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Background

Since Fall 2009, university-based researchers have been partnered with strategically positioned community-based professionals and youth to develop an arts-based curriculum for a series of workshops. The purpose of these workshops is to educate service providers regarding considerations and strategies for working with high-risk youth. As part of the project an evaluation of outcomes of the workshops for service provider participants was conducted. Evaluation and Research Services assisted in this process by entering and analyzing the data, facilitating the focus group, and creating a summary report of the analysis.

Method

The evaluation of the High Risk Youth Uncensored project addressed the following research questions: How can we educate service providers to better prepare them for working with high-risk youth? What are effective methods for doing so? What is the role of youth in this process? What is the role of arts in this process? To what extent are service providers receptive to such education? These questions were addressed through a post-workshop (exit) survey, follow-up online survey, and a focus group. The follow-up survey contained unique items as well as a number of items that were identical to questions in the exit survey. Data were collected between December 2010 and August 2011.

Participants

Clients who attended workshops included those in social services, education, and the medical profession, among others. Those attendees who indicated their interest in doing so were contacted a few weeks later with an invitation to complete an online follow-up survey and/or attend a focus group. A total of 80 participants completed the workshop survey; of those, 20 completed the follow-up survey and three attended the focus group.

Results

Demographics

58% of exit survey respondents have been in their line of work for less than 5 years, with 29% working for 5-10 years. The corresponding figures for the follow-up survey are 74% and 11%, respectively. Those employed in education were heavily represented in the exit survey, while library and counseling staff made up a large proportion of follow-up survey respondents. A complete breakdown of respondents' areas of service is available in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Areas of Service: Exit Survey (n=80)

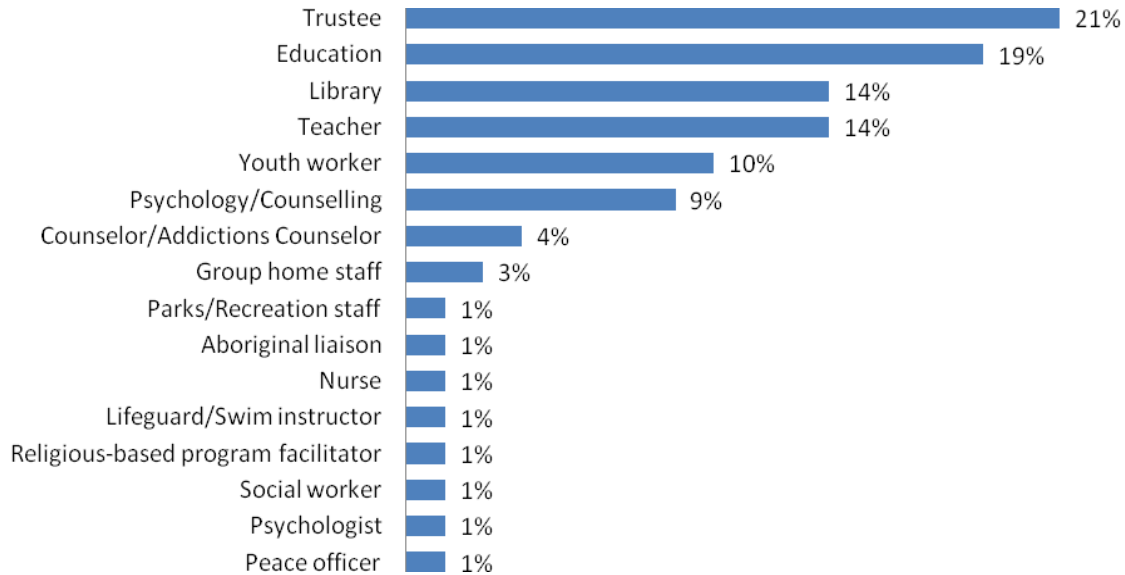
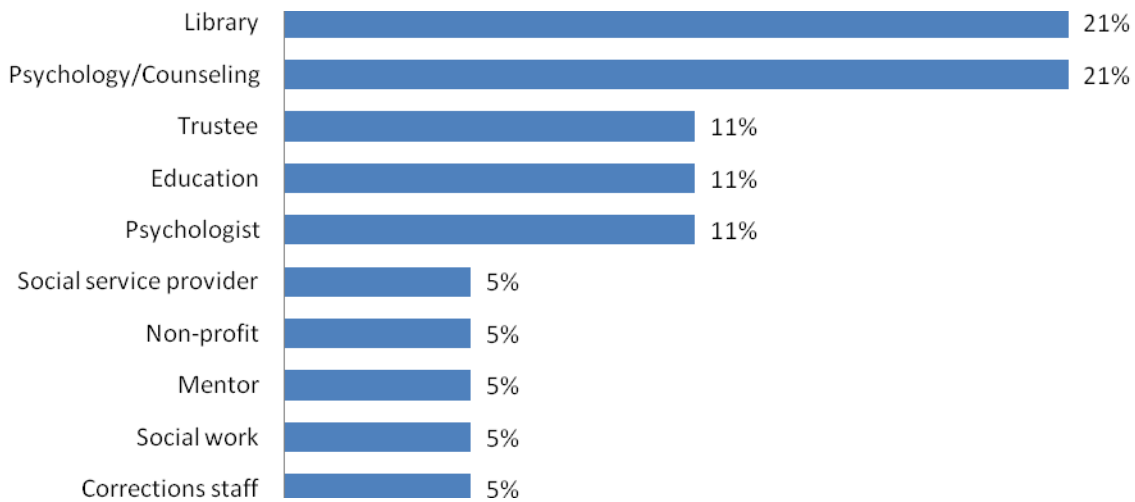


Figure 2: Areas of Service: Follow-Up Survey (n=19)



Quantitative

In both the exit and follow-up survey, participants were asked to consider the impact of the workshop on their professional lives as well as their views of both high-risk youth and of youth in general. The vast majority of participants felt they had acquired knowledge applicable to their professional practice. In addition, most felt their expertise had been challenged and that their view of youth had changed due to

