas two others only found it “a little helpful” and were not comfortable with it. Based on the cost and limited satisfaction with receiving mental health therapy via RPT, this component of the NYVRP is likely not worth continuing in the future (or replicating at other sites). If it is continued, it is recommended that in-person sessions be periodically arranged in addition to RPT sessions.

### **13.2 Evaluation Lessons Learned**

Several lessons have been learned in relation to the evaluation over the course of the evaluation. Most importantly, we have learned that, while participatory methodologies may be considered ideal when working with First Nation communities, we also have to ensure that we are not overwhelming the program staff with our evaluation activities. In particular, we had wanted staff to hand out NYVRP Participant and Parent surveys, as they had pre-existing relationships with these participants. However, we wanted to conduct the surveys at the same time that staff were updating their casefiles for the casefile review and carrying out their usual responsibilities. The evaluation team was unaware of how time consuming that casefile review process was for staff and unintentionally burdened them with multiple evaluation activities at one time. We learned that we need to be more aware of the ways in which we are asking staff to assist with the evaluation and to ensure that we are not placing too many demands on them. We also need to balance the number of evaluation activities planned with staff’s capacity to contribute to these activities.

Second, we found that geography was an important consideration in the evaluation. While we wanted to spend more time in the communities to directly observe programming and to collect data in person from various participant groups, the distance to the communities and the potential for poor/unsafe travel conditions limited our opportunities to visit the communities. For instance, it would take a minimum of three to four days to visit all three communities in one trip (which can be difficult to schedule amidst competing work demands) and there is no cell service for two-thirds of trip, making winter travel undesirable. As a result, we had to modify our photo-elicitation research design to rely upon photos taken by staff rather than having youth generate the photos. To have youth-generated photos, we would have needed to spend more time in the communities to develop a relationship with the youth and to provide instructions on how to complete the photo-elicitation activity. Therefore, it is important to be realistic about the impact that geography can have on the evaluation design.

Third, we struggled to obtain enough risk assessment data for a robust pre-post analysis. Upon the introduction of the new risk assessment protocol in January 2019, the program did an excellent job of completing risk assessments with all active clients at that time; however, despite discussing the need for having post-program and follow-up risk assessment data at every bi-annual Evaluation Advisory Committee, we were not successfully able to get the program to adopt a set of procedures wherein risk assessments were completed with clients at the time they stopped participating in the program. Part of the issue was that clients seemed to gradually stop participating in the program until they were eventually considered inactive. Another issue was that staff did not seem to understand the importance of having post-risk assessment information for the evaluation. In the future, an explicit policy indicating that a risk assessment should be

completed with clients at the time they conclude the program and six months after that may be one way to increase post-program and follow-up risk assessment completion rates.

Fourth, the evaluation team strived to attend as many NYVRP meetings as possible including all Oversight Committee, Evaluation Advisory Committee, and monthly management update meetings, as well as any Advisory Committee meetings to which we were invited. We also presented our annual evaluation findings and provided updates on the evaluation at these various meetings. By being actively involved in the program, we found this helped build familiarity with, and credibility among, the various stakeholder groups, which we would like to think translated into higher participation rates in our evaluation activities. We also think our visibility in the program contributed to being able to sign a data sharing agreement with PBCN Education in Deschambault Lake.

A fifth lesson learned in completing the evaluation reports for 2018-19 and 2019-20 was that program data (e.g., casefiles, meetings minutes, activity reports, financial data) for the evaluation needs to be provided in advance of the report deadline. Ideally, data should be provided at least two months before the report is due to allow the evaluation team adequate time to analyze the files and write the report.

The final lesson learned pertains to our attempts to enter into a data sharing agreement with the RCMP to access police data for the youth enrolled in the program. After initially starting this process in August 2018 in which we attempted to enter into an agreement for identifiable youth data, we learned in March 2020 that, as a rule, the RCMP does not share identifiable data. Consequently, we had to modify our request to de-identified data. In the future, other evaluators should be aware that the RCMP does not share identifiable data to avoid the lengthy delays we experienced in trying to obtain data from the RCMP.

## 14. RECOMMENDATIONS

The NYVRP has had many successes over duration of the project but has also encountered several challenges and learned many lessons along the way. The following recommendations are offered to continue to enhance and refine the NYVRP should it continue in the future.

### 14.1 Program Delivery Recommendations

#### 13.2.1 Program Delivery Recommendations

##### Oversight and Advisory Committees

1. Continue to maintain the Oversight Committee but ensure that the purpose of the Committee is clear and that it is oriented toward problem-solving rather than reporting on program activities.
2. Restructure the Advisory Committee meetings to meet once every three months. Ensure that the purpose and intended composition of the Advisory Committees are clear and that there is a greater focus on problem-solving rather than reporting on program activities.
3. Discontinue the monthly management update phone calls unless there is a need to meet sooner than the scheduled Oversight or Advisory Committee meetings.
4. Ensure that novel information is presented at each Committee to avoid redundant information from being presented across meeting types.
5. Improve the organization of the meetings by ensuring that adequate notice is provided when inviting attendees to meetings, providing as much notice as possible if meetings are cancelled, ensuring teleconference information is available to those attending from afar, and determining in advance who will be moderating the meetings.
6. Continue to develop strategies to engage community partners to increase their participation and attendance rates in Oversight and Advisory Committee meetings. These strategies should focus on stimulating collaboration, including overcoming known barriers to collaboration in the communities. Offering regional workshops (similar to the kick-off workshop in Baker's Narrows) may be one way of stimulating collaboration.

##### NYVRP Program Delivery

7. Develop a program manual outlining the NYVRP's program delivery model, policies, procedures, and requisite paperwork.
8. Consider the level of trauma experienced by youth when determining the length of time they should be enrolled in the program. Consider extending the program to be 24 to 36 months to allow sufficient time to heal, develop supports, and transition out of the program.

9. Continue to maintain monthly Core Team meetings. Ensure that the meetings are structured (i.e., have an agenda) to avoid off-topic discussions, focused on discussing care plans and identifying solutions to address the youth's needs, and attended only by agency representatives that are directly involved with the youth. Ensure that a teleconference number is provided to attendees attending by phone and that the meeting is facilitated with these participants in mind (e.g., the teleconference is started on time, notice is provided if the meeting is cancelled).
10. Develop a mechanism to allow NYVRP program staff and partners to report confidentiality concerns and breaches to the NYVRP project management team. A policy should also be developed that specifies how staff should address confidentiality breaches, including alerting youth about any breaches that occurred with their information.
11. Offer Core Team members a training session on core correctional theories and practices, including the use of the risk assessments to inform case planning, to enhance their ability to develop care plans that are in line with the risk, need, responsivity framework
12. Continue completing the YLS/CMI: SV, POSIT, and ACE-Q with all youth enrolled in the NYVRP.
13. Update the care plans developed for each youth to ensure that each risk factor identified as "high risk" on the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT is identified as a "risk/need" on the care plan. In addition, ensure that each "risk/need" has a corresponding goal/plan to address it. Utilizing the risk assessment information to develop or refine the youth's care plans would allow for better adherence to the "need" and "responsivity" principles of the RNR model.
14. Establish criteria that youth must meet in order to move through each of the Phasing Out levels (i.e., 75%, 50%, 25%), as well as the criteria that youth must meet to be considered a graduate of the program.
15. Formally establish a peer mentorship component to allow NYVRP graduates to transition into a mentorship role where they can mentor other NYVRP participants.
16. Continue to incorporate cultural activities, land-based learning, and opportunities to learn from Elders/Mentors into the program.
17. Discontinue the use of remote presence technology to offer remote mental health therapy to NYVRP clients. If it is utilized in the future, ensure that in-person sessions are interspersed with remote sessions to increase youth's level of engagement in the remote therapy sessions.
18. Together with Creighton Community Corrections, develop clear expectations of the partnership between Community Corrections and the NYVRP, including the expected

roles of HAWWs and Probation Officers, as well as what constitutes a reasonable request for information.

19. Enhance the program's organization and recordkeeping to ensure that important documents (e.g., full Corrections referral forms) are not misplaced.
20. Develop a database or redesign the Community Data Collection Tracking Sheet to allow for the collection of useable, reliable data.

### **Staffing and Training**

21. Modify the staffing model to allow staff to better maintain their physical and mental health. This could include: a) having 3 HAWWs in each community who alternate weekly between the roles of offering programming to youth, conducting one-on-one visits, and completing administration duties; or b) hiring more HAWWs in each community, but at part-time hours to lower their caseloads.
22. Match the caseloads of the HAWWs to the trauma levels of the youth on their caseload. Youth enrolled in the program have experienced a lot of trauma and may require a substantial amount of time from the HAWW, which should be accounted for in the caseload levels.
23. Fill the administrative assistant role allocated to the NYVRP to offset some of the administrative duties placed on the MOPO and HAWWs.
24. Provide additional training to staff on core correctional theories and practices (e.g., risk-need-responsivity, social learning theory, cognitive-behavioural theory), including regular follow-up sessions, to help the staff become more adept at applying these principles.
25. Provide staff with training to increase their administrative skills. Staff should be provided with training on organization, recordkeeping (including maintaining casefiles), and confidentiality. In addition, staff with limited computer skills should be provided with training in this area (e.g., training on how to use Microsoft Word and Excel).
26. When hiring staff, hire individuals who are living healthy lifestyles, have a passion for working with youth, and have some administrative skills.
27. Provide HAWWs (and their families) with the supports they require to remain healthy and productive in their positions to avoid staff burnout and further staff turnover, such as family retreats and access to a mental health worker.

### **13.2.2 Evaluation Recommendations**

28. Consider the extent to which NYVRP staff can realistically be involved in evaluation activities and ensure that HAWWs are not asked to participate in multiple evaluation

activities simultaneously (e.g., preparing casefiles for review at the same time they are asked to assist with survey administration).

29. Consider the role of geography when planning evaluation activities, including being realistic about the amount of time the evaluators can be present in the communities, and the impact this will have on the evaluation design.
30. Work with the NYVRP project management team to develop a policy to complete the YLS/CMI: SV and POSIT at the time a youth concludes the program and 6-months after their program completion date.
31. Continue to share evaluation findings and updates with all stakeholder groups to maintain familiarity with, and credibility among, the program's stakeholders.
32. Consider whether an organization, such as the RCMP, has a policy regarding the sharing of identifiable data prior to drafting a data sharing agreement and tailor the data request to one that they will be able to fulfill.



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## APPENDIX A: NYVRP PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL DESCRIPTION

### Logic Model Inputs

At both the organizational and client/case management levels, several inputs (i.e., resources that allow the NYVRP to be carried out) have been identified. Most notable are the agencies contracted to offer NYVRP services in each community and the corresponding NYVRP staff, such as the Program Manager, MOPO, HAWWs, and the Core Teams. These groups work together to implement the NYVRP with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections and Policing, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), local schools, other local services (e.g., health centre, child and family services, community-based organizations) and community members with the financial support of the NCPS. Further, supportive and advisory roles are carried out by the Oversight and the three local Advisory Committees.

Additional inputs, specific to the client/case management level, primarily include the risk assessment tools, individualized case plans, and remote presence technology; all of these inputs aid in rehabilitation and, for correction-based referrals, reintegration. Local resources, including cultural resources, are utilized to address the identified risk factors and reduce the youth's violent and criminal behaviour.

