

THE BEAT: A YOUTH GANG PREVENTION PROGRAM

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was to develop an effective gang prevention program. A literature review on effective programs for vulnerable youth was used to design an after school gang prevention program. The program, named The BEAT, provides a flexible, youth-centred curriculum with the goal of reducing anti-social behaviours and building healthy relationships. The BEAT teaches interpersonal skills through discussions, activities, mentoring, life skill development and recreational opportunities. The program is designed to partner with family support programs and community agencies to create a wraparound approach to support vulnerable adolescent males, ages 11 to 14. The BEAT provides 11 group sessions with two follow up sessions and contains resource links and activities for group facilitators.

Keywords: male youth 11 to 14 years-old, effective gang prevention programs, reducing anti-social behaviours, youth-centred, partnerships with family supports and community agencies, wraparound approach.

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Glossary

Adolescent Egocentrism: “Type of egocentrism in which adolescents have difficulty distinguishing their thinking about their own thoughts from their thinking about the thoughts of others” (Arnett, 2001, p. 85). typical

After school programs: Programs that run after the school’s dismissal bell, and are housed in the school setting utilizing the available spaces including the gym, kitchen, classrooms and schoolyard. Typically one school staff member supervises the program and acts as an emergency contact for participants and parents.

Gang: As defined in the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Victim Services and Crime Prevention (2009), it is “a visible group of three or more persons that plans and carries out crime for profit, often using severe violence. Gang members may identify themselves through a common name, symbols, colours, signs, graffiti, clothing brands and tattoos.... Gang members are from any racial, cultural, or social-economic group” (p.3).

Imaginary Audience: “Belief that others are acutely aware of and attentive to one’s appearance and behaviour” (Arnett, 2001, p. 445).

Poverty: this is a debated subject in Canada. Unlike other countries, Canada does not define poverty, such as a poverty line. However “not making basic needs” will be associated with and used for this project (Canadian Council on Social Development, 2001).

Vulnerable youth/families: individuals or family units “that are susceptible to harm because of their socio-economic status, their minority status or other stigmatizing status” (Demi, 1995, p. 188).

Youth: In the context of this project I am defining youth as males between 11 and 14-year-olds.

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Dedicated to W.F.

A sincere thank you to my husband for his continued encouragement and understanding over the years of my studies at UNBC and completing this project. I would also like to express my appreciation to my daughter, mother, father, community and my committee that has supported me through the thick and thin of this long journey.

Chapter One: Introduction

The BEAT

The heartbeat of a community is captured in the behaviours and actions of its community members. This project aims to capture the pulse of what is happening in regards to youth in Prince George who are susceptible to gang involvement, and to develop a prevention program that builds healthy relationships and communication skills. The BEAT focuses on one main area that has been identified by Prince George community stakeholders—to reduce anti-social behaviours and disruptive behaviours that can be conducive to aggression, violence and criminal behaviour. The BEAT aims to build healthy relationships and communication skills through an after-school program for male youth. It assesses the needs of participants and builds partnerships with families and community agencies to aid in creating safe, healthy youth, families, and communities.

This project is designed for Prince George where there is mounting gang violence, a highly disadvantaged Aboriginal youth population, and a community in need of providing more support to their youth. This project is specific to one local community but contains universal characteristics that can be implemented into any community.

Youth Gangs and The BEAT Proposal

Youth gangs have become a major concern in many communities across Canada. The growth of gangs encompasses both urban and rural settings. There is a complexity to understanding and defining exactly what a gang is. The terms “youth gangs” and “street gangs” are often used interchangeably and are based on demographics (age) and the premise that both are engaged in similar deviant behaviour and illicit crimes (Chatterjee, 2006). Youth are particularly vulnerable to gang recruitment due to factors such as status; poor connection to peer, community and family supports; and economic and educational

disadvantages (National Crime Prevention Centre, 2007). The most successful ways of preventing youth gang recruitment are wraparound community-based supports and solutions which cater to individual needs (Totten, 2009).

Awareness of unique gang structures helps identify these needs and shape programming. The BEAT examines research on gang structures, risk factors for youth, reasons why youth join gangs, and influences on youth. In addition to what is included in The BEAT, I also include a review of crime prevention programs. The research informs a framework focussed on gang prevention for inner-city elementary school youth and families in Prince George, British Columbia. The need for preventative programming is driven by both a national and a local focus on reducing gang crime by investing in early childhood interventions and families supports (Bones, 2011). There is also local interest from School District No. 57 in providing a pro-social, safe, after-school program for youth-at-risk. The BEAT aims to meet these needs.

Building Healthy Relationships

Building healthy communication and relationship skills is an on-going process in life. The sooner we are able to learn effective communication skills, the longer we are able to practice and refine them. As children mature into their teenage years, there are many obstacles they need to overcome including coping with stress from school, dealing with self-identity, and learning to navigate conflict in relationships to name a few. The BEAT aims to help youth identify their pressures and provide support to build communication and coping skills.

One area of importance in building healthy relationships is the relationship between a youth and his parents. Researchers Fergus and Zimmerman (2005) describe positive family interactions as key in developing support, monitoring, and building communication skills

with youth, highlighting a “self-confident youth with good social skills is somewhat predisposed to being resilient regardless of the risk or outcome” (p. 413). Fergus and Zimmerman also point to the need to assess the unique features of the population and context in which the program aims to serve. The proposed group program focuses on the Prince George population of male youth at risk of gang recruitment and involvement. A youth’s unique family situation will be taken into consideration when developing conflict resolution skills.

Youth Groups

An examination of effective programs requires a review of how they engage youth. This is important to ensure a youth-centred approach to program design. A pertinent article by Pearce and Larson (2006) studied how teenagers become engaged in youth development programs, and the process for motivational change. Though this article focused on an older age-range of youth, it is still relevant to the pre-teenager age group that The BEAT is targeted for (ages 11 to 14). In this article, Pearson and Larson describe important factors in engaging youth in group programs. They highlight the importance of the entry phase into a group for a youth in which he or she gets to know what other peers are attending the program and will most likely engage if he or she develops good relations with these existing peers. Other factors of teen engagement focus on the group’s atmosphere being welcoming and friendly, and the facilitator’s ability to be open, honest and genuine with the youth. In this article, the subtleties in group design are highlighted, along with the qualities of the facilitators that can be overlooked, but are large contributors to youth cognitive processes and their enrolment or engagement in a group.

Group programs can provide a range of services and education to help youth cope with life changes. Reports from school staff and youth state that pre-adolescent boys in

elementary schools are being targeted for recruitment into gangs. Prince George School District No. 57 is aware that “schools are very attractive recruitment targets for gangs” (250 News, 2011, p.1).