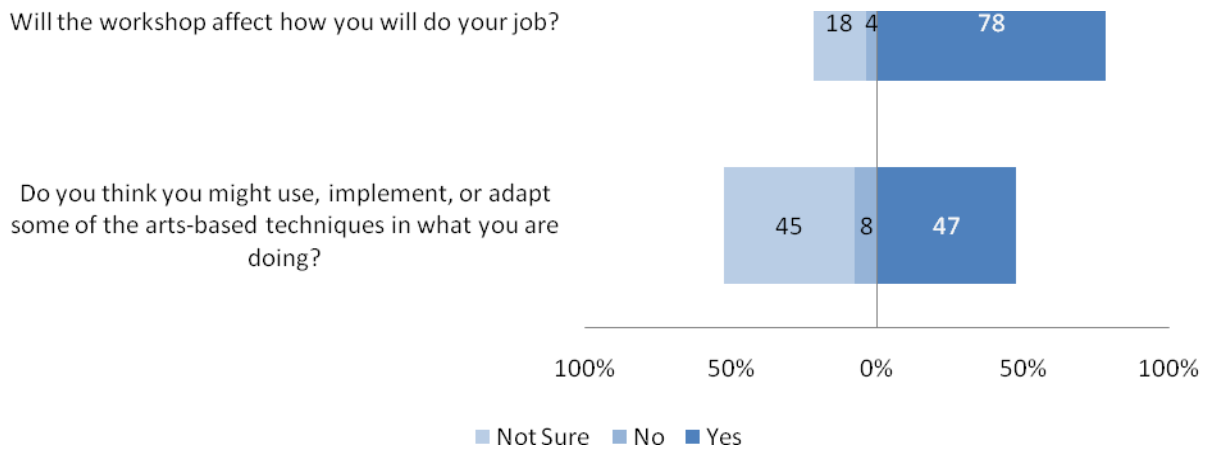
the workshop. Moreover, nearly half of respondents indicated their very definition of high-risk youth had changed as a result of the workshop. Full results are displayed in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Impact on Professional Practice and View of Youth: Exit & Follow-Up ‘Yes’ Responses



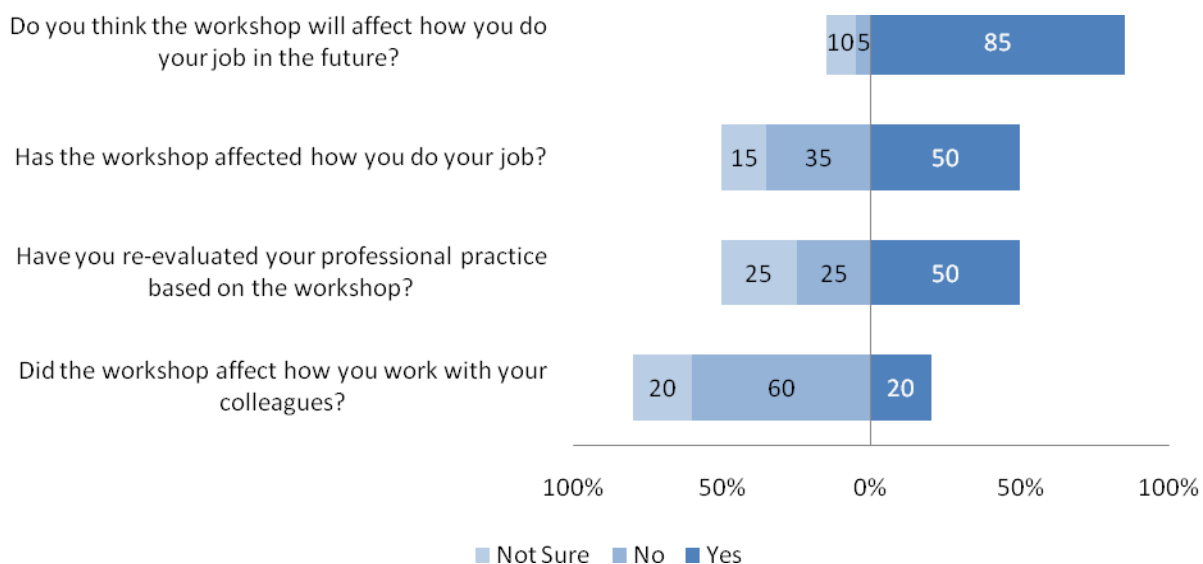
Specific to the exit survey were two further questions regarding the impact of the workshop on participants’ jobs. While more than three quarters of respondents felt the workshop would affect how they do their jobs, fewer than half indicated they might adapt some of the arts components of the workshop into their professional practice. Results are available in Figure 4. When asked in the follow-up survey whether they could adapt, or have adapted, some arts components of the workshop, 20% now said no, 30% yes, and 50% not sure.

Figure 4: Impact on Professional Practice: Exit Survey (n=78)



Follow-up survey respondents were also asked extensively about present and future effects of the workshop on their professional lives. Half of participants felt their conduct had already been affected, while a further 35% felt the workshop would affect how they do their jobs in the future. The smallest effect was deemed to be that of the workshops on colleague relations. See Figure 5 for complete results.

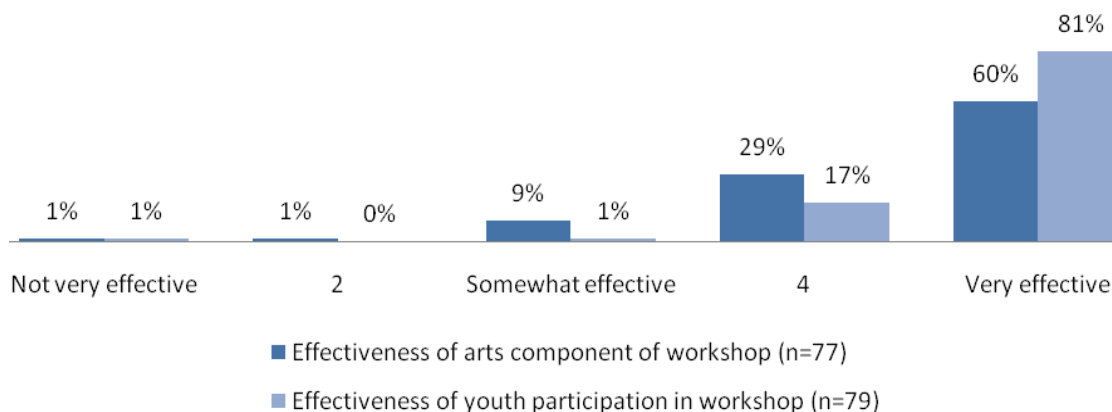
Figure 5: Impact of Workshop on Professional Practice: Follow-Up Survey (n=20)