### Logic Model Program Activities

The NYVRP incorporates both risk management and rehabilitative strategies. With respect to risk management, supervision and other interventions that reduce opportunities to engage in antisocial behaviours are employed. These strategies and interventions may include custodial sentences, court-ordered prohibitions (e.g., restricting the use of firearms or alcohol), curfews designed around high-risk times, contact restrictions (e.g., from victims and pro-criminal friends), and direct contact supervision standards involving a HAWW.

In terms of rehabilitative programs, activities that target dynamic risks (e.g., employment/education, substance use, family circumstances, pro-criminal companions/attitudes, and mental health issues linked to offending) are pursued. For instance, psychiatric and psychological services are made available to the youth by video-link through remote presence technology. In addition, NYVRP staff use one-on-one contact with the youth to establish relationships and maintain frequent personal contact with them.

Any programming offered to youth through the NYVRP is responsive to their specific needs. For instance, efforts are made to incorporate the cultural and spiritual needs of First Nation participants and make accommodations for those with mental health issues or cognitive disabilities (e.g., FASD, developmental learning disorders). Through the provision of supervision, support, and rehabilitation, it is anticipated that youth will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to reduce their criminogenic risk factors.

## **Logic Model Outcomes**

The ultimate outcome of the NYVRP is to create safer communities by reducing the amount of violent and criminal behaviour exhibited by youth in the three communities. However, prior to achieving this outcome, several short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes must occur. The short-term and intermediate outcomes that have been identified for the project relate to changes in the youth's attitudes, knowledge, and behaviour. Although not initially included in the logic model, it is expected that participation in the NYVRP will first lead to enhanced self-esteem and confidence, improved communication skills, and greater openness with one's feelings. In turn, once the youth have more positive attitude and beliefs, it is believed that changes in their behaviour will follow suit. Further, the types of changes that individual youth exhibit and the amount of change they experience will vary according to their specific criminogenic risks. Some short-term changes are also expected at the community level, such as increased cooperation with the police and increased awareness in the community about local gang issues.

Following a change in behaviour among a number of youth in the communities, it is anticipated that these intermediate outcomes will lead to outcomes of reduced violence, criminal acts (e.g., drug dealing), and gang activity in each community and, consequently, greater feelings of safety in the communities overall. More specifically, a decrease in the number of youth joining gangs and gang-related crime may be observed, as well as an increase in the number of youth exiting gangs and graduating from high school. Overall, the NYVRP is expected to result in the youth experiencing a greater sense of holistic wellbeing and being more optimistic about their futures.

## APPENDIX B: EVALUATION MATRIX BY YEAR AND EVALUATION TYPE

| Year One   | Year Two   | Year Three  | Year Four   | Year Five   | Year Six                                  |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Formative Evaluation</b>  |  |   |   |   |   |
| <b>April 1, 2015 – March 2016</b>  | April 1, 2016 – March 2017   | April 1, 2017 – March 2018  | April 1, 2018 – March 2019  | April 1, 2019 – March 2020                        | April 1, 2020 – March 2021                |
| <b>Sign contract between MOJ and U of S</b><br><i>January 6, 2016</i><br><br><b>Begin developing evaluation plan</b> | Draft Evaluation Plan<br><i>Submitted April 30, 2016</i><br><br>Build relationships with communities by attending Advisory Committee Meetings as appropriate<br><i>Attended meetings in May and September, 2016</i><br><br>Refine/further develop Evaluation Plan as details pertaining to program implementation become available<br><i>Ongoing</i> | Final Evaluation Plan<br><i>Summer and Fall 2017</i><br><br>Conduct formative evaluation<br><br>Document review<br><br>Interviews (individual and group)<br><br>Observation | Annual Report<br><i>April 30, 2018</i>  | Completed   | Completed                                 |
| <b>Formative Evaluation: Project Planning and Development</b>  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Formative Evaluation Question  | Performance Area   | Related Output Indicator  | Data Collection   | Source of Information                             | Timeline                                  |
| <b>1. Who were the major stakeholders involved in the</b>  | Sustained agency collaboration, increased in formal integration  | Number of information sharing agreements, number of   | Document review, <sup>36</sup> Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk | Summer and Fall 2017<br><br>Annual Report |

<sup>36</sup> Documents may include Committee minutes, Performance Monitoring Assessments Reports (PMA), database, youth case files and other.

|  |  |   |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>start-up of the NYVRP? What were the roles and responsibilities of each group? Who else should have been involved?</b>  |  | Oversight Committee and Advisory meetings held  |   | assessment tools, database   | <i>April 30, 2018</i>  |
| <b>2. How were communities and stakeholders engaged? How were the needs of the communities and their readiness assessed? Was there a sufficient level of engagement?</b> | Increased community involvement, Community capacity to respond effectively to youth violence and gangs, increase in volunteerism | Percentage of volunteers, community members, Elders, extended family involved in programs. Percentage of community stakeholders represented at monthly advisory meetings. | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017<br>Annual Report<br><i>April 30, 2018</i> |
| <b>3. What governance structures were established for the NYVRP? What existing community and provincial structures were built upon? Is</b>                               | Appropriate framework and effective governance structure   | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level   | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017<br>Annual Report<br><i>April 30, 2018</i> |

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| the governance structure effective?  |                                 |   |   |  |  |
| <b>4. How were decisions made about program delivery? What programming criteria were established? How collaborative was the process?</b> | Planning process                | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017<br><br>Annual Report April 30, 2018 |
| <b>5. What, if anything, would have improved the development process?</b>  | Planning process, communication |   | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017                                     |

#### Formative Evaluation: Initial Implementation

| Evaluation Question   | Performance Area               | Related Output Indicator  | Data Collection   | Source of Information  | TimeLine             |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---|--|----------------------|
| <b>1. How were the YVRP and Re-entry and Intensive Aftercare models adapted to allow for their implementation in Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows</b> | Effective governance structure | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017 |

|   |   |   |   |  |                      |
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| <b>and Deschambault Lake?</b>   |   |   |   |  |                      |
| <b>2. How well does the NYVRP adhere to the principles of risk, need, and responsivity?</b>   | Case planning   | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017 |
| <b>1. What community strengths and barriers facilitate or hinder the implementation of the NYVRP? What solutions can be identified?</b>                                   | Effective governance structure                                    | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017 |
| <b>3. What programs and services are delivered through the NYVRP? Have appropriate services been established? Are additional services or program activities required?</b> | Number and type of services offered and youth participation rates | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017 |

|  |  |   |   |  |                      |
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| <b>4. What eligibility criteria are being used to select program participants? Have appropriate eligibility criteria been established?</b>                         | Reaching participants from priority groups           | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017 |
| <b>5. What are the characteristics of youth who are participating in the NYVRP? How many youth are participating? Is the NYVRP reaching its target population?</b> | Reaching participants from priority groups           | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017 |
| <b>6. Are adequate levels of staffing in place? What training did individuals involved in project delivery receive? How effective was it? What challenges</b>      | Staff training and retention, program sustainability | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | Summer and Fall 2017 |



|   |                        |   |   |                  |                      |
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| existed in hiring qualified staff?  |                        |   |   |                  |                      |
| <b>7. How can the delivery of programming through the NYVRP be refined or enhanced?</b> | Program sustainability | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review, Interviews (individual and group), and Observation | Project partners | Summer and Fall 2017 |

| Year One   | Year Two  | Year Three  | Year Four  | Year Five  | Year Six  |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Process Evaluation</b>  |   |   |  |  |   |
| <b>Sign contract between MOJ and U of S January 6, 2016</b><br><br><b>Begin developing evaluation plan</b> | Draft Evaluation Plan<br><i>Submitted April 30, 2016</i><br><br>Refine/further develop Evaluation Plan as details pertaining to program implementation become available<br><i>Ongoing</i> | Final Evaluation Plan<br><i>Date—Summer 2017</i><br><br>Conduct process evaluation activities<br>Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey?<br><i>Date: After formative</i> | Conduct process evaluation activities<br>Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey<br><i>Ongoing</i> | Annual Report<br><i>April 30, 2019</i><br><br>Conduct process evaluation activities<br>Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Youth survey<br><i>Ongoing</i><br><br>Draft Final Evaluation Report<br><i>June 15, 2020</i> | Final Process Evaluation Report<br>October 31, 2020 |

|  |  | <i>evaluation is complete</i>   |   |  |                                  |
|--|--|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Process Evaluation Question</b>   | <b>Performance Area</b>  | <b>Related Output Indicator</b>   | <b>Data Collection</b>  | <b>Source of Information</b>   | <b>Timeline</b>                  |
| <b>1. To what extent is the model implemented as intended? What changes, if any, occurred and why?</b> | Fidelity, adapting to change, responding to local need and flexibility | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>2. How well does the NYVRP adhere to the principles of risk, need, and responsivity?</b>            | Fidelity, developing and implementing case plans                       | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>3. How does the governance structure support or impede the project?</b>                             | Continuous program assessment and communication                        | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>4. What factors assist in the implementation of the program</b>                                     | Continuous program assessment and communication                        | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level                           | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)   | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk                            | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |

|  |   |   |   |  |                                  |
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| <b>activities? What factors serve as barriers? What gaps in service delivery exist?</b>  |   | and case management level   | Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey  | assessment tools, database   |                                  |
| <b>5. How many youth participated in the NYVRP? What were their characteristics? To what extent do the participants correspond with the intended target group?</b> | Relentless outreach, reaching priority groups               | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>6. What programs are available to participants? To what extent do available resources match their service delivery needs?</b>                                   | Service integration and community participation/cooperation | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey<br>Youth survey | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>7. How often did participants access programming identified in their case management</b>  | Implementation of case plans                                | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Youth survey                     | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |

|   |   |   |   |  |                                  |
|---|---|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| plans? What facilitated their access to programming? What barriers prevented their access to programming? What, if anything, would have improved their completion rate?         |   |   |   |  |                                  |
| <b>8. Are the necessary staffing and resources in place to implement the NYVRP? What training did staff receive? How effective was it? What challenges exist with staffing?</b> | Staff recruitment, training and retention           | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment                     | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>9. How satisfied are the youth, staff, and other stakeholders with the NYVRP?</b>  | Communication, responding to the needs of the youth | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey | Youth, staff, Committees, volunteers, PMA's, case plans                      | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |

|  |   |   |  |   |                                     |
|--|---|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
|  |   |   | Youth survey   |   |                                     |
| <b>10. How well do project delivery staff work with community partners? How useful is the support provided by Ministry of Justice? How accessible is it?</b> | Community integration<br>staff training,<br>collaboration | All outputs within<br>the Logic model's<br>organization level<br>and case<br>management level | Document review<br>Database analysis<br>Interviews (individual<br>and group)<br>Observation<br>Fidelity assessment<br>Community survey | Youth, staff,<br>Committees,<br>volunteers, PMA's | March 31, 2015<br>to March 31, 2020 |