Gang members target youth vulnerable to recruitment due to factors such as poverty, domestic abuse, exposure to substance misuse, and neglect (National Crime Prevention Centre, 2007). Risk factors for youth is further explored in Chapter two and highlights the larger concerns that youth face such as family involvement in gangs, and how youth who experience trauma are more susceptible to taking risks and more readily recruited into gangs (Crimmins, et al., 2000; Edmonton Police Services, 2012).

Person-Centred Theory

The BEAT takes a person-centred approach in the design and execution of the program. For the purposes of this literature review and program, I will use the term youth-centred to describe a person-centred approach tailored to the target population. The benefit of a youth-centred approach is it will demand the program be flexible and in-the-moment to best suit youth needs, strengths, and understand a youth’s personal context.

Person Centred Theory (PCT) focuses on trusting an individual’s ability (strengths and qualities) to move forward in his or her personal growth. The role of the facilitator is to explore ways to empower the individual to achieve their full potential and become self-actualized. PCT carries the belief that individuals are “trustworthy, resourceful, capable of understanding and self-direction, able to make constructive changes and able to live effective and productive lives” (Corey, 2005, p. 169).

An important characteristic in making a youth-centred approach effective is the traits of the facilitator. Facilitators will need to be selected carefully for the program to ensure they will skilfully adhere to and provide a PCT approach, and to not present themselves as the

expert but as a tool to help the youth achieve his goals. Facilitators will also need to avoid making interpretations or evaluate the youth's ideas. An adherence to a PCT approach helps the facilitator be real in their relationships with the youth in the program.

There are three core therapeutic conditions of PCT that are important to uphold in the therapeutic relationship. They are: congruence (genuineness), unconditional positive regard (acceptance) and, accurate empathy (understanding). This approach focuses on the youth's current functioning, allowing the youth needs and strengths to determine the focus of their work, and being mindful of what the youth is able to engage in.

Trauma

Crimmins, Cleary, Brownstein, Spunt & Warley (2000) describe trauma as an experience where life has been threatened or lost. There are different types of traumatic events. These include universal experiences such as losing a loved one, catastrophic events such as fires and natural disasters, and interpersonal events such as violence and sexual abuse.

The extent to which an individual perceives an event to be traumatic depends on a number of factors. These include the severity and duration of the event; the response of peers, family, and the community; and characteristics of the individual (Crimmins, et al., 2000).

It is important to have a trauma-informed lens when working with the target youth population. The group program will need trauma-informed lens in screening and in direct practice with the youth to ensure safety practices are covered. Awareness to cultural diversity will help bring the program and screening processes in line with cultural safety in the programs design.

Rationale

Healthy interpersonal and coping skills for youth are essential to helping them create strong connections to guardians and peers. As stated in Corey, Corey and Corey (2010), “the most resilient teens have strong social skills and have open and healthy relationships with their parents” (p. 323). Having strong communication skills takes time to learn and experience. A youth that is given consistent messaging and role-modeling at school, with peers and at home will more likely pick up these skills quickly. A youth that is able to learn and use healthy relationship skills will have a higher sense of esteem and assertiveness (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). In learning about communication and relationship skills, it is believed youth including children will become less vulnerable to gang recruitment (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Victim Services and Crime Prevention, 2009).

Nationally, gang-related homicides have been on the rise since the early 1990s and accounted for almost one out of four homicides in 2008 (Statistics Canada, 2008). Barrett (2004) found intervention and prevention programs are effective for children and youth. The importance of a program which focuses on healthy relationships is it benefits youth, families, and communities in a number of ways. This includes the prevention of anxiety and mood disorders, bullying, and violent outbursts, and the promotion of healthy relational decisions regarding gang involvement and safe sexual activity (Barrett, 2004). A youth with high self-esteem may be more likely to make decisions that prevent harm to self.

Poor communication and decision-making skills can have a broad and negative impact on a youth. A deficit in these skills can affect school performance (i.e. being sent home on a regular basis due to communication breakdown and conflict in the classroom). Also, peer relationships can suffer due to poor decision making and either aggressive behaviours that lead to bullying or passive behaviours that result in being a victim. Lastly, a

lack of communication and relational skills can influence romantic relationships and sexual activity amongst youth, potentially contributing to unsafe sexual activity.

These impacts on a youth can lead to significant issues in both the present and future. As a result, proactive, preventive services for children and youth can make a lasting impact in a person's life. This project identifies key elements of an effective group program for youth with the aim of developing a program to cultivate and strengthen healthy relationships and communication skills in a youth's life.

Personal Location

My motivation for undertaking this project comes from my experience with and interest in working with children and families. I have been a social worker working with children, youth, and families in various roles in Prince George. Through my work with vulnerable families, I have experienced a lack of programming for males that aids them in building healthy relationship skills. For three and a half years, I worked as a mentoring coordinator for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Prince George (BBBSPG) developing and implementing school based programs for children in grades one to seven. These programs were in partnership with School District No. 57 in predominantly inner-city elementary schools. These programs used volunteer mentors and facilitators to work in the schools with children and youth.

While in this role, I was asked to implement an after-school program for pre-adolescent males at two elementary schools. School District No. 57 approached BBBSPG to provide a program to engage youth after school hours. Its goal was to develop intervention and prevention programming to decrease gang recruitment and involvement for vulnerable males. As a result, I helped implement BBBSPG Game On! program for male youth. The Game On! program provided a mentoring program for pre-adolescent male and focused on

building healthy and active lifestyles, and self-esteem. The program was promising, but did not completely engage its target audience of vulnerable males. One reason for this was the need for a high level of communication and relational skills training for the mentors and youth. The program did not reflect some of the context of what these youth were living in: poverty, mental health and capacity concerns, and experiences of trauma and violence. I believe the Game On! Program had potential, but it needed to develop more effective methods of reaching low socio-economic youth.

I have also worked as a mental health counsellor with youth and families. I have worked with a variety of ages and cultural backgrounds. Through this, I have learned that youth benefit the most when their families, schools and other community members are included in the service planning.

Population and Location

The population that this project will focus on is youth from low socio-economic situations struggling with pro-social coping skills and exposed to one or more of the following: domestic violence, substance misuse, and the effects of trauma. Schools have a variety of opportunities for pro-social involvement, thus are a source of community strength that should be utilized and enhanced (Communities That Care: Community Action Plan, 2011).

The project's aim is to develop an after-school gang prevention program for youth with it being piloted at inner-city elementary schools in Prince George. The reason behind the location at inner city schools is due to the higher concentration of low socio-economic families, and minority groups, which are some of the risk factors that may contribute to youth becoming involved in gangs.