When asked in the exit survey whether they thought they would now be more or less comfortable working with high-risk youth, 67% of respondents felt they would be more comfortable, 28% about the same, and only 5% were less comfortable. In the follow-up survey, when asked to reflect on their present comfort level with high-risk youth compared to pre-workshop, results were similar, with 55% more comfortable and 45% about the same.

Overall, when asked in both surveys whether they found the workshop useful, 81% of exit survey respondents and 85% of follow-up survey respondents indicated they found the workshop useful or very useful. Furthermore, 85% indicated in the exit survey that they liked the games/arts/drama approach to the workshop and the majority of respondents found the arts component and youth participation of the workshops to be very effective, as shown in Figure 6. Notably, 98% of respondents indicated the youth participation was an effective tool.

Figure 6: Effectiveness of Alternative Approach: Exit Survey



Qualitative

In both surveys, participants were asked to provide open-ended responses indicating what they had discovered that was relevant to their professional practice. Some respondents indicated they had learned to think more positively, outside the box, and with a more open mind. They had learned to be more understanding, accommodating and flexible, and to remember that each youth is different and has his or her own story. Others indicated they had learned to listen to youth with more patience and compassion, to avoid labels, and that overall they had learned the importance of establishing a rapport and mutual trust with high-risk youth.

In the follow-up survey, respondents were asked to provide open-ended responses indicating how the workshop may have affected how they view high-risk youth. A few saw the workshop as a confirmation of what they already knew, but most indicated their views had changed. Respondents indicated they now recognized that youth want assistance as well as independence, that all youth have strengths, talents and well-founded, valuable opinions, and that high-risk youth are largely articulate and receptive to an empathetic ear. Others had learned to recognize self-fulfilling prophecy in action, that behaviour is itself a form of communication, and that it is counterproductive to judge based on appearance.

In both surveys, respondents were requested to indicate how often they have encountered high-risk youth in their professional work. Their comments were organized into thematic categories, which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency of Encounters with High-Risk Youth

Category of Comment	# of Responses (Exit Survey)	# of Responses (Follow-Up Survey)
Frequently	25	9
Very little	21	3
Sometimes	17	4
None/Never	7	2
Have high-risk family member(s)	4	0

Also in both surveys, participants were asked to provide open-ended suggestions regarding how the workshops could be improved. The majority of recommendations were for more of everything—more skits, more scenes, more time for discussion, and more youth. There were even several requests to extend the workshops to an entire day. Other suggestions included more efficient use of time—avoiding preamble, beginning on time, and ensuring that individual scenes do not get dragged out. Additionally, there was concern among some library participants that their workshop devolved into a critique of library policy rather than a dialogue with high-risk youth. By and large, however, comments were exceedingly positive and participants wanted to see the workshops expanded. All open-ended responses can be found in the Appendix.

The focus group participants echoed many of the sentiments found in the survey responses. They found the youth participation had allowed them as service providers to be more empathetic, to dig a little deeper, and to understand the true nature of high-risk youths’ needs. Moreover, the participants felt the workshops had reaffirmed the value of creating space for meaningful dialogue and for recognizing the value high-risk youth have in contributing to their own learning and to the learning of others. They appreciated the authenticity and flexibility of the scenarios, and they wished to see the workshops more widely disseminated, especially for up-and-coming teachers. The participants felt the arts-based component of the workshops was imperative and refreshing. They also felt, as did a few survey respondents, that take-home materials would augment the retention of information and insights gleaned from the workshops.

In their own words

- *I really appreciated being a part of this workshop! I can't guarantee that it will change attitudes of staff overnight, but hopefully it will in the future. It's a never ending battle, but I'm happy to be part of it!*
- *This was a tremendous opportunity for us as psychology grad students -- having an honest and open discussion with the youth was so eye-opening!*
- *I think it is important that other professionals that are currently working with these youth in some form or another be exposed to this workshop. It would really be so helpful if it were more widespread and accessible to everyone that really does need to see it.*

Summary

- More than three quarters of participants felt they had learned something from the workshop that they could apply to their professional practice and that the workshop would affect how they do their job, now and in the future.
- Around half of respondents felt their definition of high-risk youth had changed from the workshop, and also that they may be able to incorporate some of the arts-based components of the workshop into their jobs.
- Of those respondents who completed the follow-up survey, half felt the workshop had already affected how they do their job and that they had re-evaluated their professional practice based on the workshop.
- 60% of participants felt the arts component of the workshop was “very effective”, while a great majority—over 80%—felt the youth participation was “very effective”.
- Open-ended responses demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of respondents were grateful for the opportunity to take part in the workshop. Most suggestions for improvement centred around expanding the workshops, making them longer—even a full day—and accessible to more community members.
- Qualitative data also indicated that most participants’ views of high-risk youth had been positively altered, making them more empathetic, proactive, and receptive to the ability of youths to communicate their feelings. This was largely attributed to the interactive nature of the workshops and to the open dialogue allowed between two otherwise incongruent groups.

Appendix

Open-Ended Responses: Exit Survey

Did you learn anything that you can apply to your professional practice? If so, what?