| Year One                                    | Year Two   | Year Three  | Year Four  | Year Five  | Year Six                                     |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Impact Evaluation</b>                    |  |   |  |  |  |
| <b>No activities occurred</b>               | Sign contract between<br>MOJ and U of S<br><i>June, 2017</i> | Final Evaluation<br>Plan<br><i>Date—Summer<br/>2017</i>                     | Annual Report<br><i>April 30, 2018</i>   | Annual Report<br><i>April 30, 2019</i>   | Final Evaluation<br>Report<br>March 31, 2021 |
| <b>Begin developing<br/>evaluation plan</b> | Develop impact evaluation<br>design<br><i>July, 2017</i>     | Collect pre- test,<br>post-test and<br>follow-up measures<br><i>Ongoing</i> | Collect pre- test, post-<br>test and follow-up<br>measures<br><i>Ongoing</i>   | Collect pre- test,<br>post-test and follow-<br>up measures<br><i>Ongoing</i>   |  |
|   | Submit Ethics Application<br><i>June, 2017</i>               |   | Consider collecting<br>data using other<br>methods (will only be<br>able to look at<br>experiences of first<br>cohort if done this<br>year)<br>Interviews with youth<br>(individual and group)<br>Case studies | Conduct qualitative<br>impact evaluation<br>activities<br>Interviews with<br>youth (individual<br>and group)<br>Case studies<br><i>Ongoing</i> |  |

|   |   |   |   | Draft Final<br>Evaluation Report<br><i>October 31, 2020</i>                  |                                  |
|---|---|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Impact Evaluation<br/>Question</b>   | <b>Performance Area</b>                         | <b>Related Output<br/>Indicator</b>   | <b>Data Collection</b>  | <b>Source of<br/>Information</b>   | <b>Timeline</b>                  |
| <b>1. Did the program produce the intended outcomes, in the intermediate and long-term?</b> | Partnerships, reaching target groups            | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>2. What unintended outcomes, both positive and negative, did the NYVRP produce?</b>      | Continuous program assessment and communication | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>3. Did the impacts reach all of the intended targets?</b>                                | Use of risk assessment tools, case plans        | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level                        | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |

|  |   |   |   |  |                                  |
|--|---|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>4. Did the impacts match the needs of the participants?</b>                   | Use of risk assessment tools, case plans                        | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level                        | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>5. What were the particular features of the NYVRP that made a difference?</b> | Reporting, communication and collaboration. Service integration | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>6. What variations, if any, were made during the process?</b>                 | Flexibility adapting to local needs                             | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>7. What has been the quality of programming between sites?</b>                | Fidelity  | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities,  | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |

|  |   |   |   |  |                                  |
|--|---|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
|  |   |   | Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies  |  |                                  |
| <b>8. Did the NYVRP work in conjunction with other interventions, programs or services in the community?</b> | Community integration and participation | Number of clients who are connected to community supports /mentors who help further address identified risk factors | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>9. What helped or hindered the NYVRP to achieve the desired impacts?</b>                                  | Communication and flexibility           | All outputs within the Logic model's organization level and case management level                                   | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>10. Has there been sustained linkages between community agencies?</b>                                     | Number and type of partnerships         | Number of clients who are connected to community supports /mentors who help further address identified risk factors | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>11. What plans are in place to</b>  | Planning                                | Committee, staff, volunteer and   | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures,  | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's,   | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |



|  |                                  |   |   |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>sustain or expand the NYVRP?</b>  |                                  | service agency commitment and participation levels  | Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies  | case plans, risk assessment tools, database                                  |                                  |
| <b>12. Have the youth demonstrated a decrease in bullying, aggressive, and violent behaviour?</b>              | Activities and services provided | Number of core team agencies addressing client needs based on assessment and integrated case plan | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>13. Have the youth demonstrated a decrease in their abuse of alcohol and drugs?</b>                         | Activities and services provided | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level  | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>14. Have the youth demonstrated an increase in their school attendance and improved school performance?</b> | Activities and services provided | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level  | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and              | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |

|   |                                  |  |   |  |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|--|---|--|----------------------------------|
|   |                                  |  | Case studies  |  |                                  |
| <b>15. Have the youth demonstrated an increase in their involvement in prosocial activities and peers?</b>  | Activities and services provided | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>16. Is there greater involvement in employment-related activities by the youth?</b>  | Activities and services provided | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>17. Is there greater attachment to prosocial support systems, including their familial and service provider supports as demonstrated by the youth?</b> | Activities and services provided | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures, Conduct qualitative impact evaluation activities, Interviews with youth (individual and group), and Case studies | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk assessment tools, database | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |
| <b>18. Are the positive impacts experienced by</b>  | Activities and services provided | All outputs within the Logic model's case management level | Pre- test, post-test and follow-up measures,  | Youth, staff, Committees, PMA's, case plans, risk                            | March 31, 2015 to March 31, 2020 |

|                               |  |  |  |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>youth<br/>sustainable?</b> |  |  | Conduct qualitative<br>impact evaluation<br>activities,<br>Interviews with youth<br>(individual and<br>group), and<br>Case studies | assessment tools,<br>database |  |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------------|--|

## APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER SURVEY



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### Community Agency Survey

#### NYVRP Community Stakeholder Survey

The University of Saskatchewan and the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) invite you to participate in a survey about your views on the progress and impact of the NYVRP. We are inviting all community stakeholders who are involved in the NYVRP to complete a short 15-minute survey.

As a key stakeholder involved in the program, you have an important perspective about the program and we would like to learn your thoughts about the NYVRP. This survey will be used to inform the NYVRP and to help understand how the program has affected the youth and communities involved.

The survey is voluntary, and you do not have to answer any question you do not want to. Similarly, if you don't know the answer to a question, you can skip it. We also do not ask for your name on the survey to keep your responses anonymous.

By completing this survey, you are giving free and informed consent for the evaluation team to use the survey data to inform the NYVRP.

If you have any questions about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact:

Dr. Lisa Jewell: 306-966-2707 or [lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)

Dr. Davut Akca: 306-966-1605 or [davut.akca@usask.ca](mailto:davut.akca@usask.ca)

Thank you for your participation!



## Community Agency Survey

### Involvement in the NYVRP

1. To what extent are you involved in the NYVRP?

- ☐ Very involved
- ☐ Quite involved
- ☐ Somewhat involved
- ☐ A little involved
- ☐ Not at all involved

2. In what ways are you involved in the NYVRP? *Please check all that apply.*

- ☐ Attend NYVRP meetings
- ☐ Provide services to the NYVRP youth
- ☐ Provide administrative services to the NYVRP
- ☐ Other (please specify)



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## Community Agency Survey

### Involvement in NYVRP Meetings

3. Are you invited to Core Team Meetings arranged by the NYVRP?

*Core Team meetings are held monthly and are attended by frontline staff of participating agencies and NYVRP staff. At these meetings, care plans are developed and discussed for youth enrolled in the program.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know



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### Community Agency Survey

4. In the past 12 months, how many Core Team meetings have you attended?

- ☐ All meetings
- ☐ Most meetings
- ☐ About half the meetings
- ☐ A few meetings
- ☐ No meetings



## Community Agency Survey

### 5. What were your reasons for not attending some Core Team meetings?

*Please check all of the statements below that explain why you were not able to attend one or more Core Team meetings.*

- ☐ I was away on vacation or other leave
- ☐ I was too busy to attend
- ☐ I was not interested in participating
- ☐ The meetings are too long
- ☐ The meetings are not productive
- ☐ My supervisor told me not to go to the meetings
- ☐ I didn't have anything to contribute to the meetings
- ☐ Participating in the Core Team doesn't help me with my own work
- ☐ The meeting invitations were not sent out far enough in advance
- ☐ Other emergencies came up that I had to take care of
- ☐ I am not based in the community where the meetings are held
- ☐ The meetings were not held at a convenient location
- ☐ A teleconference number was not provided

### 6. What else stopped you from attending Core Team meetings?





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### Community Agency Survey

7. Are you invited to Advisory Committee Meetings arranged by the NYVRP?

*Advisory Committee meetings are local monthly meetings attended by managers and supervisors of participating agencies and NYVRP staff.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know



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## Community Agency Survey

8. In the past 12 months, how many Advisory Committee meetings have you attended?

- ☐ All meetings
- ☐ Most meetings
- ☐ About half the meetings
- ☐ A few meetings
- ☐ No meetings



## Community Agency Survey

### 9. What were your reasons for not attending some Advisory Committee meetings?

*Please check all the statements below which explain why you were not able to attend one or more Advisory Committee meetings.*

- ☐ I was away on vacation or other leave
- ☐ I was too busy to attend
- ☐ I was not interested in participating
- ☐ The meetings are too long
- ☐ The meetings are not productive
- ☐ My supervisor told me not to go to the meetings
- ☐ I didn't have anything to contribute to the meetings
- ☐ Participating in the Advisory Committee doesn't help me with my own work
- ☐ The meeting invitations were not sent out far enough in advance
- ☐ Other emergencies came up that I had to take care of
- ☐ I am not based in the community where the meetings are held
- ☐ The meetings were not held at a convenient location
- ☐ A teleconference number was not provided

### 10. What else stopped you from attending Advisory Committee meetings?



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## Community Agency Survey

11. Are you invited to the Oversight Committee Meetings arranged by the NYVRP?

*Oversight meetings are bi-annual meetings and are attended by senior managers of participating agencies and NYVRP management and staff.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know



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### Community Agency Survey

12. In the past 12 months, how many Oversight Committee meetings have you attended?

- ☐ Both meetings
- ☐ One meeting
- ☐ No meetings



## Community Agency Survey

13. What were your reasons for not attending some Oversight Committee meetings?

*Please check all of the statements below that explain why you were not able to attend one or more Oversight Committee meetings.*

- ☐ I was away on vacation or other leave
- ☐ I was too busy to attend
- ☐ I was not interested in participating
- ☐ The meetings are too long
- ☐ The meetings are not productive
- ☐ My supervisor told me not to go to the meetings
- ☐ I didn't have anything to contribute to the meetings
- ☐ Participating in the Oversight Committee doesn't help me with my own work
- ☐ The meeting invitations were not sent out far enough in advance
- ☐ Other emergencies came up that I had to take care of
- ☐ I am not based in the community where the meetings are held
- ☐ The meetings were not held at a convenient location
- ☐ A teleconference number was not provided

14. What else stopped you from attending Oversight Committee meetings?



## Community Agency Survey

### Perceptions of the NYVRP

15. Overall, how satisfied are you with the NYVRP program?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied

16. What do you like about the NYVRP?

17. What do you dislike about the NYVRP?

18. How can the NYVRP be improved?



## Community Agency Survey

### Impact of the NYVRP

19. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you feel that you cannot respond to a specific item, please leave it blank.

Since joining the NYVRP, the youth involved in the NYVRP are:

|  | Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree                 | Strongly agree        |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Less involved in fights/violence                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Less involved in bullying                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Less involved in gangs                             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Doing less tagging/graffiti                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Getting in less trouble with the police            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Using drugs or alcohol less often                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Attending school more                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Getting better grades                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Following rules or listening better                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| More respectful                                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Doing more recreational activities                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Doing more cultural activities                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| More involved with community events and activities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Gaining employment-related skills                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



20. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you feel that you cannot respond to a specific item, please leave it blank.

Since joining the NYVRP, the youth involved in the NYVRP have:

|  | Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree                 | Strongly Agree        |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Better mental health   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Better coping skills   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Fewer emotional outbursts                                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A better understanding of the consequences of their behaviours | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| More positive attitudes toward the police                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Stronger family relationships                                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| More positive friends  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Stronger connections with Elders                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Stronger connections with community agencies and supports      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

21. What other changes have you noticed in the NYVRP clients since the NYVRP started?



## Community Agency Survey

22. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you feel that you cannot respond to a specific item, please leave it blank.