This focus is aligned with the need for more preventative programming to address recruitment and gang involvement in Prince George, School District No. 57 (250 News, 2011; T. Spring, personal communication, December 12, 2011). This project will help provide needed services to the target population. Special consideration will be made for Aboriginal youth and families, who make up 11% of the Prince George population and, by virtue of being a minority group, have higher risk factors to be recruited into gangs (National Crime Prevention Centre, 2007, p.1). Prince George has a higher Aboriginal youth population than non-Aboriginal youth with 31% of the Aboriginal people being under 15 years of age (Milligan, 2010, p. 2).

Overview of the Proposal

This project has two objectives. The primary objective is to identify the key elements for an effective program that builds healthy relationships for vulnerable male youth that help reduce anti-social behaviours. The project's second objective is to interpret these findings and to create a program that produces an effective after-school gang prevention program that focuses on building healthy relationships skills with youth. The program also has the potential to partner with future family support programs and community agencies to create a wraparound approach.

Because the program is specific to the Prince George community I would also like bring awareness to the Aboriginal youth population. The BEAT will incorporate cultural safety by having local Aboriginal agencies at the table working with the youth involved with The BEAT. Cultural safety is a part of the screening process for The BEAT and the weekly facilitator's wrap up (a tool used to adapt group lessons as needed). The program suggests cultural training for facilitators, cultural considerations in the program's design, and

partnership with local Aboriginal family services as needed to better serve the youth involved.

A review of the literature will identify the impact of risk factors of low socio-economic status on youth with special consideration for the community of Prince George. This is to identify effective interventions, to educate, and to help community providers assist youth and families with whom they work. Additionally, a screening process for participants will be included in the program to ensure selection of youth that will be able to safety and effectively participate in the group process.

Following the screening process, Chapter three provides the reader with the manual of the proposed gang prevention program.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review is intended to provide the necessary research and guidance in structuring an effective prevention program, as well as investigate topics in healthy relationships that help reduce anti-social or disruptive behaviours. The following areas that inform The BEAT and address the needs of vulnerable youth and families will be highlighted in this review: (a) epidemiology and etiology, (b) characteristics of healthy relationships and (c) evidence-based and recommended preventative gang or crime interventions. These essential topics are the foundation in which this program has been established.

The epidemiology literature review explores the rise in gang crimes in Canada and gang structures. More specifically, the focus is on risk factors for youth such as the impacts of poverty, youth development stages, and the attraction of gang involvement. This review examines identifying characteristics of healthy relationships and recommended strategies in preventing gang involvement and implementing healthy relationships including material for working with youth and families.

The Rise in Gang Crimes

In order to better understand the rise in gang involvement one must explore the increase in gang crime and recruitment. Looking at the epidemiology of youth gangs is to understand what leads youth to join gangs and become involved in criminal or delinquent activities. As mentioned earlier, youth gangs have become a major concern in many communities across Canada. The rate of gang membership, violence and drug trade has been on the rise since 2005-2006 (Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, 2010). Youth residing in the community and prisoners in low and medium security facilities are the two highest population groups recruited into gangs (Harris, 2012; Totten, 2009). This leads to a cyclical nature for retaining members. Once a youth is recruited into a gang and commits illicit acts,

his or her chances of going to prison increase the longer the youth participates in the criminal activities (Chatterjee, 2006). As a prisoner, the youth (or adult) may continue to be recruited back to his or her original gang or into a rival gang (Harris, 2012).

While youth and street gang populations grow, so does the expansion of gang territory. No longer are gangs found only in urban settings; they are also found in rural settings. This growth is partially related to what defines a group as a gang. For example, street gangs and youth gangs are terms used interchangeably due to similar age demographics, and delinquent and illicit acts both types carry out. While there is no universal definition for “gangs”, researchers, police enforcements and the Canadian government have created guidelines in defining gang structures. The Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (2010) alludes to the rise of new street gangs as subdivisions of higher levels of organized crime groups with “larger gangs being identified as new entities, street gangs branching off or splintering into smaller criminal groups and gangs changing their names” (p. 18). Gang structures are able to shift quickly and dynamically, seemingly on a daily basis (Government of Canada, Department of Justice, 2013).

Definition and Overview of Gang Structures

With the rise of gang violence, membership and subdivisions of gangs, it is important to recognize factors that influence gang involvement. Understanding the appeal of joining a gang requires knowledge of how gangs are structured. Gangs range in complexity from non-organized groups to highly organized structures. This creates diversity in their structure, composition, hierarchy and membership (Totten, 2009). Gangs are dependent upon ethnicity, culture, geography and demographics (Chatterjee, 2006; Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC), 2010; Totten, 2009). A gang’s purpose, duties, level of violence and crime involvement varies from group to group and region to region.

Gangs are diverse in Canada, but a common link between them is their involvement in, and efforts to control areas of illicit activities (CISC, 2010; Linden, 2010). Control is managed most often by violent acts which maintain the gang's reputation and protects turf, illicit acts, trafficking and power structures. This is known as "power and profit" strategies (CISC, 2010; Halifax Regional Police, Nova Scotia Justice, Department of Justice Canada, n.d.). Power and profit strategies can be a method of helping a youth find desired employment, income and status, especially if coming from a disadvantage socio-economic background.

There are three main levels of gang structure: organized crime, mid-level gangs, and street gangs. Organized crime is highly structured; may have exclusive membership based on family, race, ethnicity, common criminal enterprise; and collaborate with street gangs and mid-level gangs to make money through organized crime (MPSSG, Victims Services and Crime Prevention, 2009, p. 3). Mid-level gangs have blended characteristics of organized and street gang crime groups. This group is typically composed of smaller groups than organized crime. Mid-level groups can be sophisticated and disciplined, and often build their reputation with violence that "is often initiated in response to perceived threats from other groups" (MPSSG, Victims Services and Crime Prevention, 2009, p. 4). Street gangs typically represent the workers on the streets for more organized crime groups. These groups are less structured and engaged in less serious crimes. Gaining membership is typically not difficult due to the high number of youth often seeking gang membership (MPSSG, Victims Services and Crime Prevention, 2009).

As described above, the structures that govern gangs vary. Although some information about gangs can be generalized, there are also high levels of variation and distinctiveness between gangs. It can also be difficult to label a gang since their structures

may change depending on variables such as leadership, gang size, geography, and rival gangs in the area. Gang members may shift from one level structure to the next. As the next section will demonstrate, factors influencing youth membership in a gang is also related to a youth's development stages and self-perception.