- reaffirmed ideas about [unintelligible]. it was good to hear from the student's experience
- Be positive!
- To approach each situation differently and with an open mind
- Just to understand the backgrounds of students to deal with their problems
- Be more accommodating
- A reminder of how to see kids as individuals, one person @ a time
- the need to reflect on how to balance professional boundaries with reaching out to these youth and meeting them on their terms; reframing the notion of "success"
- -take time to get to know the student - go out of your way.
- The importance to youth or rapport & relationship - I already knew this, but to have it so explicitly stated was eye-opening.
- how to relate to students better
- better understanding of youth attitude.
- Reinforced that relationship is everything
- provide more advocacy
- add more professionals so that the youth can answer questions like #6
- remember there is a story behind reactions & behaviors.
- How to rationally advocate to my supervisor for my youth without getting fired.
- encourage broader thinking & challenge creative approaches
- every "negative" situation can have a positive outcome.
- Patience, have a conversation.
- Trying to build a trusting & positive relationship with the youth that use the branch I work at.
- reinforced things I already knew; hard-reduction principles --> will share with co-workers
- Theray to backup what I say when i defend High Risk youth
- More understanding of the teens views on the library and where they come from.
- avoiding lables
- Being able to talk directly with the teens about their experience of the library was the most useful part of this workshop. Having an open dialogue with the teens was much more useful and informative than the contrived dramatic scenes that perhaps did not reflect the way the library actually operates.
- Attitudes/approaches

- -Strategies on dealing w/ youth who don't have addresses; how to calm down an intoxicated youth
- stopping and thinking before interacting w/ high risk teens
- Bus tickets .. confusing policies
- More understanding of why high risk teens act the way they do
- I have more understanding of the background of the youth I deal with
- more flexibility with policies ; more compassion for their needs
- It would seem taht youth have some serious misconceptions about our services as much as the opposit
- Reinforce the need to respond to individuality & the need for trust
- How I approach people in general
- Yes, to learn to better handle gaining trust in youth
- No one deserves to be thrown away
- Take more time
- Take more time and listen better.
- re-enforcement of the importance of relationships
- Doesn't mean we have to label them and take them out of there class setting, we need to help them/keep them interacting.
- To always think of child first look at a rules.
- As an educator I have experienced the problems & concerns. As a trustee, we are trying to work on solutions - Inclusion without finding will only compound concerns - 30-40 kids in a class with some at work is not conclusive to giving students a personal touch or adult model.
- Try to go that one echo step to try to get that child back on track, Be a little more flexible
- -keep looking outside the box -don't expect anything even close to blanket solutions (individual)
- but you as a trustee. we all know people come with their own style but we seem to choose to know that without acknowledging it.
- To follow through on an initiative I suggested a while ago about encouraging/setting up sometime for kids to track their own assets/talents/goals on a regular basis - - i.e kids create their own file that gets pushed along. ALSO - Think about policy though flexibility lens & CARing lens.
- To be more flexible - more open to change
- Explore flexibilty
- taking time & going the extra mile
- Take chances & make changes
- We need higher level of government & support changes that lead to a less factory system - This includes money
- Get the word out "there"!
- more empathy
- We can't look at youth like a baseball game 3 strikes you just try again - they're not out.

- I DONT KNOW THAT IT CHALLENGED MY EXPERTISE AS I DONT FEEL I HAVE ANY EXPERTISE - BUT IT HAS CHALLENGED BY BIASES AND PROVIDED A NEW PERSPECTIVE THAT I KNOW WILL BECOME INTERNALIZED & WILL AFFECT MY FUTURE DECISIONS WITH AT RISK YOUTH AT THE BOARD EVEN.
- SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND
- CONNECT W/ YOUTH, DON'T JUDGE
- Try changes, talk to youth so they are involved in decision
- if we can't change everything - try to change some things - take a risk.

How might the workshop be improved?

- No requirement to get on stage
- disclaimer: it's not what you say (language) it's how you say it
- Give the option of seeing it played out *or* just discussing it --> Sometimes you'll get more ideas if acting isn't involved
- More scenes
- More skits would be great (2 was great but if there could be 4 it would be even more interesting).
- More time
- can't think of anything
- Be on time to start.
- More youth. Directed solutions rather than just displaying the problems.
- More time for "talk back" at end vs. presentations at start.
- Longer --> more explanations on High Risk teens
- great.
- Handouts to take home
- -having more time to have an open dialogue with the youth would be great
- N/A
- Peter needs to speak up.
- The library policies hinder us from helping youth at risk as shown by one of the managers being stumped by not knowing what to do by homeless 17 yr. old. (i.e. some branches have bus tickets, who knew?) Another manager was surprised some kids can't ask their parents for help!
- I guess it comes down to audience participation :)
- can't think of anything
- Sitting us in opposition to each other didn't foster co-operation. It was 'us' vs. 'them'!
- In addition to debriefing our participation ("What were you trying to do?") also debrief the students
- excellent
- involving the crowd/trustees, superintendant
- more seamless transitions... show clip then cut sound & begin to talk as working scrolls - stay on time schedule - start on time!! - coffee - give 10 min & get back

- more efficient use of time. Do not make your audience sit through the credits. People have to travel etc.
- ? quite good, already.
- Love it!
- Make it DAYlong. - Would have 10 weeks to continue the conversation to really push through farther to possible solutions on systemic/policy level.
- I think it could be an all day workshop. I wanted more.
- Explain more "in depth"
- handouts with youth ideas to solutions & personal experiences that worked for them.
- Longer.
- Less explanation/talking at the beginning.
- It is Great
- Full Day =)
- Keep doing what you are doing!
- It would be great to see some male representation of youth
- Longer - more role playing.
- I REALLY ENJOYED IT + THINK IT IS WELL DONE
- more stories!
- Excellent! Fresh approach.
- Great as it is

Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the workshop?

- GREAT JOB
- Great job!
- Insightful
- Young actors with opinions is *great* . Avoid dragging scenarios out. The first one was beaten to death. Move it along quickly.
- awesome job
- Thanks so much!
- I enjoyed teh students perspectives on how scenes should be solved
- this was a tremendous opportunity for us as psychology grad students -- having an honest and open discussion with the youth was so eye-opening!
- It would be great if the studetns could sit quietly when questions are being asked & such. During question period & even during one of the skits a couple of girls were talking throughout and one was constantly playing with her phone - this was a huge distraction for me. It would be great if the students could respect their peers & the audience by sitting quietly when others are talking - it would add to their professionalism during their skits. It was a wonderful presentation overall :)
- The nature of the workshop wasn't very clearly communicated. I thought was a workshop on "drama therapy", which it was, but I wasn't expecting so much dialogue between the youth and attendees. A clearer workshop purpose would've been good.