### The NYVRP has:

|  | Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree                 | Strongly Agree        |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Been successfully implemented  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Been adequately supported by all stakeholders  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased my agency's ability to collaborate with other community agencies                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased my interest in collaborating with other agencies to address violence in my community | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased our community's ability to cooperate with the police                                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased our community's ability to cooperate with corrections                                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Offered a valuable set of services to our youth  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased mental health support for youth in the communities                                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased family participation in community activities   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

|  | Strongly Disagree     | Disagree              | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree                 | Strongly Agree        |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Had sustainable positive impacts on the clients              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Had sustainable positive impacts on the community            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased our community's capacity to address youth violence | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased our community's capacity to address gangs          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased my sense of belonging as a community member        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased my sense of safety in the community                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

23. What other changes have you noticed in your community that you believe are related to the NYVRP?



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## Community Agency Survey

### About You

24. Which sector do you currently work in?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Administration   | <input type="radio"/> Law Enforcement     |
| <input type="radio"/> Chief & Council  | <input type="radio"/> Recreation Services |
| <input type="radio"/> Corrections  | <input type="radio"/> Social Services     |
| <input type="radio"/> Education  | <input type="radio"/> Victim Services     |
| <input type="radio"/> Health (including holistic, mental health, and addictions) | <input type="radio"/> Youth Services      |
| <input type="radio"/> Justice  |   |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify)                                     |   |

25. Which community do you provide services for?

*Please check all that apply.*

- ☐ Deschambault Lake
- ☐ Pelican Narrows
- ☐ Sandy Bay

26. Is there anything else you want us to know about the NYVRP?



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## Community Agency Survey

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

If you have any questions, please contact:

Dr. Lisa Jewell  
lisa.jewell@usask.ca  
Ph: 306-966-2707

Dr. Davut Akca  
davut.akca@usask.ca  
Ph: 306-966-1605

<https://cfbsjs.usask.ca/>

## APPENDIX D: COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER SURVEY INVITATION AND REMINDER EMAILS

### Invitation Letter

Subject: **Invitation for NYVRP Community Stakeholder Survey**

Dear [FirstName],

The Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) relies upon a network of community stakeholders to offer guidance, direction, and support to the program. As part of the final evaluation that the University of Saskatchewan is completing for the NYVRP, we would like to learn what community stakeholders think of the program.

As a result, **I am inviting you to complete a short, 15-minute survey about the NYVRP.** We are inviting all stakeholders who belong to the NYVRP's Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, and/or Core Teams to participate in the survey.

**You can access the survey using the following link:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/NYVRP2020>

The survey asks questions about your involvement in the NYVRP, your satisfaction with the program, and whether it has led to any changes in your communities and among the youth involved. The survey is voluntary and you do not have to respond to any question that you do not wish to answer.

**We would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete the survey. Your perspective as a community stakeholder is very important and will help us better understand whether the program has been successful.**

If you have any questions about the survey or the evaluation, please do not hesitate to contact me at [lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca) or 306-966-2707.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Lisa Jewell**

**Research Officer**

Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies

Ph: 306-966-2707

[lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)

<https://cfbsjs.usask.ca/>

## Reminder 1

Subject: **NYVRP Community Stakeholder Survey - Reminder**

Dear [FirstName],

**Last week, I invited you to complete an online survey about the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP).** Given your involvement in the NYVRP as an Oversight Committee, Advisory Committee, and/or Core Team member, we would like to learn about your perceptions of the NYVRP.

**If you have already completed the survey, please accept my sincere thanks for answering our questions. Please disregard the rest of this email and have a good day.**

**If you have not yet had a chance to complete the survey, I hope that you will consider doing so.** Community stakeholders play a vital role in the NYVRP. It is only by hearing from representatives from all organizations involved in the NYVRP that we can better understand the program and whether it has helped address youth violence in the communities where it was offered.

**The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.** It is completely voluntary and all responses will be kept confidential. **You can access the survey here:**  
<https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/NYVRP2020>

For more information, please feel free to contact me by email at [lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca) or by phone at 306-966-2707.

Thank you in advance for your time!

Lisa

---

**Lisa Jewell, PhD, CE**  
**Research Officer**

Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies  
Ph: 306-966-2707  
[lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)  
<https://cfbsjs.usask.ca/>



## Final Reminder

Subject: **NYVRP Community Stakeholder Survey is Closing Soon**

Dear [FirstName],

**I hope this message finds you as well as possible in these uncertain times.** Earlier this month, I invited you to participate in a survey on the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP). I realize that a lot has happened over the past two weeks due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that many offices are closed and that the priority is on keeping everyone safe and healthy.

**In the midst of this chaos, we are still trying to collect some information about the NYVRP to support the evaluation, as this is a critical point in time for the program.**

We have been fortunate to hear from many community stakeholders already—many thanks if you have already completed the survey.

**If you have not yet completed the survey and have a few moments to do so, your perceptions of the NYVRP would help us develop a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the program.** Feedback from community stakeholders is extremely important for strengthening the NYVRP and developing recommendations for implementing the program in the future. **I understand, however, if you have other priorities at this time.**

**You can access the survey here:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/NYVRP2020>

**We will be closing the survey at the end of this month, so you still have a few days to complete it.**

For more information, please feel free to contact me by email at [lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca) or by phone at 306-966-2707. Please be assured that the survey is completely voluntary and all responses will be kept confidential.

**I hope you stay safe and healthy! Thank you!**

Lisa

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**Lisa Jewell, PhD, CE**

**Research Officer**

Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies

Ph: 306-966-2707

[lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)

<https://cfbsjs.usask.ca/>





## APPENDIX E: NYVRP STAFF INTERVIEW GUIDE

### **1. What are the strengths of the NYVRP?**

- What have been the most successful aspects of the NYVRP?

### **2. What have been the most challenging aspects of the NYVRP?**

### **3. What have been the easiest parts of your job to carry out?**

Program components:

- One on one visits with youth
- Providing youth with services they need (e.g., mental health, addictions, employment, corrections)
- Mentors/Elders
- RPT
- Risk assessment process
- Getting referrals
- Core teams
- Care plans
- Paperwork
- Type of youth being served
- Keeping youth engaged
- Phasing out process

### **4. What have been the most difficult parts of your job to carry out?**

### **5. How successful do you think the Core Teams have been in supporting the youth?**

- What worked well?
- What challenges did you face?
- What suggestions do you have for improving the Core Teams in the future?
- Is this a worthwhile component of the program?

### **6. How successful do you think the Advisory Committees have been in providing support and direction to the NYVRP?**

- What worked well?
- What challenges did you face?
- What suggestions do you have for improving Advisory Committees in the future?
- Is this a worthwhile component of the governance structure?

### **7. How successful do you think the Oversight Committee have been in providing support and direction to the NYVRP?**

- What worked well?
- What challenges did you face?
- What suggestions do you have for improving the Oversight Committee?
- Is this a worthwhile component of the governance structure?

**8. What are your thoughts on the NYVRP's staffing model (i.e., 1 Manager of Program Operations and 1 or 2 HAWWs in each community)?**

- Was there enough staff in place to ensure the successful implementation of the NYVRP?

**9. Did you have all the training you needed to be successful in your job? Please tell me more.**

- What training was most helpful to you in carrying out your job?
- What additional training would have been useful? When should it have been given to you?

**10. What are your thoughts on the level of support the Ministry of Corrections and Policing provided to the NYVRP?**

- Did the Ministry of Corrections and Policing provide enough support to the program for it to be successful?
- How useful was the support provided?
- What other types of supports should the Ministry have provided to the NYVRP?

**11. What changes, if any, have you noticed in the youth who participated in the NYVRP?**

- What aspects of the NYVRP made the biggest difference to the youth enrolled in the program?
- What aspects of the NYVRP, if any, made it difficult for the youth to achieve positive outcomes?
- Do you think the changes you have observed in the youth are sustainable?
  - Focus on:
    - youth violence
    - gang involvement
    - alcohol and drug use
    - school attendance and performance
    - Prosocial activities and peers

**12. What changes, if any, have you noticed in your community's ability to work together to address youth violence?**

- How has the NYVRP benefited the different agencies involved?
- Including with RCMP and corrections

**13. If the NYVRP continues, what needs to be in place to make it sustainable?**

**14. What advice would you give to improve the NYVRP in the future?**

- What advice would you give other communities interested in implementing the NYVRP?

**15. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me that we haven't already talked about?**

## APPENDIX F: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. **Can you tell me a little bit about your role in the NYVRP?**
  - How long have you been involved in the NYVRP?
2. **What are the NYVRP's strengths?**
  - What have been the most successful aspects of the NYVRP?
3. **What have been the most challenging aspects of the NYVRP?**
4. **How successful do you think the Core Teams have been in supporting the youth enrolled in the NYVRP?**
  - What worked well?
  - What challenges occurred?
  - What suggestions do you have for improving the Core Teams in the future?
  - Is this a worthwhile component of the program?
5. **How successful do you think the Advisory Committees have been in providing support and direction to the NYVRP?**
  - What worked well?
  - What challenges occurred?
  - What suggestions do you have for improving the Advisory Committees in the future?
  - Is this a worthwhile component of the governance structure?
6. **How successful do you think the Oversight Committee have been in providing support and direction to the NYVRP?**
  - What worked well?
  - What challenges occurred?
  - What suggestions do you have for improving Advisory Committees in the future?
  - Is this a worthwhile component of the governance structure?
7. **What are your thoughts on the NYVRP's staffing model (i.e., 1 Manager of Program Operations and 1 or 2 HAWWs in each community)?**
  - Was there enough staff in place to ensure the successful implementation of the NYVRP?
  - Did staff have the knowledge and skills they needed to be successful in their jobs?
    - i. If not, what additional training would have been useful?
8. **What are your thoughts on the level of support provided to the NYVRP and its staff by the Ministry of Corrections and Policing?**
  - Did the Ministry of Corrections and Policing provide enough support to the program for it to be successful?
  - What other types of supports should the Ministry have provided to the NYVRP?

**9. What changes, if any, have you noticed in the youth who participated in the NYVRP?**

- What aspects of the NYVRP made the biggest difference to the youth enrolled in the program?
- What aspects of the NYVRP, if any, made it difficult for the youth to achieve positive outcomes?
- Do you think the changes you have observed in the youth are sustainable?
  - Focus on:
    - youth violence
    - gang involvement
    - alcohol and drug use
    - school attendance and performance
    - Prosocial activities and peers

**10. What changes, if any, have you noticed in your community's capacity to work collaboratively to address youth violence?**

- Including with RCMP and corrections

**11. How has being involved in the NYVRP benefited your organization?**

**12. If the NYVRP continues, what needs to be in place to make it sustainable?**

**13. What advice would you give to improve the NYVRP in the future?**

- What advice would you give other communities interested in implementing the NYVRP?

**14. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me that we haven't already talked about?**

## APPENDIX G: INVITATION LETTERS FOR STAFF AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

### Staff Invitation Letter

March 10, 2020

Dear NAME:

#### **RE: NYVRP Evaluation**

The Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections and Policing, is conducting a final evaluation of the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) that is currently taking place in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay. The purpose of the evaluation is to explore the strengths and challenges of the NYVRP and to determine the impact of the program in the communities where it is offered.