Youth Development Stages

Understanding youth developmental stages has a twofold focus for the project. First, the particular age group of youth (11 to 14 year-olds) and most susceptible to gang recruitment are also in the pre-adolescent stage of brain development. As children mature, their ability to think abstractly increases (Arnett, 2001). It is during this period that youth begin to gain metacognitive and perspective-taking abilities that carry into adolescence (Arnett, 2001; Broderick & Blewitt, 2006). These abilities create the ability to think about one's own thinking, and to think about thoughts of others. However, when these abilities are not refined, it can create obstacles. There may be difficulties for youth in distinguishing their thinking about their own thoughts from their thinking about the thoughts of others, resulting in a distinctive kind of adolescent egocentrism (Arnett, 2001). The term "imaginary audience" was introduced by Elkind (1985) which makes an adolescent more self-conscious about his or her appearance and behaviour, overemphasizing the amount of time others observe and think about him or her. A youth's self-image becomes paramount to their feelings of self-worth, which makes the youth even more self-conscious (Arnett, 2001). In addition to the imaginary audience, a youth can feel others are not able to understand his or her unique experiences, and become resistant to others input or suggestions. This can have a negative impact on a youth's behaviour, mood, communication and sense of connection to others. Understanding these developmental stages in a youth improves understanding of both the youth's personal experiences and the facilitator's role with youth in The BEAT.

Second, youth recruitment into gangs is known to start at a young age and research points to as early as 8 -11 years of age (Bolan, 2010; Edmonton Police Service, 2012). Some researchers point out that children can be born into gang involvement through family ties, and that all children are susceptible (MPSSG, Victim Services & Crime Prevention 2009; NCPC, Public Safety, 2013). However, the largest age range recorded for gang recruitment is between 12 and 14 years of age, and 48% of gang members are under the age of 18 years of age (NCPC, Public Safety, 2013). For these reasons I believe ages 11-14 to be an important developmental stage to work with youth and help foster healthy relationships, self-image and self-worth; this is key to decreasing susceptibility to recruitment and influence.

Youth at Risk

Chatterjee (2006) describes the appeal to join a gang as “push and pull factors” that overlap with risk factors (p.3). These push and pull factors fulfill a need or offer a solution to the youth, creating a draw for gang membership. The National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) (2007) looked at five categories to understand gang risk factors for youth: individual characteristics, peer groups, school, family, and community. The risk that lies in each category is related to the extremity of the conditions or the negative impacts on a youth. According to NCPC (2007), within these categories the greatest risk factors for youth are negative influences in the youth’s life (ranging from their peers to family members), “limited attachment to the community, over-reliance on anti-social peers, alcohol and drug abuse, poor education or employment potential, and a need for recognition and belonging” (p.1). It is also important to note, that youth at risk tend to be from minority groups that “suffer the greatest levels of inequality and social disadvantage” (NCPC, 2007, p.1). The gaps and inequality ethnic youth groups experience heightens the above risk factors, meaning minority groups can be at a great disadvantage.

Aboriginal youth are more vulnerable to gang recruitment and organized crime than non-Aboriginal youth (Chatterjee, 2006; Richter-White, 2003). This is reflected in the Canadian police survey on youth gangs which estimated that 25% of youth gang members were African Canadian, 21% Aboriginal peoples, and 18% Caucasian (Astwood Strategy Corporation, 2004). This is an important point to consider as Prince George has a high Aboriginal youth population. In the next section I describe research that looks into the hierarchy amongst gangs and how Aboriginal gang structures fit into the continuum.

Aboriginal Gang Structures

Grekul and LeBoucane-Benson (2008), state the “Aboriginal gangs do not make up the criminal business organizations, which are more lucrative and enduring, and are more likely to be found in the street-level groups and wanna-be groups, which are less stable, organized and established” (p. 75; Astwood Strategy Corporation, 2004). Grekul and LeBoucane-Benson point to indicators that suggest Aboriginal gangs are used by more organized criminal business organizations to carry out “street work”, placing Aboriginal groups on the disorganized continuum of criminal group organizations (p.75). This further suggests that within gang structures, there is hierarchy creating inequality amongst gang groups. Disorganized operations of some Aboriginal gangs result being vulnerable to highly organized gangs.

The appeal of gang involvement for youth lies in the manner in which gangs handle and resolve situations, and in what a gang structure can provide to youth. Gang involvement at any level can provide a sense of belonging, status and reputation to its members (NCPC, Public Safety, 2013). The risk factors joining gangs described by the NCPC are applicable to all youth including non-minority groups. According to a RCMP informant, the Prince George community does not yet have organized Aboriginal gangs, but reports there are Aboriginal

youth and other minorities members involved in existing mid-level and street gangs groups such as, Independent Solider, Crew, and the Renegades (RCMP, personal communication, May 21, 2013).

Prevention Programs That are Ineffective

Ineffective prevention programs for youth are typically based on deficit model where a youth is treated as a patient with paternalistic values and hierarchical behaviours in which things are done "for" or "to" youth and his or her families. Deficit-based programs identify a youth's problem and provide recommendations from an existing menu of known alternatives (Powel, Batsche, Ferro, Fox, & Dunlop, 1997, p. 3). Programs listed in this section highlight an array of deficit-based program characteristics that are known to be ineffective.

Curriculum-based programming such as boot camps using traditional military basic training and "scared straight" programs both fail to reduce the participant's reoffending rates and may increase crime (Sherman, Gottfredson, MacKenzie, Eck, Reuter, & Bushway, 1997). Prevention programs that target youth at-risk for gang involvement, such as the American Gang Resistance Education and Training program (GREAT) and the Drug Abuse Resistant Education (DARE) program can bring about modest, short-term change but are deemed ineffective in the long-term (Rosenbaum & Hanson, 1998; Totten, 2009).

Other deficit based programs which are short-term fixes include gang suppression programs where police increase arrests and raids on drug markets. Incarcerating gang members is not found to reduce future criminal behaviour (Aos, Miller & Drake, 2006). Any gains from gang suppression programs have been shown to be short-term and can fail to address underlying concerns and risk factors for gang involvement. Gang suppression programs for Aboriginal youth fail to address psychosocial issues such as child maltreatment,

mental health concerns, substance use, and deficits in education and employment (Totten, 2009). Arrests of juveniles for minor offenses leads to more delinquency than if police provided warnings or alternatives to formal charges (Sherman, et al., 1997).

Totten (2009) also described detached worker programs that do not have an integrated, inter-sectoral approach with community services. An example of a detached worker program is police home visits to couples of domestic violence for monitoring and counselling. This was not shown to be effective (Sherman et al., 1997). A similar approach used in some schools of having individual and peer counselling did not reduce substance abuse or delinquency (Sherman et al., 1997). Programs with a singular or “one size fits all” approach which ignores integration with other community supports for youth and families has little to no impact in reducing crime, violent or delinquent behaviours or substance use (Sherman et al., 1997; Totten, 2009).