- I liked the discussion at the end. hearing the youth was great.
- great discussion generated through drama
- I loved it... Keep up the good work!!
- I'm very impressed w/ the youths vocal ability & clarity of their situation
- Some service providers may like something tangible to take away, even if it's only the experience of getting involved w/ the skits. To what degree are service providers involved in designing the content of the skits? Is there a creative way to capture all the great learnings at the end? ie) use of art
- I really enjoyed the format. As a newer employee to EPL, it was great to see how different employees respond to these different situations
- It was good to see how youth view the library & barriers. Labels skit was very effective. Thank you!
- More teen stories (real life). Human is the best thing to happen to Edmonton Risk Youth
- I would like/love to see this in some form as a standard course for edmonton public library
- Thank you to everyone who put on this workshop. The youth involved were very brave and honest in their dialogue with us. Being able to talk openly and to work through scenes with them was really helpful and appreciated. However, we seemed to spend a lot of time clarifying policy. The workshop may have been more useful to me if we could have tackled very specific problems, rather than more vague problems that then need explanation and clarification of what we'd actually do in these situations.
- It was great!
- Enjoyed the interaction with the youth. Hearing some of their life experiences was awesome. Thank you!!
- Very effective! The facilitators were excellent - appreciated the overview of the theoretical background.
- I feel like the facilitator turned the afternoon into a critique of library policy which was rather condescending.
- The youth did a great job! And were very open to communicating with us :)
- not at this time
- This turned into a lecture about why our policies are terrible instead of how to work together.
- Smeg that & the oral was very valuable.
- Good workshop
- I thought it was excellent
- The kids were very honest about the failings in the system
- Great!
- very informative
- put the words on the screen as she sings the words are profound but would have more punch - especially with other audiences.
- Would love to have your group to high schools.
- Ensure that quick fixes aren't the answer

- Need to have understanding in all support service.
- great will bring info to my district - would be good if they engaged
- Excellence can be obtained if you: RISK more than others think is wise
- No, great job, encouraging.
- Kids teaching us about kids! Can't beat it!!
- I felt honoured to be at this workshop.
- KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK HELPING ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH!!
- Excellent - Thanks!
- Very valuable Challenges us to make changes to make a difference

Open-Ended Responses: Follow-Up Survey

In what ways did the workshop affect how you view these youth?

- As I have had a fair amount of experience with at-risk and high-risk youth (and advocating on their behalf), I saw this workshop more as confirmation of what I already knew - that you can't judge a teen by their looks or even behaviour, that youth need and want to use libraries, that people often act the way they are expected to act (so if you expect bad behaviour, you're likely to get it!) and that youth need to be given a chance (or several chances). However, my colleagues who had not had as much experience with youth commented that the workshop made them look at high-risk youth with more compassion.
- I don't think that it changed my view of these youth as much as re-inforced it
- I think that this workshop allowed me to see that these youth have the ability to be articulate about what works and does not work for them within our current way of doing things. Further to this, it was good to see the way that the youth embraced letting us see their perspective; I was glad to see how open they were about sharing their experiences.
- It confirmed my belief that there is always a reason for behavior and that behavior is a form of communication.
- It helped me to understand these youth as articulate individuals who have well-founded opinion and expectations of the healthcare providers they work with.
- It helps me to be more cognizant of the fact that these youth have experienced some horrible life circumstances that they didn't ask for and that they are not to be feared and dealt with in a harsh way, rather, they need a soft, understanding person that can empathize and validate how they are feeling and what they've been through, and what they may still be struggling with.
- It was really great to hear their perspective of library interactions and hear about where they were coming from in terms of backgrounds. I, as I am sure many people are, am guilty of judging a youth by how they look and this workshop really made think about who they are and what they might need instead of assuming that they are only going to give be grief.

- None-I work with at risk youth and have a good understanding of how to work with them and respect their unique situations
- Opened my eyes to not only the challenges and hardships they have faced, but more importantly their strengths and talents.
- Re-thinking some of our policies, ways of approaching youth, and helpful tips to share with other staff who work with youth
- Since I work with most of those youth anyway, it was great to see that they put effort in the workshop. It is great to see that they care enough to put work into something that will hopefully better the lives of youth to come.
- The workshop helped me to understand that a lot of youth are nervous about using the library and see us as negatively as "authority figures".
- They want to be independent with a little bit of help. They want some adults in their lives but we can need to be on their level.
- This workshop allowed a better understanding of how life away from school affects thier achievement and also how one mistake may restrict any chance of success.
- TO BE MORE OPEN AND UNDERSTANDING
- Unchanged
- validation that these youth have valuable opinion to share
- We are all human beings and we want to be respected for who we are.

Did you learn anything that you can apply to your professional practice? If so, what?

- different approaches to communication
- Do not assume! Take time to listen to youths stories
- Ensuring that I listen closely to them to address their needs.
- How to reach these kids. What not to do as a psychologist. It is pretty clear that many of these youth have had just horrible experiences with psychologists and other helping professionals. What is important is that you just be yourself, be genuine, care for them, and go out of your way when necessary to show them that you are there to help them.
- How to relate to these youth, and that developing a rapport with them is critical to helping them.
- I have passed this information on to my superintendent and other board members
- I interact with possible at-risk youth on a daily basis and after going to this workshop I feel better equipped to empathize with the youth and the challenges they face everyday. I have become much more patient and try and approach every situation in a more light-hearted, go-with-the-flow manner rather than a strict, these-are-the-rules manner.
- I learned that youth really do desire to be treated as individuals and seen as their own unqie person; I can help this along by really listening to their stories and taking time to get to know them.
- It forced me to consider the idea of becoming an advocate for the populations I will be working with.