As part of the evaluation, we are conducting interviews with NYVRP staff, as well with the community stakeholders who have been most involved in the program. Given your role in the NYVRP as a Health and Wellness Worker, I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview about your experiences with the program.

During the interview, I will ask you questions such as what you thought were the most successful and challenging aspects of the NYVRP and whether the NYVRP had all of the supports and resources it needed. I will also ask you questions about how the NYVRP has affected the youth and communities involved in the program.

The interview will likely take 60 minutes, and we can complete it over the phone. If you would like to arrange a time for a telephone call, or would like any additional information about the evaluation, please email ([lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)) or phone (306-966-2707) me at your convenience.

I hope you are able to participate in this evaluation. Your contributions would be both valuable and highly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Lisa Jewell, PhD, CE  
Research Officer

## Stakeholder Invitation Letter

March 10, 2020

Dear NAME:

### **RE: NYVRP Evaluation**

The Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections and Policing, is conducting a final evaluation of the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) that took place in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay. The purpose of the evaluation is to explore the strengths and challenges of the NYVRP and to determine the impact of the program in the communities where it was offered.

As part of the evaluation, we are conducting interviews with a small group of key stakeholders who were the most involved in the NYVRP, including NYVRP staff and stakeholders from each community who have participated in the Oversight Committee, Advisory Committees, or Core Teams. You have been identified as a key community partner for the NYVRP. As a result, I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview about your experiences with the program.

This interview is meant to complement the survey that you were invited to participate in last month to allow us to more fully understand how well the NYVRP was implemented and whether it achieved its goals. As a result, I will ask you questions such as what you thought were the most successful and challenging aspects of the NYVRP and whether the NYVRP had all of the supports and resources it needed. I will also ask you questions about how the NYVRP has affected the youth and communities involved in the program.

The interview will likely take between 30 to 60 minutes, and we can complete it over the phone. If you would like to arrange a time for a telephone call, or would like any additional information about the evaluation, please email ([lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)) or phone (306-966-2707) me at your convenience.

I hope you are able to participate in this project, as your contribution to the evaluation would be both valuable and highly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Lisa Jewell, PhD, CE  
Research Officer

## APPENDIX H: NYVRP FINAL EVALUATION INFORMATION SHEET



UNIVERSITY OF  
SASKATCHEWAN

### **Final Evaluation of the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP): Information Sheet**

#### **What is the purpose of this study?**

The Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP) is a five-year initiative that is being implemented in Deschambault Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay to reduce youth offending and create safer communities. The NYVRP is in its final year of programming and the University of Saskatchewan, Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies has been contracted by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections and Policing to evaluate it.

The purpose of this evaluation is to explore: a) how the NYVRP was delivered to better understand the most successful and challenging aspects of the program; and b) the impact the NYVRP has had on the youth and communities involved.

#### **Who will be included in the evaluation?**

Key stakeholders who have been most involved in the NYVRP will be asked to participate in an interview. This will include NYVRP staff and management and members of the Core Teams, Advisory Committees, and Oversight Committees.

Other aspects of the evaluation include surveys with community stakeholders and youth, focus groups with youth participants, and a database/casefile review. Stakeholders and youth participants from all three communities will be invited to participate in the evaluation.

#### **What am I being asked to do?**

You are being invited to participate in an interview about the NYVRP, which will take between 30-60 minutes. Your participation in the study is voluntary.

#### **If you have any questions, please contact:**

Lisa Jewell, PhD  
(306) 966-2707  
[lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)

## APPENDIX I: STAFF AND STAKEHOLDER CONSENT FORM

THE CENTRE FOR  
FORENSIC BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES AND JUSTICE STUDIES



### NYVRP Consent Form for Staff and Stakeholder Interviews

#### **Project Title:**

Final Evaluation of the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership

#### **Evaluators:**

Dr. Lisa Jewell  
Research Officer  
University of Saskatchewan  
lisa.jewell@usask.ca  
306-966 -2707

Dr. Davut Akca  
Research Officer  
University of Saskatchewan  
davut.akca@usask.ca  
306-966-1605

#### **Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation:**

The primary purpose of the final evaluation is to determine the extent to which the NYVRP was able to achieve the intermediate and long-term outcomes (intended and unintended) among the participating youth and communities within the initiative, such as reducing youth violence, gang involvement, and gang related activities, as well as increasing community capacity to collaborate and address youth violence.

To fully understand how the NYVRP was delivered and how this may contribute to achieving its outcomes, the evaluation will also explore the aspects of the program that worked well and those that were challenging to implement. In doing so, elements such as the program's governance structure, staffing model, and level of support provided by the provincial government will be considered. Recommendations will be made with the intention that they can be used to inform the NYVRP if it continues in the future.

#### **Procedures:**

Because of your involvement in the NYVRP, we would like to ask you some questions about your experiences with the program. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. To learn about how well the NYVRP has been functioning, you will be asked questions about what you think have been the most successful and most challenging aspects of the NYVRP, how effective Core Teams have been in supporting the youth, how effective the Advisory Committees and Oversight Committee have been in providing guidance to the NYVRP, and the appropriateness of the NYVRP's staffing model and level of support provided by the Ministry of Justice. In order to learn about the impact of the NYVRP, you will be asked to share your perceptions of any changes you have observed in the youth and communities involved in the program as a result of the program.



**Funding:**

This evaluation study is being funded by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections and Policing. It is part of a larger initiative funded by Public Safety Canada, National Crime Prevention Centre.

**Potential Risks:**

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this evaluation. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and participants have the right to withdraw at any time. All information received will be kept completely confidential. You will not be identified by name in any reports or publications that result from this evaluation. However, due to the small number of people being interviewed for this study, there is a chance you could be indirectly identified because of the unique information or perspective you provide.

**Potential Benefits:**

As a result of your participation, you will contribute to understanding what aspects of the NYVRP were most effective and whether it had any impact on the communities and youth involved.

**Compensation/Incentives:**

We will not pay you for the time you take to be in this study.

**Study Results:**

The results of this study will be reported in an evaluation report submitted to the Ministry of Corrections and Policing, Government of Saskatchewan.

**Confidentiality:**

No personal identifying information will be linked to you or any other evaluation participant. All information gained from this evaluation, including your recorded interview, will be held confidential by the Evaluators. Data will be stored securely at the University of Saskatchewan in either a locked filing cabinet or on a secure network drive. Data will be stored for six years; at that time, it will be destroyed. Only overall results, rather than individual data, will be included in any technical reports, fact sheets, presentations, and journal articles used to disseminate the findings.

While all information will remain confidential, the exceptions will include the following four mandated reporting cases: 1) urgent danger of suicide; 2) threats to hurt someone; 3) reveals child abuse or neglect; 4) reveals Elder/senior abuse.

**Right to Withdraw:**

Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the evaluation for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort. Should you wish to withdraw, we will terminate the interview and discard all previously obtained information. Your right to withdraw data from the study will apply until results have been disseminated by way of a written report. After this date, it is possible that some form of dissemination will have already occurred and it may not be possible to withdraw your data.

**Questions or Concerns:**

If you have any concerns about your rights as a participant to this study and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact Laura Dunbar, the project Evaluation Advisor at Public Safety Canada, at 613-946-0318 or email [laura.dunbar@canada.ca](mailto:laura.dunbar@canada.ca).

**Consent:**

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the description provided:

“I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the evaluation. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records.”

---

 Name of Participant

---

 Signature

---

 Date

---

 Evaluator

---

 Signature

---

 Date

## APPENDIX J: CODING FRAMEWORK USED TO ANALYZE STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

\*Text in **blue** denotes major thematic topic areas. Themes in **bold** denote superordinate themes; text in *italics* denote subordinate themes within each topic area.

### Need for Program

**High need for NYVRP services within the community**

**HAWWs help fill service gaps in the communities**

**No amenities for youth in the community for prosocial activities / have hope**

**Communities are run down**

### Community Context

**High level of violence/crime in the communities**

**People (Parents) are not ready to heal in the communities**

**People (leadership/agency staff) in the communities need to undergo healing themselves**

**Community Leadership needs to play a stronger role in addressing youth violence in the communities**

**Constant tragedies in the community prevent follow through on some initiatives**

**Problems in the community are bigger than what the NYVRP can fix/address**

**Other programs NYVRP clients could be involved in (SVOR)**

### Strengths of NYVRP

**Staff**

*Staff hired were local to the communities (enhanced understanding of issues faced)*

*Dedicated, long-term staff with passion for youth*

*Local staff hired were respected in the communities (for living healthy lifestyles)*

*Community saw NYVRP staff as leaders*

*Strong leadership offered by NYVRP Project Management Team*

*All staff had their own strengths that served to engage the youth*

### **Purpose of Program (Focus on Youth)**

*Focused on helping youth*

*Don't give up on youth (relentless outreach)*

*HAWWs available when youth need them*

### **Community Partnerships**

*Community partnerships*

*Enhanced connection with the RCMP*

*PBCN / Chief & Council Offered Support for program (at administrative level)*

*NYVRP easy to work with*

### **Incorporation of Land-based Learning and Cultural Teachings**

*Incorporation of land-based learning*

*Elders/mentors involvement*

### **Other**

*Have program dollars available to run programs, provide snacks, etc.*

## **Start-up Challenges of the NYVRP with Long-term Impacts**

### **Lack of Consultation with communities**

*Lack of consultation/research with community slowed down implementation/ resulted in unrealistic timelines*

### **Staffing**

*Finding the PM and MOPO and HAWWs and Service Agencies was difficult*

*MOPO should have been hired first (before HAWWs)*

### **Complexity of Program Delivery model**

*Program delivery model was too complex (especially for remote communities)*

### **Geographic Distance of Communities**

*Geographic distance of communities (took away from substantive work re: program development)*

### **Lack of parental support of the program**

## **Ministry Support of NYVRP**

### **Inadequate support received from the Ministry for Program Delivery**

*MOPO/HAWWs did not receive enough support from Ministry*

*Additional mentorship should have been offered to MOPO from Corrections*

*Ensure timelines and job expectations are clear (for MOPO)*

*Inadequate supports in place for program delivery (paper work/forms/lack of program manual)*

*Staff found it difficult to keep with changing forms; should have done mid-project review of forms*

*Needed additional Ministry resources / specialists to support program (over and above Ministry Manager) (e.g., clinical director, fiscal/contract management)*

*Ministry Manager's role should have been dedicated to NYVRP*

### **Database Required**

*Database should have been completed for the NYVRP*

*Corrections developed own spreadsheet to track referrals sent to NYVRP*

### **Adequate Ministry Supports Provided**

*Enjoyed working for Ministry Manager / the support Ministry Manager provided*

*Appreciated the family retreats provided by the ministry*

*Do not wish the ministry had provided any additional supports*

*Community corrections provided an adequate level of support to the program (made staff available to participate)*

## **Community Corrections**

### **NYVRP and Corrections Mutually Benefitted Each Other**

*NYVRP helps Corrections with their own work*

*NYVRP and Corrections share information about common clients*

*Did monthly reports for corrections*

*NYVRP could give youth opportunities Corrections can't give them*

*Both HAWWs and Probation Officers try to work on reducing risk factors, reinforcing the same messages to youth*