Totten (2009), in *Aboriginal Youth and Violent Gang Involvement in Canada: Quality Prevention Strategies*, used a Canadian Aboriginal cultural lens to review a variety of youth gang programs and approaches serving Aboriginal youth to reduce gang involvement. He found many to be ineffective. His review also included systemic concerns of the child welfare system in Canada and its impact on Aboriginal youth and families. Awareness of the ineffective elements of programs reviewed sheds light on what to avoid to ensure The BEAT is as effective as possible.

Youth Gang Prevention Programs

Existing youth gang prevention programs are typically community-based initiatives funded by Federal, provincial, and or municipal levels of government to reduce crime and build stronger and safer communities. In February 2012, the Canadian government released

the Youth Gang Prevention Fund with the objective to support proven and promising crime prevention initiatives that address youth violence and youth gangs in communities. Proven crime prevention initiatives are evidence-based programs. This section provides a description of the current evidence-based programs and strength-based programs to help shape the projects' program manual.

Youth gang prevention programs typically take on a community perspective, adapting to the community's culture and needs. A variety of prevention programs are reviewed in the next section to guide to build a reputable program for the Prince George community in The BEAT design.

Evidence-Based Programming

Gang prevention programming in Canada is a relatively new field compared to the United States and, as a result, there is comparatively less Canadian research. Welsh's (2007) *Evidence-based Crime Prevention* analyzed and evaluated existing crime prevention programs and initiatives in both Canada and the United States which resulted in a reduction in crime. This report focused on a variety of risk factors to families and children and explored the most effective programming. These programs reduced negative behaviours through education, support, and building coping skills. The report focused on four kinds of programs: family-based, community-based, and school-based prevention programs, and place-focused prevention initiatives. The first three areas are the most relevant for this project and reviewed. It's important to note that there can be significant pitfalls in replicating evidence-based programs. From my experience in working with a variety of service providers, evidence-based programs are difficult to operate when there is a lack of necessary funding, staff, and time.

Nation, Crusto, Wandersman, Kumpfer, Seybolt, Morrissey-Kane and Davino (2003) also conducted research on crime prevention programs to determine and outline essential characteristics of effective prevention programming. This report created nine principles grouped into three areas of prevention programming: program characteristics, matching the program with a target population, and implementing evaluation of prevention programs. In this review I highlight the characteristics shown to be most effective in each of the programs.

Family-based prevention. Family-based prevention programs focus on family risk factors, and use family therapy or behavioral training approaches and parental education. The Elmira Prenatal/Early Intervention Project in the United States is designed for public health nurses providing home visits to high-risk pregnant mothers. The nurses provide prenatal and postnatal education and care (Welsh, 2007, p. 20). Evaluation of the program reveals impressive results in reducing delinquency and improving life-course outcomes. The strengths of the program design are the professional education on life stages and development, and physical and mental health care in an outreach format. The Elmira project accomplishes four important principles for effective programming: appropriately timed in a target audience's life, a intervention with flexibility in how information is distributed to families, invested workers working directly with families, and parental education and skills (Nation et al., 2003).

The BEAT provides a family reference section that complements family groups or home visit supports. Suggestions on education topics such as child development, parent training, and social support services references are included in this section. The family reference section provides family members and youth with information on communication skills and strengthens The BEAT wraparound program approach. In addition, the Elmira outreach aspect is a future component of The BEAT.

Other family-based program types that reduce crime are Headstart or Child Parent Centre. These programs focus on disadvantaged families and daycare, preschool or an elementary environment of learning. The education component of these programs teaches reasoning abilities, high quality intellectual stimulation with active learning, and home visits and family support. Longitudinal studies show child participants had fewer lifetime arrests for violent crimes, property crimes and drug crimes along with higher levels of schooling and annual incomes (Welsh, 2007, p. 20).

The BEAT program uses referral services to community agencies that provide a range of preventative programs that utilize effective prevention principles for all family members. For example, the Prince George community has an Aboriginal Head Start program provided by the Native Friendship Centre for children aged 3 to 5 and their parents. School District No. 57 hosts several StrongStart BC programs for children and parents to help prepare the children for Kindergarten. These programs are excellent referral sources. These programs connect families to early prevention services. These programs support principles of effective prevention programming with multiple settings (community, family, peers, and schools are all relevant settings as they have an impact on the development of the problem behaviour), varied teaching methods that are interactive and skills based, and sufficient quantities of programming (Nation et al., 2003).

These principles will be taken into consideration with The BEAT design. For example, since sufficient programming and contact time is linked to positive prevention outcomes, The BEAT will run 2.5 hours weekly from October to December and January to May. This frequency and duration will provide participants the time to learn and practice the skills presented while allowing for an efficient delivery of the program.

Family-based therapy approaches are also effective with family-based prevention programs. For example, Multisystemic Therapy (MST) has produced positive outcomes in crime prevention (Welsh, 2007). MST is based in the context the youth and family are residing together. This therapy supports all parties involved to understand the major components that contribute to a youth's struggles and to collaboratively build interventions.

Similar to MST, The BEAT is designed to be flexible, adapt to future innovations, and work within a wraparound framework. Wraparound programs integrate family and community-based principles into a youth's individualized care plan and management (National Wraparound Initiative, 2014). To best provide supports and meet participant needs, it is best to align The BEAT with a wraparound approach. The Prince George community is building momentum towards a wraparound approach with youth-at-risk. Currently, there is a Communities that Care (CTC) initiative underway and in May 2013 one inner-city school hosted a community information presentation on wraparound services for youth to promote proactive skills to protect children and youth-at-risk and their families (M. Alexander, personal communication, May 24, 2013).

School-based prevention. An important component of school-based crime prevention programs is the use of interventions that establish norms or expectations for behaviour. A school environment that clearly defines what is and is not acceptable behaviour is proven to target risk factors for crime such as bullying, which has been linked to delinquency and later criminal offending (Welsh, 2007, p. 27).

In the Prince George community, a priority concern is to address the norms associated with alcohol use by youth (Communities that Care, 2011). School-based programs have the potential to utilize a variety of teaching methods and settings (classroom, gym, etc.) to help reiterate and connect theory and practices that relate to establishing expectations and norms.

Mentoring paired with school discipline and behaviour management could positively affect norms outside of schools.

Mentoring is a method of promoting skills and providing youth with positive relationships. By developing strong, positive relationships, mentoring also offers the opportunity to improve child-parent interactions and parenting skills. Mentoring has consistently demonstrated positive outcomes in substance use prevention and can aid in establishing norms against substance use (Nation, et al., 2003, p.6). One-to-one mentoring is not always associated with success. Outcomes may depend on qualitative differences in one-to-one mentoring such as the role of the individual (probation officer, therapist, teacher, volunteer mentor) and interpersonal factors.

School discipline management strategies and mentoring programs can help change a youth's delinquent behaviours. These proactive approaches can increase a youth's sense of belonging in the school and community, improve interpersonal skill and engagement, improve the school environment and reduce school disorder and crime (Welsh, 2007).