- need front line staff to focus on what youth are saying not their own agendas
- Same as above - re thinking our library policies surrounding library cards for at risk youth
- That sometimes seemingly small things from our end represent big issues from there end and that there needs to be open communication to ensure that issues are not happening that we are unaware of.
- The bullying theme was very good at exposing what the students expect the teachers to do when bullying occurs. The students want a teacher presence in the school and to be more aware of the situations taking place.
- The importance of two-way dialouge
- TO LISTEN MORE
- Youth are unaware of or misinformed about many of the library's rules. Library staff still need to work at being welcoming and non-judgmental. I need to continue to work with staff to make sure youth (and all customers) are getting a consistent, friendly message, and to make connections with youth as much as possible.
- Youth have so many challenges in their lives and we need to ensure that youth need someone to hear them out.

Now that you are back in your work environment, how do you think the workshop could be improved?

- Better marketing. Make it more accesable to school administrators
- Honestly, I really enjoyed it the way it was. Even more interaction with the youth would be great but I guess that is based on time constraints.
- I am a student, and so do not work in a formal setting. However, having heard from these youth about the qualities they are looking for in the professionals they work with, it may be helpful to gain some insight from professionals who work with these youth, particular counsellors. I would be particularly interested to learn how they balance professional ethics with client accessibility.
- I am not yet in my "work environment", as I am still a student, but I definitely see this workshop as being helpful for when I do start working. I think it is important that other professionals that are currently working with these youth in some form or another be exposed to this workshop. It would really be so helpful if it were more widespread and accessible to everyone that really does need to see it. As well, more personal stories like the video we began with would be very nice, as that part was particularly moving and gives the youth a chance to really showcase their creativity and share part of themselves with the audience.
- I am not yet in my work environment, I am still in my Master's program. Not sure how it could be improved. Presentation wise - I think it would add to the seriousness of the theatrical presentation if the youth were advised to turn off their cell phones during the presentation. This was the only thing that I disliked about the presentation. At times it was hard to focus on what was going on because of the giggling of some of the youth that were playing with their cell phones. It was very distracting for me and seemed to take away from the seriousness of the message being delivered by the workshop.

- I believe the workshop could be improved by working more collaboratively with librarians. The situations presented were very contrived and not based on our actual operations. This made it difficult to use any of the information presented, because it didn't really apply to my actual working life or the way my co-workers and I interact with youth on a day-to-day basis (ex. telling people they have to leave because they have food - our policy is to let anyone who wants to bring food into the library).
- I believe it could be longer with more time for discussion with the youth.
- I think that this was one of the best workshops that I have attended and I have a lot of respect and I truly admire everyone who participated in this workshop. Thank You.
- I think the most effective part of the workshop is the dialogue with the youth.
- I think the workshop was great, but the attendees were the wrong audience. The library sent individuals interested in and knowledgeable about working with youth-- it felt like preaching to the choir.
- It was great :)
- Let the actors be more involved in the discussion and ask them how would they want the problems to be solved
- Make it a two-way street - we learned about youth's perceptions of the library but they did not learn about library staff's perceptions. Also, they had made incorrect assumptions about library rules and it would have been good to be able to give them the correct information, as well as to find out how they thought the library could better support them/meet their needs. The assumptions about library rules put some staff on the defensive as well, it seemed.
- Many of the staff who attended the workshop thought there should have been more time spent covering the research, and also more time for the talk back questions - so the workshop could have been a little longer
- More opportunities for front-line workers and youth to engage with each other either before, during or after the workshop. Presentations at the start are useful in terms of setting the context, but the amount of time spent on this portion could be shortened depending on the knowledge level of the audience. Ex) many front line agency staff are already well aware of harm reduction philosophies
- presenting examples of positive encounters not just the negative
- The one component of our workshop that I felt could have been done differently was the first art piece (for us, it was a film). I would have liked to have heard the artist speak about her work, what the process was like and share some of her experiences. Other than that, I understand that working with high-risk youth can be difficult and that they may approach things differently, but allowing each participant to say a few words about their experiences rather than having a few participants monopolize the conversation would have been nice. Maybe a moderator or discussion guide for the final conversation would be a good idea?

How useful did you find the workshop? Why?

- Because the combination of the 'skits' and the dialogue that takes place afterwards is very valuable in terms of provoking thought, sharing, learning and reflecting.

- For these youth to come forward speaks volumes -- they are saying -- hear us speak, value us and our opinions.
- gave a real picture of what youth go through in Edmonton
- Hearing about the experiences of the youth (at the library) in a calm and controlled setting was great; getting to discuss it further
- I really enjoyed hearing from the youth about their experiences with people in my profession; it lets me know where I can be most helpful to individuals who are experiencing similar problems to those these youth experience.
- I really liked that the actors were real street youth so they were able to portray the reality of their experiences.
- It reminded me why I do what I do as well as gave me a rekindled passion to keep going!
- It was interesting to hear the youth talk about their experiences and expectations. It certainly gave me food for thought in terms of how I want to run my practice in the future.
- It was nice to see some specific issues raised
- Just hearing what the youth had to say really opened my eyes. You hear the terms "at-risk" or "high-risk" all the time but it becomes so generic that hearing their stories was amazing.
- Most useful to me was to be able to have a candid conversation and ask questions of the youth who were there. Being able to speak with them in smaller groups for a longer time would be very useful.
- Nothing new.
- Presented by youth
- There aren't any workshops that focus on this group of youth, so it sheds some light on this population and what they are going through.
- This allowed me to learn more about our at risk youth and what questions to ask our administrators to help facilitate their success.
- useful to hear youth express thoughts on topics that otherwise are rarely exposed/shared
- you get problems straight up from the students. It is a different perspective that teachers don't always see

Could you or have you use(d), implement(ed), or adapt(ed) some of the arts-based techniques in what you are doing in your professional practice? If so, please provide an example of how you have or might do this.