*Shared relapse prevention plan with HAWW*

### **Supported provided by Corrections to the NYVRP**

*Tried to prioritize NYVRP assessments*

*Corrections was able to do most NYVRP assessments (for corrections-referrals)*

### **Difficulties with Community Corrections (From NYVRP's Perspective)**

*Community corrections was not as engaged as desired / weren't doing referral forms*

*NYVRP staff did not receive referral forms from corrections (not true)*

*Corrections relied too heavily on NYVRP (didn't feel like a partnership)*

*Some friction in relationships between some HAWWs and POs*

### **Difficulties with NYVRP (from Corrections Perspective)**

*NYVRP did not do monthly reports for Corrections*

*NYVRP complained/blamed corrections was not doing assessments/sharing referrals*

*NYVRP were not good partners (did not reciprocate)*

*Role Confusion – NYVRP would ask for information that should not be released to them*

*Information provided by NYVRP was unreliable*

*NYVRP management unaware that Corrections was sharing referrals with HAWWs*

### **Disorganization of the NYVRP**

*Disorganization of the program (referrals process, other paperwork)*

*Corrections didn't know who was accepted to program / who needed to be assessed*

*HAWWs should inform Corrections when a client has consented to participate in program*

*Corrections developed own spreadsheet to track referrals sent to NYVRP*

*Meetings were late / cancelled at the last minute*

*Corrections staff who experienced disorganization were less keen on participating in the NYVRP*

### **Challenges with Corrections contributing to the NYVRP**

*Probation staff didn't understand the referral process at times*

*Need materials to inform/transition new probations staff to the NYVRP*

*Lack of accountability among NYVRP staff for their disorganization*

*Probation Officer didn't know to share risk assessment with HAWW*

*Community corrections may not need to be a partner of the program in the future; would continue to refer to program*

### **Differences in Perceptions about Risk Level / Openness of Youth**

*Youth not necessarily more forthcoming with HAWWs than Corrections*

*Moderate youth (according to Corrections) were not actually high risk*

## **Staffing**

### **Burnout and Mental Health Concerns among NYVRP Staff**

*Staff required additional MH supports*

*Staff's families were negatively affected by their employment with the NYVRP*

*Burnout experienced by staff (LJ: happened really quickly)*

*Staff experienced physical medical illnesses*

*Medical appointments take staff out of the community for days*

*Staff need to focus on self-care*

*NYVRP staff took on a lot*

### **Limited Qualifications of NYVRP Staff**

*NYVRP staff did not have a background / education in corrections*

*Had to switch to simpler risk assessment tools that staff could understand*

*NYVRP staff lacked administration skills which made reporting difficult*

*HAWWs skills improved over time*

### **Core Skills Needed by Staff**

*HAWWs need to have administrative skills*

*HAWWs with Admin skills would pick up slack / support HAWWs without admin skills*

*HAWWs need to be committed/available to the youth*

### **Office Space**

*HAWWs have to share offices (lack of privacy when talking with clients)*

### **Service Agreement Holder Issues**

*Sandy Bay funds were mismanaged*

*Sandy Bay funds should be managed by the Band*

*NYVRP staff should have a say in who holds the service agreement*

### **Staffing Model Needs**

*Administrative support was needed*



*Spread Caseload across HAWWs / travelling casefile*

*Need 3 HAWWs per community: one doing administration, one programming, one visits*

*Should hire more HAWWs with lower caseloads*

*Two HAWWs per community is adequate*

*Not easier when two HAWWs in place*

*Good to have options for HAWWs; Youth may connect more with one HAWW vs. another*

*Better to just have one supervisor*

*Performance reviews with each staff would help develop their skills*

### **Additional Supports Needed by Staff**

*Staff did not receive raises as promised*

*Hire PM to advocate for staff*

*New HAWWs need to be trained*

### **MOPO had additional responsibilities once PM left**

*MOPO's additional HR responsibilities were especially burdensome  
service agreement holders didn't really assist as they should (see notes from throughout year)*

*MOPOs job included increase staff morale*

### **Potential for staff to be hired as “service providers” by Corrections following end of NYVRP**

## **Training**

### **Additional Training Required**

*Staff required additional “corrections” trainings/supports (including care plans)*

*Corrections training was provided*

*Additional training required*

*Need more consistent follow-up training, especially with respect to corrections principles*

*Staff's risk assessments and case plans should have been observed more carefully by the Ministry*

### **Training needs to match learning style**

*HAWWs are visual learners*

### **Most useful training**

*HAWWs had the knowledge/skills they needed*

## **Program Delivery**

### **Programming (General Comments)**

*Able to keep youth engaged / build trust*

*Sometimes youth disengaged from the program due to other issues going on in their lives*

*Teach youth about their history/culture*

*Need to have safety mechanisms in place (support from RCMP) when dealing with crises*

*Need to teach youth basic life skills*

*HAWWs were role models to the youth*

*HAWWs reinforce youth's conditions, etc.*

*Teach youth to stay away from gangs*

### **One-on-One visits**

*Staff were respected in community; facilitated one-on-one visits*

*Two times a week would be better than three times a week*

*Activities HAWWs did with the youth*

*Meet with youth in early/late afternoon*

*Did more group work than one-on-one work with the youth*

*Youth in community with 1 HAWW not getting as many one-on-ones (one-on-ones are important)*

## **Connecting Youth to Services**

*Could connect youth with the services they needed*

*Supported youth in attending appointments*

*Some agencies would request HAWW attend with youth (some due to behaviour; some due to age restrictions)*

*Programs available to youth*

*Youth did not want to participate in healing circle (too shy, reluctant to share information in the circle)*

*Pick kids doing well in school to go on trips*

*Community agency vehicle (CVA) is too small*

*Cultural camps were well-liked by youth / successful*

*Need more resources (e.g., counselling) for the youth to access*

*Youth were reluctant to attend programming because they were concerned about the confidentiality of the program staff*

## **Risk Assessment Process**

*Some assessments easy (e.g., ACE was easy)*

*Sometimes the assessments had to be translated to Cree*

*Natasha was too hard*

*Risk assessments not used to guide how youth's needs were addressed*

*Sometimes youth do not answer questions on the risk assessment truthfully*

*Using the YLS/CMI: SV led to great fidelity to the program model*

*Unsure if its necessary for HAWWs to be doing risk assessments*

## **Program Length**

*Healing can take years; program needs to be longer, especially with depth of SES issues in the communities*

## **Phasing Out Process**

*Phasing Out process helped transition youth out of the program*

*Past clients remain in contact with the HAWWs*

*Youth who exited the program didn't graduate from the program*

*Youth who do not have supports continue to reach out to the HAWW*

*Difficult for staff to complete paperwork necessary to close/transition files (by end of March 2020)*

*Difficult for staff to leave the youth; have committed to remaining in youth's lives*

*Formal transition plans for youth at closure of program may be minimal*

*Youth do not want the NYVRP to end*

## **RPT**

*Waste of money*

*Few youth used it*

*Youth used RPT in the NYVRP staff offices, staff not comfortable leaving youth alone*

*RPT did not allow for adequate reading of body language; can led to missed information*

*Youth need more help than what RPT could offer*

*Youth was engaged in RPT*

*Youth weren't engaged in RPT / comfortable with RPT (preferred face-to-face)*

*Concerned youth don't have adequate support in the community following their session*

*Created a heavier workload for staff*

*RPT on hold; waiting further instruction from Ministry*

## **Family involvement**

*Difficult to get families involved with the youth*

*Some parents volunteered with the program*

**Referrals**

*Could get the referrals they needed for the program*

**Paperwork / Administration**

*Chrono notes are time consuming*

*Too much administration*

**Mentor/Elders**

*Only a handful of Mentor/Elders used*

*Some are Mentors/ some are Elders*

*Elders/mentors teach traditional skills*

*Most interaction with Elder is in a group setting*

*Hard to find Elders/mentors due to volunteer nature of the role or unhealthiness of individuals*

*Elders were paid an honorarium*

*Youth gravitate towards the Mentors/Elders*

**RCMP**

*Lack time/resources to provide regular supervision of the youth*

*Friendly supervision is policing 101*

**Meetings and Committee Involvement****Decreased participation of local agencies in Core/Advisory**

*Agencies did not perceive NYVRP to be important (they don't care)*

*Agencies didn't have a high work ethic / standard*

*Unhealthy people living and working in the community*

*Not able to develop information sharing agreements*

*Meetings needed to focus more on problem-solving*

*Meetings were held too frequently*

*Need to consolidate meetings*

*Need to be more clear on who should be at each meeting*

*There were similar types of meetings (e.g., interagency meetings) in Sandy Bay*

*Lack of understanding about the purpose of the committees and evidence-based practice*

*Lack of participation of agencies was de-motivating*

*Agencies sent uninformed representatives*

*Agencies were there for their own gain (not for the group)*

*Did not provide call-in information / teleconference number to out of community attendees / use telephone meetings more often*

*Turnover in agency staff (new staff didn't attend)*

**PBCN Chief & Council / Leadership not as involved in Committees as desired**

## **Core Teams**

### **Core Team Functioning**

*Core Team Attendees*

*Content of Core Meetings*

*Agencies shared information about programming/opportunities youth can be involved in and the youth*

*Did not help with care plans / most developed by MOPO*

*Core team members help with developing care plans*

*Corrections primarily tasked with case management*

*Core team members should have received training in creating care plans*

*Value of care plans developed by Core Teams*

*Right people were at the table to address youth's needs*

*Sandy Bay Core Team meetings had greater attendance when held at Mamwetan board room*

*Core Teams were well run*

### **Core Team Challenges**

*Challenge for local staff to keep up the momentum (without PM/MOPO leading the meetings)*

*Staff initially weren't giving enough notice for meetings*

*Agencies did not respond/rsvp to meeting invitations*

*ICFS was not willing to participate in Core Teams (unwilling to share info)*

### **Future Suggestions for Core Team**

*Core teams should continue*

*Meetings should be more structured; focus more on care plans*

*Purpose of the meetings and roles/responsibilities need to be clearer, especially to new members*

*Ensure the right people / agency representatives are present at the Core Team (important for confidentiality)*

*Monthly Core meetings are okay*

*Should be less frequent*

*Need to be realistic about the ability of NYVRP to do intensive case management*

*Provide lunch/food/some other type of incentive for agencies to attend meetings*

*Combine the Core Team with the Advisory Committee*

*Alternate location of Core meetings to encourage participation*

*Meeting should be held by phone more often*

## **Advisory Committees**

### **Advisory Committee Functioning**

*Advisory Committee Meeting Attendees*

*Advisory meeting topics - Agencies share information about programs they offer / discuss youth*

*Sandy Bay only community where Advisory Committee participation was constant*

*Deschambault Lake Advisory Committee meetings had slightly better attendance than Core Team meetings*

*MOPO encouraged staff to visit agencies*

### **Advisory Committee Challenges**

*Agencies would only come together when something bad happened (communities are reactive)*

*Staff needed to role model the way they want other agencies to behave*

*Meeting invitations were issued with short notice*

*Meetings were cancelled last minute*

*Meetings were off topic*

*Interagency meetings also encounter difficulties with attendance/organization*

*Difficult to attend all three Advisories (same meeting in each community/meetings were repetitive)*