Another evidence-based program often used in schools is self-control or social competency instruction, using cognitive-behavioural skills and methods. Training in self-control and parenting is linked to building healthy relationships and communication skills. These components are central to The BEAT, and cognitive-behavioural material is incorporated into group lessons on self-control, conflict resolution and coping skills.

Community-based prevention. In Welsh's (2007) report he reviews three types of community-based programs: gang member intervention programs that seek to reduce cohesion among youth gangs and individual gang members, community based mentoring, and after-school recreation. While these programs are not evidence-based, Welsh points out these programs have promise when using a tailored, community-needs approach.

Programs that tailor skills and communication training, mentoring, and family-outreach to community needs are found to have positive results in prevention programs with youth (Nation et al., 2003). Programs that are tailored to the local community have a great capacity to be socioculturally relevant to group norms. This incorporates local knowledge at the program's structural level and mirrors the local culture of the target audience. This is important in recruitment and retention of youth participants (Nation, et al., 2003).

Welsh (2007) described a strong community-based mentoring program called the Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) that provided education (tutoring, computer skills, homework assistance), service activities (volunteering in community), and developmental activities (curricula focus on life and family skills, and college and career planning) to youth and families. This program created partnerships with community agency to provide services to participants and would make referrals to community agencies for families during home visits as needed. Having a variety of supports gave choice to participants, which helped empower youth and equip them to make more informed choices for themselves.

Communities That Care Initiative

Another initiative important to mention is the Communities that Care (CTC). This initiative contains effective prevention characteristics and shares many characteristics with The BEAT vision. This initiative tailors its programming and practices to local community and individual needs, shifting away from a one-size-fits-all program style (Welsh, 2007). This crime prevention model for communities fosters evidence-based crime prevention and specifically targets problem youth behaviours. It is research-based and incorporates evidence and practices from a variety of fields including public health, psychology, education, social work, criminology, medicine, and organizational development (Welsh, 2007).

The Prince George community has been participating in the CTC initiative for the last three years. The Prince George CTC prevention plan is valuable in ensuring customization of The BEAT to the Prince George community's needs. Through the CTC community assessment, three priority risk factors were identified in the Prince George community that were targeted for action: community laws and norms favourable towards substance use, poor family management and family capacity, and individual attitudes favourable to antisocial behaviour. This last risk factor, anti-social behaviour, is The BEAT main objective in helping to prevent crime and gang involvement.

The Prince George CTC reinforces the need for successful programming to be youth and family-centred. CTC has identified service gaps in local programs including the availability of after-school youth programs and the need to incorporate family programming. These needs influenced The BEAT design in order to produce a local program that best suits the needs of the community and individuals it is serving.

School-Based Prevention Initiatives and Programs That Target Identified Risk Factors

This review of effective prevention programs focuses on programs that contain the following components: promotion of healthy relationships skills, crime prevention, family involvement, or focused on youth involved in gangs.

The review of these programs is to provide research that informs the development and programming of The BEAT. I will begin with a study of existing effective programs such as Surrey Wraparound, SACY, Strengthening Families Program, and PALS / STARS.

Surrey Wraparound. Surrey Wraparound is an after-school program that provides participants a safe place to socialize and learn communication skills. The focus of this program is to prevent youth from joining gangs, or to offer support to youth in exiting gang involvement. This program is designed to reduce the amount of youth being institutionalized

by providing family-based treatment and programming. Surrey Wraparound works with youth and their families with serious emotional, behavioural and mental health needs. The program uses a youth-centred and family-centred approach aided by a group facilitator and a wraparound team who supports and engages in the well-being of the youth as needed (NCPC, Public Safety Canada, 2012). The program is built in partnership with the Surrey School Board and Surrey RCMP. This partnership is a collaborative effort where resources, assessment tools and information is shared to assist in screening candidates. The Surrey wraparound screening includes RCMP staff that identifies the youth as a result of his or her contact with police, and school representation in order to reference the youth's school attendance, academic records, etc. The partnership leads to more in-depth information, provides guidance on which systems to include in the individual plans with a youth, and helps tailor the resources offered to support the goals of a youth and his or her family. This type of screening is ideal for The BEAT wraparound programming. The BEAT program uses a partnered approach to screening for the program involving School District No. 57, RCMP and the Native Friendship Centre. Chapter three has an overview of the screening process.

Some of the effective prevention characteristics of the Surrey Wraparound program are using multiple settings and domains to support youth participants, and providing youth with skills-based training and communication skills. Lessons and supports are provided in both the school and community and involves peers and families. Psychoeducation in interpersonal skills, health and recreation is provided as needed. These activities aid in retaining and achieving reduced problem behaviours with youth (Nation et al., 2003).

The Prince George community is in the beginning stages of incorporating an adapted version of the Surrey Wraparound program with the formation of the PG FIRST committee. The committee provides community services to youth and their families at high risk of not

accessing needed services due to fragmentation services. Similar to the Surrey Wraparound program, the PG FIRST committee is a youth-centred approach that strives to create a youth-driven, comprehensive plan. The programs offers individualized care services to 11 to 17 year-olds (NCPC, Public Safety Canada, 2012). It is important to note that an estimated 70% of the youth referred to the PG FIRST panel are of Aboriginal decent (RCMP, personal communication, June 25, 2013). This demonstrates the need for cultural sensitivity in all stages of planning.

Special program considerations. In addition to the Surrey Wraparound strengths in prevention programming listed above, there is another feature relevant to The BEAT. Youth that have completed The Surrey Wraparound program are able to maintain contact with facilitators. This allows for the positive relationships developed in the program to continue. This is an important strategy for The BEAT to aid in sustaining the knowledge and skills that were learned in the program.

School Age Children and Youth – substance use prevention initiative (SACY). SACY uses an inter-sectoral approach to support families and children in order to connect families and youth to their school and community and prevent, reduce or delay substance use. The program coordinates a variety of services to help support families and children including housing and both clinical and social supports. SACY is a joint initiative of the Vancouver School Board and Vancouver Coastal Health in collaboration with the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Police Department, the University of British Columbia and the Centre for Addictions Research of BC (Vancouver School Board, 2012, para 14).

The program provides a model of using local stakeholders working in collaboration, to provide families and youth with needed services. This model is promising in the manner it improves inter-sectoral collaboration and reduces problems associated with fragmentation of

services that can plague individuals and families seeking services and treatment (problems such as accessibility and availability of services). This model of joining stakeholders of families and multiple agencies and providers for service delivery is an important component of The BEAT intended framework and partnerships will be a focus of future program development.