- art based intervention is part of what our organization does
- Arts-based approaches are encouraged in several of the projects aimed at youth that I am engaged with
- have my client tell his/her story
- I am sure our front line staff could have
- In my therapy work, I can definitely see how I may be able to implement these techniques. Especially in a group setting, I think that they would be very effective.
- It is already arts based

- Need to listen, listen, listen -- everyone has stories. Value their stories. They have experience and they want to share.
- Not in my professional practice yet.
- Possibly some improv workshops
- The role playing of workplace interactions could easily be adapted to be used with the youth at my work. I think that some of them would be eager to share their views in this way because it is kind of playful and not so accusatory. It would have to start with a discussion about what they felt and eventually move into short role plays.

Please discuss how effective you found the arts components of the workshop as compared, for example, to a lecture/discussion focused format?

- allowed more expressive engagement with the audience; was more powerful and meaningful
- I found the arts components of the workshops fairly effective; I think that having it balanced with the lecture portion was good as it gave some context for those of us who did not necessarily have a huge background in the issues these youth face. I think that our group was a bit smaller than would be optimal for the arts components.
- I have gone to a lot of workshops and again I need to say this was the best. Thank you.
- I loved it! Its way more engaging, especially the interactive portion.
- I thought it was great, it really sticks with you compared to just reading a study or paper.
- I thought the combination of arts components and lecture was very effective. Discussion after was important as well. I don't think the presentation would have been as effective if it had only been lecture/discussion. I also think it was a great opportunity for the youth to be seen/heard/respected.
- I was actually surprised that I learned more from the arts components than from the lecture parts. However, they were both essential and worked together very well. Please keep both styles involved in this project as they are both very informative and reach to a variety of learning styles.
- Interactive, engaging.
- It is much more effective because you are learning from people who have actually been there, and it is more interactive.
- It was very effective to have the scenes - made the workshop much more interactive and staff participated more than they would have if it was just a lecture
- It was very interesting, in particular to showcase the talent and passion of the youth in telling their story. It was dynamic and engaging.
- The arts based component was interesting, but again, did not accurately represent our day-to-day functioning, so was contrived and not immediately applicable. But the general idea of using drama to explore issues is a good one.
- The arts component of this workshop allowed for a real portrayal of life by the youth performing whereas a lecture would have limited the depth of understanding.

- The arts component was visually appealing and the discussion was informative, I liked both parts.
- The arts was nice. It was great to see the youth engaged in something that they can make their own and truly be proud of. However, the lecturing and general information given at the beginning was also very helpful, and I think both are crucial for a successful program.
- This workshop uses all three formats: arts, lecture and discussion. I would rank them in the following order of effectiveness: Most effective = discussion and arts components Least effective = lecture
- very effective It was great to have a interactive experience with real youth of the city I live in. It made to presentation very interesting and relevant to my professional work
- Very effective, engaging and empowering

Please discuss how effective you found the youth participation in this workshop as compared, for example, to a workshop led by professional experts only?

- youth expressing themselves on topics that they have personal experience with was powerful; is much for effective to have youth delivering this information; is real as opposed to textbookish
- I think that giving the youth a voice and having them fully participate in the workshop was much more effective than having a workshop led by only professional experts. Again, it was nice to have the professionals there to provide context, but for me the main thing that differentiated this workshop was the youth participation.
- They have the experience -- they can relate -- and if they were to present again -- I would for sure be attending their workshop. Please think about doing another presentation -- would this be something that they could present at Teachers Conventions.
- It was great, its much more effective to hear it straight from the youth
- The experts and the youth have this disconnect and so this is perfect to join the two together.
- I felt that it was extremely effective to have the combination of the lecture and the youth. Those youth ARE professional experts on what it's like to be high-risk youth, and their presentation brought the theory to life.
- Again hearing the youth explain things in their own words was what really made this workshop great. It isn't quite the same having an "expert" tell you what the youth feel. The real experts are the youth themselves. They have lived or are currently living the high-risk lifestyle and their input in invaluable.
- Great to hear the voices of the youths-- much more effective than adults speaking for them.
- The youth are real people who have lived what they are talking about. They have been there ..they know what it's like.
- Very effective
- I really appreciated the youth involvement. They are intelligent and opinionated individuals, and deserve a forum in which to talk to service providers about what they need. It was highly engaging and interesting.

- Having the youth there was the best part of this workshop. I would like to see more time built in to just talk to them. I also think that it would be more useful if the youth who had these problematic interactions with the library were the ones presenting the dramatizations.
- Any time information is presented by the person who is living the life being portrayed you get a better understanding than someone speaking as an outsider. The best expert if the person has lived it not listened to it.
- It was effective being delivered by the youth the presentation was based on rather than some hired actors. However, as I discussed previously, it would be nice if some of the youth could have acted more professionally. It was really only a couple of the youth that were being "goofy" with their cell phones, etc. and maybe it didn't bother others as much as it bothered me. I am a little biased and can't stand when people's cell phones are beeping in my classes, so I was probably more annoyed by the cell phones than other people watching the presentation.
- Sooooo effective to hear the perspective of the youth first hand. I really don't think it could have been communicated as effectively if they had not been such a large part of it.
- Absolutely critical that youth participate and lead this workshop. In my assessment, "expert" is a myth when it comes to working with high-risk populations.
- Very effective, being able to interact with at-risk youth gave me a taste of what my future profession could look and feel like
- see above
- The best way to learn is by listening to those affected!

What were the content areas and issues raised in the workshop you attended that you remember?

- Home issues -- falling asleep in class because they had to take care of a younger sibling(s). - School issues
- labeling of youth - common youth experiences in my workplace - programs aimed at high-risk youth - how we could better serve the youth population in my workplace
- Bullying, Problems at Home
- conflict resolution; youth being heard/accepted; lack of ability for workers to identify the true 'problem' that youth might be having; communication styles
- feeling understood being a real support being there for the youth in times of need
- I remember the skit which communicated how disconnected the youth feel from some of the service providers they encounter, and the minimal effort made by some service providers to really connect with the youth. I also remember the open dialogue with the youth, and their wanting to know the level of commitment that we as future service providers will have to them.
- issues of respect being 2 way street. We need to respect youth where they are at but in return youth need to respect us where we are at. Behaviours and language on both sides need to reflect this
- Judgement without all the facts, preconception regarding youth in a new environment based on old information, apathy by adults towards at risk youth.