### **Future Suggestions for Advisory Committee Meetings**

*Unsure of value of continuing Advisory Committee meetings*

*Advisory committee meetings necessary for community accountability / ownership*

*Community members need to be more involved (need to step up)*

*Reduce frequency of meetings (1/3 months); schedule phone meetings for in between*

*Combine the Core Team with the Advisory Committee*

*Could hold Advisory meetings in conjunction with interagency meetings*

*Book Advisory Committee meetings further in advance*

*Have Advisory outside of the community*

*No suggestions*



## **Oversight Committee**

### **Oversight Committee Functioning**

*Value of Oversight is that directors can mandate involvement in the NYVRP*

*Oversight can be used to address systemic issues (wasn't done in NYVRP though)*

*Useful to learn about the evaluation / overall direction of the program*

*Provided a venue to tell stakeholders what the NYVRP was doing (should focus more on this)*

*Was just a management update, but face-to-face*

*Chair (Original) validated the challenges faced by the NYVRP*

*Attendance by some agencies pressured others to attend*

### **Challenges with the Oversight Committee**

*Wanted Oversight Committee members to encourage frontline staff to attend Advisory/Core meetings (didn't happen)*

*Didn't receive good feedback on how to deal with problems identified in the communities*

### **Future Suggestions for Oversight Meeting**

*Oversight meetings should continue*

*Meetings need to be more structured; be less repetitive/focus less on reporting same information*

*Face-to-face once per year sufficient; phone calls otherwise*

*Book Oversight meetings further in advance*

*No suggestions for Oversight*

### **Monthly phone calls**

*Information was repetitive within and across meeting types*

*Purpose of calls was unclear*

*Monthly management calls could replace Advisory meetings*

*Meetings cancelled with no notice*

*Confusion about who's moderating the meetings*

*Should have focused more on troubleshooting*

*Share more success stories to increase buy-in*

## **Characteristics of Youth**

### **Living Conditions**

*Youth live in poverty, come from dysfunctional families*

**Youth go back to same, negative environment (home life) after they are done working with the HAWW**

### **Mental Health**

*Suicidal ideation among NYVRP youth*

*Youth likely have FAS*

*Youth alcohol and drug use is common*

*Youth have the capacity to be taught*

*Youth need support to feel a sense of worth and belonging*

### **Education**

*Youth are passed to grades; they are actually performing at a much lower grade level*

*Youth refuse to go to school; often drop out around grade 10-11*

### **CJS Involvement**

*Youth had to report weekly to corrections (suggests high risk)*

*Gangs are an issue in Pelican Narrows*

*Gang/criminal record give youth status in the community*

*Gang involvement was never really an issue*

## **Engagement**

*Can be difficult to engage the youth*

*Takes a while to build trust*

## **Individual-level Outcomes**

### **General Comments**

*Program model is good for helping youth*

*Improvements in youth in the communities*

### **Self-esteem / Relationship / Communication Outcomes**

*Youth show themselves to the HAWWs / trust the HAWWs*

*Youth would seek out HAWWs*

*Past participants remain in contact with the HAWWs*

*Youth learned to reach out to HAWWs for help*

*Youth are more respectful*

*Youth are more confident*

*Youth communicate more/better*

*Youth are more open about their struggles*

*Youth are better able to control their emotions*

*Youth show compassion*

*Youth can identify their peers' negative behaviours*

*Youth better understand/appreciate rules*

*Youth started to make their own appointments*

### **Police / Justice / Violence Related Outcomes**

*Improved relationships with/perceptions of the police/RCMP*

*Youth have fewer contacts with the police / less violent*

*Reduced the severity of the problems the RCMP has to deal with in the community*

*Some youth are no longer involved in gangs (because they have good positive support)*

*Some youth have left their gangs*

*Less tagging of buildings in the community*

*Youth have fewer breaches*

### **Mental Health and Addictions**

*Some youth have slowed down their alcohol and drug use*

*Youth are less suicidal / more optimistic about the future*

### **Prosocial Peers**

*Youth have made new friends*

### **Employment**

*Youth have found employment (adult youth/program participants)*

### **Leisure Activities**

*Youth involved in more leisure activities*

### **Volunteerism**

*Youth volunteer at community events*

### **NSVOR Considerations**

*Success cases involved in NSVOR and NYVRP*

### **Lack of outcomes**

*No changes observed*

*Youth school attendance did not improve (fighting with peers, didn't want to go back to school)*

*Alcohol / drug use did not change*

*Violence/gang involvement did not change*

*Older youth were maturing*

### **Sustainability of Outcomes Achieved**

*Sustainability of gains made by youth after program is removed*

*Youth face negativity in their lives outside the program*

## **Community-level Outcomes**

### **No changes at the community level**

#### **Positive Outcomes**

*Community members will share information about youth with HAWW (to alert that they are in trouble)*

*Community members call on HAWWs to intervene with youth/adults in the community (including those not in the program)*

*Involvement in NYVRP helped build/strengthen relationships with other agencies*

*Helps the RCMP build relationships in the community*

*Program is beneficial to the community*

### **Challenges Prohibiting Outcomes from Being Achieved**

*Lack of follow through on community initiatives*

*Not all issues in the community can be addressed by the NYVRP*

*Problems in the community are bigger than what the NYVRP can fix/address*

## **Advice/Improvements for the NYVRP**

### **Continued Need for Program**

*NYVRP should be continued; community needs it*

*Allocate more resources to the program*

*Continue to focus on the youth*

### **Staffing**

*Hired skilled workers*

*Have more supports in place for the NYVRP staff*

### **Training**

*Ensure all required training is provided to HAWWs, MOPO, and Core (corrections, ethics)*

### **Program Delivery**

*Streamline paperwork*

*Involve parents more in the NYVRP*

### **Program Delivery Model Values**

*Value flexibility (to account for the constant trauma)*

*Community should have ownership of the program in the future*

*Have the RCMP engage the youth more*

### **Stakeholder Engagement (including Corrections)**

*Get as much community support as possible*

*Have regional meetings*

*Have more open communication between HAWWs and PO in terms of sharing assessments and care plans*

*Have clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities of NYVRP vs. Corrections*

## APPENDIX K: NYVRP PARTICIPANT SURVEY

## Pelican Narrows NYVRP Participant Survey

1. How many months have you been in the NYVRP?

\_\_\_\_\_ months

2. Which NYVRP worker have you seen most often?

- ☐ Olivia
- ☐ Russell

3. How often do you see your worker?

- ☐ 3 or more times a week
- ☐ 1-2 times a week
- ☐ 2-3 times a month
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Less than once a month

4. Why did you join the NYVRP?

5. Overall, how much do you like the NYVRP? Please check the best answer.

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Not at all

6. What do you like about the NYVRP?

7. What do you dislike about the NYVRP?

8. How has the NYVRP helped you?

9. Has the NYVRP helped you with any of the following things? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Attend school more often
- ☐ Get better grades
- ☐ Use drugs or alcohol less often
- ☐ Be less involved in bullying
- ☐ Be less involved in fights and violence
- ☐ Do less tagging/graffiti
- ☐ Get in less trouble with the police
- ☐ Be less involved in gangs
- ☐ Have stronger family relationships
- ☐ Have more positive friends
- ☐ Do more recreational activities
- ☐ Have better mental health
- ☐ Have better coping skills
- ☐ Have stronger connections with Elders
- ☐ Do more cultural activities
- ☐ Feel more supported by the community
- ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Which community programs have you been connected with through the NYVRP? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Mental health counselling
- ☐ Addictions counselling or support groups
- ☐ Anger management classes
- ☐ Holistic health programs (e.g., men's groups, women's groups)
- ☐ Cultural activities
- ☐ Recreational activities (e.g., sports, gardening, arts and crafts)
- ☐ Tutoring or other supports to help with your school work
- ☐ GED classes
- ☐ Resume building
- ☐ Help with finding a job
- ☐ Parenting classes
- ☐ Prenatal classes
- ☐ Volunteering in the community
- ☐ Youth conferences
- ☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_



**11. Have you seen a mental health therapist through the doc-in-a-box?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ I don't know

*If YES, please answer the questions below.*

**11a. How helpful was it to see a therapist through the doc-in-a-box?**

- ☐ Very helpful  
☐ Somewhat helpful  
☐ A little helpful  
☐ Not at all helpful

**11b. How comfortable were you with receiving counselling through the doc-in-a-box?**

- ☐ Very comfortable  
☐ Somewhat comfortable  
☐ A little comfortable  
☐ Not at all comfortable

**11c. In the future, would you prefer to receive therapy in person or through the doc-in-a-box?**

- ☐ Prefer in person  
☐ Prefer doc-in-a-box  
☐ Prefer a combination of in person and doc-in-a-box  
☐ Doesn't matter to me

**11d. Please explain why you like in person, doc-in-a-box, or both.**

**12. Have you been connected with a mentor through NYVRP?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**12a. If YES, what does the mentor help you with?**

**13. Have you been connected to an Elder through NYVRP?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**12a. If YES, what does the Elder help you with?**

**14. Besides your Health and Wellness Worker, how many supports do you have in your life? Supports could be family members, friends, mentors, Elders, or other organizations that you trust.**

- ☐ 0 supports  
☐ 1 support  
☐ 2 supports  
☐ 3 or more supports

**15. What do you need to feel ready to graduate from the NYVRP?**

**16. Would you recommend the NYVRP to your family or friends?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ I don't know

**16a. Why or why not?**

**17. How can we make the NYVRP better?**

**Thank you!!!**



## APPENDIX L: PHOTO-ELICITATION CONSENT FORM FOR NYVRP YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

THE CENTRE FOR  
FORENSIC BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES AND JUSTICE STUDIES



### Consent Form for NYVRP Youth Participants

#### **Project Title:**

Impact Evaluation of the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP)

#### **Evaluators:**

Dr. Lisa Jewell  
Research Officer

University of Saskatchewan  
[lisa.jewell@usask.ca](mailto:lisa.jewell@usask.ca)  
306-966 -2707

Dr. Davut Akca  
Research Officer

University of Saskatchewan  
[davut.akca@usask.ca](mailto:davut.akca@usask.ca)  
306-966 -1605

#### **What is the purpose of the evaluation?**

We are doing a study on the Northeast Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (NYVRP). We want to know how the program works. We want to learn from staff and youth involved in the program. We also want to know how the program has helped youth.

#### **What will I be asked to do?**

We would like to talk to you because you are in the NYVRP program. We will use photos to talk about the program. You and other NYVRP youth will be asked to take part in a group session. You will be asked to pick a photo that you like from a group of photos. You will be asked to write down your thoughts about the photo. You will then be asked to share your thoughts with the group. We will ask you questions like:

- How has the NYVRP made a difference in your life?
- What is this photo about?
- What does this photo mean to you?
- What does this photo show about the NYVRP?

The session will take 90 minutes. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to.

#### **Will what I say be recorded?**

With your permission, the group discussion will be recorded. We want to make sure we correctly record what you say. After the session, we will listen to the recording and write down what was said. The recording will be destroyed as soon as the notes are completed.

During the session, please feel free to ask any questions about the study. Please check the box below to say if you agree or disagree with the session being recorded.

Yes, I consent to be audio recorded ☐

No, I do not agree to be audio recorded ☐

**Who is this study funded by?**

The study has been paid for by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice. It is part of a bigger project paid for by Public Safety Canada, National Crime Prevention Strategy.