PALS and S.T.A.R. programs. Another effective after-school program was Participate And Learn Skills (PALS) based in Ottawa, Ontario. This program targeted 5 to 15 year-old children and youth that lived in a housing project for low-income families. The participants were offered skill-based programming and activities including athletics, music and arts. The program had high rates of success; juveniles were charged 80% less by police over the 32 months compared to a similar housing project with youth not involved in the PALS program (Welsh, 2007). PALS reached the end of its funding but fortunately was replicated in the Hamilton, Ontario program S.T.A.R. The objectives of the S.T.A.R. program are to improve self-image, confidence and quality of life for children and their families. Like the PALS program, S.T.A.R. has a strong focus on collaboration and partnerships with parents and community, child-centred agencies.

Special program considerations. The S.T.A.R. program uses a five-step development ladder for participant progress and achievement. These steps work in the context of risk factors that the children and youth are facing including struggling with addictions, poverty and abuse. This five-step ladder is flexible and works with realistic, youth-centred goals. The first step looks at his or her *initial participation* - attending at least one activity. The second step is *sustained participation* - children attending at least half of the sessions for at least one activity. The third step is *skill development* - children progressing from one recognized skill level to another within an activity. The fourth step *individual integration* - children reaching

a level of skill development comparable to other children their age, and moving into a mainstream sport or arts skill development activity. The fifth step *program incorporation* - an organized mainstream skill development group takes responsibility for recruiting and maintaining the children from the low-income community in a mainstream program (Community Action Program for Children, 2012). The BEAT will incorporate a similar ladder to help maintain a youth-centred approach in the context of a youth's strengths. A five-step ladder will help facilitators monitor successes and together, create further goals in collaboration with youth engaged with The BEAT.

Strengthening Families Program. The Strengthening Families Program was selected by the CTC of Prince George as a program that can effectively achieve the unique goals of the community (CTC, 2011, p. 21) This program was being facilitated in an adapted format in 2013 with Carrier Sekani Family Services in Prince George (a delegated child and family resource service under the Child, Family and Community Service Act and guided by Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators). This program has potential to run in partnership with The BEAT to enhance family involvement with youth.

The original Strengthening Families Program is for higher risk families and focuses on building family capacity to reduce problematic areas including substance abuse, depression, violence, aggression, delinquency, and school failure. The original programming is broken into four age groups: 3 to 5 year-olds (higher risk), 6 to 11 year-olds (higher risk), 10 to 14 year-olds (universal), and 12 to 16 year-olds (higher risk). Each session is two hours. The first hour separates parents and children to focus on building communication and skills. The second hour practices these lessons with the family together. Resources including videos help demonstrate effective and ineffective parenting encounters. The CTC initiative in Prince George is interested in the universal programming of Strengthening Families (ages 10

to 14 year-olds) as the identified risks in the community relate to all youth and families.

Topics include parenting and communication skills, conflict resolution and dealing with peer pressure.

Special program considerations. A challenge encountered by providers of this program is the costs associated with the original program including training for facilitators and resources such as the videos and books prescribed for the program. Carrier Sekani Family Services (CSFS) in Prince George is an example of a community agency that struggles to afford the costs associated running the program.

Another consideration is local adaptation of the program. The Strengthening Families program was adapted to meet the local Aboriginal families needs in Prince George. This showcases the need to tailor this program to be culturally and socioculturally relevant. These changes to the program might jeopardize its scientific relevance, but can provide better recruitment and retaining youth and families overall (in discussions with the CSFS Family Wellness Worker, April 30, 2013).

Program elements that contribute to positive outcomes include the depth of communication skills training and parent education. The program provides an array of interventions with all family members utilizing videos and both individual and group work with family members in a multi-modal and multi-settings framework. Duration and frequency of sessions in order to suit its target audience is a major emphasis of this program. Flexibility by using appropriately timed materials tailored to the age group and level of risk of its participants is essential part of this organization.

Promising Prevention Programming

There are two other group programs for youth that highlight qualitative mentoring capabilities when paired in a community-based prevention program: Just TV and Game On!

Qualitative community-based mentoring programs can support healthy relationships with youth. Mentoring programs that support one or more of the following three areas yield positive outcomes: youth education, service activities (i.e., community minded projects or directives), and skills-based activities (Ahrens, DuBois, Richardson, Fan & Lozano, 2008; Nation et al, 2003; Welsh, 2007). These two mentoring programming highlight one or more of these areas and use a sociocultural lens in doing so.

Just TV. The Winnipeg community centre initiative Just TV, is an after school program funded by NCPC for youth (ages 16 to 24) that are gang involved or at risk of gang involvement. Youth record music and videos about their experiences and share them with other youth in the group. In addition to this peer mentoring component, the program is skills-based and youth write music and lyrics, create videos and perform live (in the annual Just TV film festival). The music and videos are typically created in a Hip Hop style using music production technologies and software. The skills-based component supports youth to learn technical skills about operating production equipment, cameras, etc. Other skills and resources available to the youth participants include resume building, employment searching, and housing and referral services. Along with these skills, the centre provides healthy meals, food preparation skills and peer mentoring with current and past participants in the program.

Special program considerations. This program serves as a strong example of a youth-centred approach by its use of appropriate tools for the target audience. The program's mentoring model and staff of youth workers are able to assist the youth achieve their goals and connect with additional resources (i.e., housing, food, employment, etc.) and skills (i.e., cooking, resume building). The program uses urban culture as a tool to help youth shift from crime or gang involvement. Appropriate tools are used to help spark intrigue and motivation, create an important expressive outlet, and build a sense of belonging and efficacy. The

program is an example of being socioculturally relevant in working youth participants that are gang involved or at risk, and empowering youth in a legitimate activity of creating music in a genre that these youth enjoy and relate to.

Game On! A promising program is the male youth program Game On!, developed by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada that was modelled after their successful female youth program Go Girls! This program uses a mentoring-based approach that provides experiential learning about male stereotypes, active lifestyles, healthy eating and decision-making skills. It addresses peer and societal pressures that influence a youth's life and fosters peer support and mentorship. The program is designed for small groups of 12 participants of 11 to 14 year-old youth. The program manual is designed to be flexible and encourages mentors to tailor the program to the youths' interests and needs. The program's focus is to provide male youth with information and support to make healthy, informed choices in their daily lives. The program uses multiple domains to work with youth including schools and peer groups.

Special program considerations. The Game On! curriculum is adaptable; it provides a guideline of topics and activities but seeks for mentors to incorporate their own expertise into the activities and lesson plans. A flexible program has greater longevity and is more likely to be made socially and culturally relevant to youth participants.