- Library has confusing rules/too many rules/youth make assumptions about rules. Some library staff do not respect youth, especially those who are/look high-risk. There are a lot of reasons that youth end up living a high-risk lifestyle, many of which are extremely difficult to overcome.
- Problems surrounding policies at the library, the desire to be respected and feel safe
- putting multiple labels/diagnoses on youth. -developing rapport with youth and not acting like you have a revolving door, assembly line of youth coming in your office and leaving with the feeling like it was a waste of your time and theirs. -one of the girls showed a video of her feelings around her life and suicide.
- That they want to be heard and listened to and not judged so much
- The content that was most memorable for me is just the fact that these youth know when the professionals they need with don't really care about them, and they can tell when you are being genuine. And that just a small gesture like offering someone a drive somewhere, or making sure they have a pair of shoes or other necessities can really help them to trust you and to let you into their lives and some of the things they are dealing with.
- The fact that we need to take time to listen and to find out where these kids are really coming from.
- We touched on how youth feel labelled and like they don't get a fair chance because these labels follow them everywhere. We also touched on how youth feel they are all treated exactly the same despite the huge differences in their experiences. We touched on how youth don't feel that they can trust professionals because they aren't necessarily around when the youth need them. We also spoke at the end of the workshop about what the role of the psychologist is and what youth would like it to be for them.
- youth having to sign in when entering a centre -idea of "tolerance" when accessing service centres (ex can't be high) -labelling and stereotyping on both sides of the coin

What is your view on the relevance and usefulness to your professional practice of the content or issues raised in the workshop you attended?

- Absolutely crucial. I think everyone in my profession (school psychology) will work with these youth in some capacity, and everyone should see this presentation, or one similar to it.
- All of the issues raised in this workshop affect the high number of at risk youth we have in our district and it is very important that our educators understand where these students are coming from in their lives outside of school and how it affects their educational opportunities
- As a psychologist I can be a support for youth at risk but one of their main concerns were that they want someone to call in the middle of the night and come pick them up if they are in trouble. As a psychologist this would be breaking some of our code of ethics. The youth did not seem to understand this....we do have professional boundaries we cannot cross
- directly relevant because my job daily involves engagement with this demographic; better understanding of their lived experiences/more empathy makes a better worker
- For example, the bullying theme. It is really relevant and useful. The more ways when know how to handle the bullying the better.

- Hearing the opinions and concerns of the youth was incredibly eye-opening, and can certainly inform the practice of psychologists. In particular, counsellors need to think about advocating for their clients outside of session, and how accessible they want to be to their clients.
- I sometimes have to sit on expulsion hearings and make difficult decisions regarding the future of young people!
- I think it is very relevant to social work, we are after all trying to learn to serve people better and the first step to serving is understanding.
- I think that the issues and content touched on in the workshop that I attended are very relevant and useful to my professional practice, especially given that I am at the start of my professional career and very likely will have the opportunity to advocate for change in the way youth (both high-risk and not) are treated in my career.
- I think that this workshop was both relevant and useful and I feel that all public service staff should attend this workshop. It is vital that people receive consistent service, and clearly high-risk youth are often not receiving the same level of respect and positive interactions as other customers. Also, we need to reach out to high-risk youth to make sure they understand that they are welcome in the library, that we don't have as many rules as they think, and that we have a lot of resources to support them in terms of education, life skills, and entertainment, as well as a safe place to go.
- I think the issues are very relevant, and being aware of how these youth view the services of counsellors or school psychologists will better prepare in working with them within the school setting. I'm hoping that I will be able to relate to these students in a more positive way, and actually be able to help them.
- I will bring this to the Board table and to our senior admin to explore further
- It was all very useful. Some of the lecture based information was a bit beyond what I am able to do for the youth that I interact with but I would at least be able to offer them a phone number or place to go if necessary.
- So worthwhile and so "today". We are dealing with issues that are happening today.
- Very relevant given that my biggest focus is on relationship building. This workshop has illustrated for me and reaffirmed my belief that both the 'service providers' and 'clients seeking service' need to have this type of space created for them. Space to converse and share what's working and what's not working from their past exchanges, to understand each other better and then create a plan for how to take the next steps together toward a place of mutual benefit.
- Very relevant, and I hope that we can offer more workshops like this for library staff working with at risk youth in the future

Please expand on any of your answers to the survey questions or provide any other comments or suggestions around the workshop.

- Great workshop! I hope you can continue presenting them and keep the arts based components.

- I really appreciated being a part of this workshop! I can't guarantee that it will change attitudes of staff overnight, but hopefully it will in the future. It's a never ending battle, but I'm happy to be part of it!
- I think it's a great workshop. I would love to see it used as a P.D. session for our teachers.
- I think that you should continue on with these presentations in the Ed Psych area. It would be great for each cohort of school psychs (and also the counselling cohorts-which unfortunately only one member of this cohort attended with the school psych. group) to be seeing presentations like these.
- Like I already said... more showcasing of the youth's work, whether it be film, poetry, art, etc... would be a very powerful addition.
- Thank you for presenting this workshop, and congratulations to the youth (and other workers) involved! I hope that there will be more workshops like this offered for library staff.
- The only suggestion would be when looking to bring in other service providers that may have a tendency to be a bit resistant or defensive towards this type of training, great pains must be taken to ensure that the entire process is facilitated in a way that makes it clear to everyone involved that it is a 'two way street' being created. That is, neither the "marginalized youth" nor the people representing systems that they may be marginalized from, can ever feel that this is about an attack on their choices, practices, behaviours or decisions. Coming to this place of mutual acceptance towards building stronger relationships with one another so that everyone's needs can be better met won't be easy to do in all cases, but is absolutely necessary that the energy is put into making it happen.
- uncensored is great! I think it should be standard training for many professional areas that have to engage this demographic. Uncensored has the potential to change stereotypes and generalizations currently held by community members. Need to find other agencies to take the training.
- With the youth doing the role playing it meant so much more to the workshop -- yes, someone could have done a power point but it would have not had the same effect. Thank you youth. I truly admire and respect you.