**What are the risks of being in this study?**

This study is voluntary. You do not have to take part in this study. If you do not take part in the study, it will not affect your participation in the NYVRP. You will still receive services from the NYVRP.

You may find some of the questions personal. You can skip any questions you want to. You can stop the discussion at any time.

You might also become upset if you think of a bad memory. If you feel upset during or at the end of the session, you can tell the evaluator. They will find someone who can help you. You can also tell your HAWW.

The evaluators will not tell anyone that you attended this discussion or what you said about the program. If you decide on your own to tell someone, there is a chance they may treat you differently. If this happens, you should talk to a staff member.

**What are the benefits of being in this study?**

You will help us understand the NYVRP program and help make it better. You will also help us understand how the NYVRP has helped youth.

**Will I receive an honorarium?**

You will receive \$10 for the time you take to be in this study.

**How will be the study results be shared?**

The results of this study will be written in a report submitted to the Ministry of Justice, Government of Saskatchewan.

**Will my information be kept private?**

Your name will not be in any reports or presentations. The information you share will be kept private. It will be stored on a password-protected computer or in a locked filing cabinet at the university. We will keep your data for six years. After that, it will be destroyed.

The evaluators will keep anything you say private and safe. The evaluators cannot guarantee that the other youth in the session will keep what you say private and safe. We will ask everyone in the session to not share what was said outside of the meeting. Please do not share anything talked about in the group with other people afterwards.

While all information will remain confidential, the exceptions will include the following four situations: 1) urgent danger of suicide; 2) threats to hurt someone; 3) child abuse or neglect; and 4) Elder/senior abuse.

**Do I have to take part in the study?**

This study is voluntary. You do not have to take part in it. You can skip any questions at any time. You can stop participating at any time. If you want to stop, you can leave the session. Please let staff or the evaluators know if you want to stop being a part of this study.

If you want to stop, we will not use any of the things you say in the study. It will not change whether you can be in the NYVRP. You may choose to stop being in this study up until the study report is sent out. After this, some of the things you say may already be in the report (without your name).

**What if I have questions or concerns about the study?**

If you have any concerns about your rights as a participant to this study and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact Laura Dunbar, the project Evaluation Advisor at Public Safety Canada, at 613-946-0318 or email [laura.dunbar@canada.ca](mailto:laura.dunbar@canada.ca).

**Consent:**

**I consent to participate in the study (circle one).....Yes    No**

Your signature below means you have read and understand the description provided:

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the evaluation. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for my records.

---

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

I read and explained this Consent Form to the participant before receiving the participant's consent, and the participant had knowledge of its contents and appeared to understand it.

---

Evaluator

Signature

Date

**APPENDIX M: PHOTO-ELICITATION PHOTO INFORMATION SHEET*****“What Difference has the NYVRP made in your Life?”***

Photo number (please look at the back of the photo): \_\_\_\_\_

**1. What is this photo about?**

**2. What does this photo mean to you? Why did you pick this photo?**

**3. What does this photo show about the NYVRP?**

## APPENDIX N: PHOTO-ELICITATION INTERVIEW GUIDE

### ***“What Difference has the NYVRP Made in your Life?”***

#### *Agenda for session:*

- *Welcome everyone as they come to the room*
- *Encourage everyone to get some food*
- *Introductions*
- *Review consent form*
- *Give honorarium*
- *Have the youth pick 1 or 2 photos (depending on size of group). If they are okay to write their thoughts on the photo info sheet, give them a few minutes to do so.*
- *Allow each youth the opportunity to comment on their photo and encourage others to discuss the photo after the youth explains what the photo means to him*
- *Asking closing questions*
- *Thank youth for participating*

1. **Can you tell me about the photo you picked?**
  - a. What is this photo about?
  - b. What do you see in this photo?
  - c. What is really happening here?
2. **What does this photo mean to you? Why did you pick this photo?**
  - a. What does the photo represent to you?
  - b. How does this photo relate to your life?
  - c. What does this photo show about the NYVRP?
  - d. Why is the photo important?
3. **[To other participants] What do others think about this photo?**
  - a. Does it bring up similar thoughts/feelings?
  - b. What other thoughts/feelings do you have about the photo?
4. **What do you like best about the NYVRP?**
5. **What is the greatest lesson you have learned from the NYVRP?**
6. **Is there anything else you want to say about the NYVRP?**

## APPENDIX O: ETHICS EXEMPTION LETTER ONE



**To:** Dr. Stephen Wormith  
Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies  
Department of Psychology  
University of Saskatchewan  
**Cc:** Lisa Jewell (Research Officer)

**Date:** January 22, 2016

**Re:** Exemption for NYVRP Ministry of Justice collaborative study

Thank you for submitting your request for exemption for proposed study entitled "***Formative and Process Evaluation of the Northern Youth Violence Reduction Partnership***". This evaluation study would meet the requirements for exemption status as per **Article 2.5 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS): Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, December 2014**, which states "*Quality assurance and quality improvement studies, program evaluation activities, and performance reviews, or testing within normal educational requirements when used exclusively for assessment, management or improvement purposes, do not constitute research for the purposes of this Policy, and do not fall within the scope of REB review.*"

It should be noted that though your project is exempt of ethics review, your project should be conducted in an ethical manner (i.e. in accordance with the information that you submitted). It should also be noted that any deviation from the original methodology and/or research question should be brought to the attention of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board for further review.

**Please revise the consent form to reflect an exemption from the REB or delete the section regarding REB approval.**

Sincerely,

Scott Tunison  
Vice-Chair, Behavioural Research Ethics Board  
University of Saskatchewan

nb

## APPENDIX P: ETHICS EXEMPTION LETTER TWO

### Amendment for the addition of the Impact Evaluation



**To:** Dr. Stephen Wormith  
Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies  
Department of Psychology  
University of Saskatchewan

**Cc:** Susan Mulligan, Interim Project Lead

**Date:** June 19, 2017

**Re:** Amendment to Exemption for NYVRP Ministry of Justice collaborative study

Thank you for submitting your amendment to the project entitled "***Formative and Process Evaluation of the Northern Youth Violence Reduction Partnership***". This evaluation study would meet the requirements for exemption status as per **Article 2.5 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS): Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, December 2014**, which states "*Quality assurance and quality improvement studies, program evaluation activities, and performance reviews, or testing within normal educational requirements when used exclusively for assessment, management or improvement purposes, do not constitute research for the purposes of this Policy, and do not fall within the scope of REB review.*"

It should be noted that though your project is exempt of ethics review, your project should be conducted in an ethical manner (i.e. in accordance with the information that you submitted). It should also be noted that any deviation from the original methodology and/or research question should be brought to the attention of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board for further review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vivian Ramsden".

Vivian Ramsden, PhD  
Behavioural Research Ethics Board  
University of Saskatchewan

## APPENDIX Q: ENDORSEMENT OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER SURVEY INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL OUTCOME ITEMS

| Item   | Strongly<br>Disagree<br>(%) | Disagree<br>(%) | Neither<br>Agree<br>nor<br>Disagree<br>(%) | Agree<br>(%) | Strongly<br>Agree<br>(%) |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| Following rules or listening better                          | 5.3                         | 5.3             | 5.3  | 84.2         | ----                     |
| More respectful  | 5.0                         | 5.0             | 5.0  | 70.0         | 15.0                     |
| Doing less tagging/graffiti                                  | ----                        | 10.5            | 36.8                                       | 31.6         | 21.1                     |
| Less involved in bullying                                    | ----                        | 15.8            | 21.1                                       | 42.1         | 21.1                     |
| Getting in less trouble with the police                      | 5.0                         | 5.0             | 15.0                                       | 55.0         | 20.0                     |
| Less involved in gangs                                       | 5.0                         | 5.0             | 25.0                                       | 30.0         | 35.0                     |
| Less involved in fights/violence                             | ----                        | 10.5            | 15.8                                       | 42.1         | 31.6                     |
| More positive attitudes toward the police                    | ----                        | 10.5            | 21.1                                       | 57.9         | 10.5                     |
| Fewer emotional outbursts                                    | ----                        | 10.5            | 26.3                                       | 63.2         | ----                     |
| Better coping skills   | ----                        | 11.1            | 11.1                                       | 66.7         | 11.1                     |
| Better understanding of the consequences of their behaviours | ----                        | 10.5            | 10.5                                       | 68.4         | 10.5                     |
| Better mental health   | ----                        | 11.1            | 11.1                                       | 61.1         | 16.7                     |
| Use drugs or alcohol less often                              | 5.3                         | ----            | 42.1                                       | 47.4         | 5.3                      |
| Are getting better grades                                    | 5.6                         | 11.1            | 44.4                                       | 38.9         | ----                     |
| Are attending school more                                    | 5.6                         | 5.6             | 11.1                                       | 72.2         | 5.6                      |
| Gained employment-related skills                             | 5.6                         | 5.6             | 44.4                                       | 38.9         | 5.6                      |
| More positive friends  | ----                        | 16.7            | 22.2                                       | 55.6         | 5.6                      |
| Stronger family relationships                                | ----                        | 5.6             | 44.4                                       | 33.3         | 16.7                     |
| Stronger connections with community agencies and supports    | ----                        | 5.3             | 21.1                                       | 57.9         | 15.8                     |
| Doing more recreational activities                           | 5.6                         | ----            | 11.1                                       | 66.7         | 16.7                     |
| Stronger connections with Elders                             | ----                        | 5.0             | 15.0                                       | 60.0         | 20.0                     |
| Doing more cultural activities                               | 5.3                         | ----            | 10.5                                       | 57.9         | 26.3                     |
| Made a positive, sustainable impact on the clients           | ----                        | 5.0             | 5.0  | 65.0         | 25.0                     |
| More involved in community events and activities             | 5.3                         | ----            | 36.8                                       | 36.8         | 21.1                     |



## APPENDIX R: ENDORSEMENT OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER SURVEY COMMUNITY-LEVEL OUTCOME ITEMS

| Item   | Strongly<br>Disagree<br>(%) | Disagree<br>(%) | Neither<br>Agree<br>nor<br>Disagree<br>(%) | Agree<br>(%) | Strongly<br>Agree<br>(%) |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------|--------------------------|
| Increased family participation in community activities                     | ----                        | 18.8            | 31.3                                       | 43.8         | 6.3                      |
| Increased our community's ability to cooperate with corrections            | ----                        | ----            | 41.2                                       | 47.1         | 11.8                     |
| Increased our community's ability to cooperate with the police             | ----                        | 10.0            | 30.0                                       | 45.0         | 15.0                     |
| Increased my agency's ability to collaborate with other community agencies | ----                        | 10.0            | 10.0                                       | 60.0         | 20.0                     |
| Increased my interest in collaborating with other agencies                 | ----                        | ----            | 21.1                                       | 63.2         | 15.8                     |
| Had sustainable positive impacts on the community                          | ----                        | 5.0             | 5.0  | 65.0         | 25.0                     |
| Increased mental health support for youth in the communities               | ----                        | 14.3            | ----                                       | 61.9         | 23.8                     |
| Increased our community's capacity to address gangs                        | ----                        | 11.1            | 16.7                                       | 61.1         | 11.4                     |
| Increased our community's capacity to address youth violence               | ----                        | 5.6             | 5.6  | 66.7         | 22.2                     |