Game On! qualities that can be incorporated into The BEAT include its flexibility in program delivery and low costs. The program is easier for a community to fiscally sustain since much of the staffing is by agency volunteers. It is important to note that volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds, however, and may not be aware of trauma-informed or person-centred approaches. While there are positives to volunteer mentoring (such as being invested in relationship and the program), professionally-trained volunteers and facilitators is recommended to work with The BEAT target population to help ensure expertise and

supervision is provided. Invested volunteers who receive supervision and support are more likely to produce the quality of relationships with youth desired in prevention programming (Nation et al., 2003).

Summary

The literature review reveals essential components of evidence-based prevention programs. It has shown that a successful program cannot work with a youth in isolation, but must connect with the community, families, peers, schools, the RCMP, and other agencies involved in a youth. The review has demonstrated the importance of a program being culturally relevant, responsive to a youth's needs and flexible in both the content and how it is delivered. It must have invested staff and volunteers with access to training who teach and mentor participants, instilling in them interpersonal and problem-solving skills, coping mechanisms, and life skills. Last, a sustainable program must be outcome-oriented, evaluation-based, and cost-effective. The literature review and the best-practices it highlights from effective prevention programs has shaped the design of The BEAT, incorporating prevention principles demonstrated to be effective.

The BEAT will adopt a systems-perspective, connecting with agencies, peers and families. In advance of the program running, a partnership with School District No. 57, RCMP, and the Native Friendship Centre will be developed and framed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to share resources and reach the targeted audience for participant screening. The MOU will set guidelines for each partner's role. In addition, peers and families will be invited to participate in components of The BEAT, and the program will help connect them to needed services.

Culture is a dynamic, rapidly-evolving entity. The activities and skills need to be relevant to the participants' social context, interests and needs. The BEAT is designed to be

flexible and allow the information taught to be tailored to the youth, ensuring that the program continuously adapts and evolves to meet the needs of participants and their community. Facilitators familiar with youth urban culture will help keep the program culturally relevant and safe for youth participants.

An important component of the program is relevant, applicable training in interpersonal skills, communication, coping, and problem-solving. There will also be multiple opportunities for recreation and life skill development. The BEAT will use interactive instruction in multiple settings including in the community, schools, outdoors, kitchens, and gyms. The program will be piloted for three months, with two and half hour sessions each week. There will be a total of 11 sessions along with two follow-up sessions mirroring the school calendar with the intention of expanding the program in the future to include more sessions.

Group facilitators will be both volunteers and professionally trained workers such as counsellors or social workers to provide a youth-centred program and to incorporate community service providers. This will help uphold The BEAT vision to comprehensively assess a youth's needs and build partnerships with participants, families, and community agencies towards creating a safer community. Interested, engaged facilitators will keep the program relevant and engaging for youth participants, and tailor The BEAT to the those involved.

Last, the BEAT provides templates for evaluation for use by facilitators, stakeholders, and youth. There will also be a family reference section to expand into a future wraparound approach with a wider scope of youth and family programming or supports.

By incorporating essential components of the evidence-based prevention programs described in the literature review, The BEAT aims to be an engaging, outcome-oriented

program able to meet the gang prevention needs of the community of Prince George, its families and its youth. The program is detailed in Chapter three.

Chapter Three: Process of Inquiry

Assessment and Screening

The BEAT uses assessment and screening processes to select and prepare youth to participate in the group. The assessment allows agencies to identify program participants and the screening interview introduces a participant to the program and explores their needs and goals.

The assessment is done between participating agencies, which share information on youth that are referred to The BEAT, or are known to be in need of a program as it is known. The criteria for youth to participate are: males between the ages 11 to 14 years, elevated risk factors, anti-social behaviours, and involved or have the potential to be involved in gang activity.

Agencies meet to discuss potential youth participants, including background information such as family history, school behaviour and attendance, gang and police involvement, to identify youth suited to The BEAT. The program recommends the assessment be conducted by the RCMP's Youth at Risk department, the Native Friendship Centre and School District No. 57. This is to ensure collaboration between the three service providers in supporting the youth. School District No. 57 will be instrumental in knowing the criteria for the program, and help identify and refer participants and families to The BEAT. It is also imperative that the RCMP and Native Friendship Centre participate, and that the assessment process uses a culturally sensitive lens.

The screening process consists of a supportive interview between the program counsellor or social worker and youth that will participate in the program. It provides an introduction to the program and begins to determine the youth's needs and goals through an exploration of his motivation and strengths.

The agency assessment process and participant screening interview reveals important information about a youth: his background, motivation and goals, and strengths. These tools will not only help determine what services will be needed for each youth's wraparound plan, but also act as an evaluation tool to be used in pre and post programming comparisons.

Group capacity will be 12 youth participants and three facilitators. Throughout, the program's counsellor or social worker acts as a liaison between the agencies and the youth in the assessment and final evaluation process.

Background history. Assessment will take into consideration feuding gangs and aggressive behaviours and how this would affect the group dynamics if youth are placed in the same group. Spacing group participants in attending the program may be needed such as rotating members on different weeks. It is important to select the best composition of group participants possible; group safety is paramount for all involved.

A youth's family and social situation is taken into consideration, identifying risks and prioritizes a youth's needs matched to eligibility of programming. While this section looks at the presenting problems of a youth, it is necessary to be aware of safety concerns. Once background information is compiled and the agency assessment process is completed, the group's counsellor or social worker will be notified of potential participants and continue the screening process with an informal interview with each youth.

The following questions are in the pre and post program evaluations and constitute a strength-based approach to setting participant goals during the assessment process:

Focusing on the youth's potential, in what areas can services be made available to engage the youth?

How can services help empower the youth and the family?

Does the youth want family involved in different parts of his journey? If so, which ones and

are the agencies able to support these wishes? Discuss a plan.

What services may validate the youth's story, experiences, skills and supports in a flexible, positive manner?

If needed, where can youth build relationships (such as clubs, family projects, mentoring opportunities, volunteering, community minded projects, job shadowing, etc.)?

Youth's motivation. Youth will be screened in an informal interview process. A discussion regarding the youth's participation in The BEAT will highlight his intention and willingness to try something new. A youth's motivation for the group will be considered on a continuum. This will help the screening process be open to youth, including both those that are merely interested in trying it out, to youth that actively seek to participate in the program.

Youth's strengths. Ask anyone to describe his or her strengths, and the question is typically followed by silence. What a youth is "good at" is not necessarily strength; it is the qualities that make him or her unique. For example, being good at sports is a general statement; the qualities of being fast and focused, or having a good memory are the strengths that can be applied to different practices in life. This supports the youth to explore and reflect on what makes him unique, and consider who he is. This is an important first step in establishing trust and unconditional positive regard for the youth, and sets the scene for The BEAT. Exploring strengths is conducted in an informal conversation with each youth and the screening agencies.

Finalizing the Assessment and Screening Processes

The assessment and screening process serves to appropriately place youth in The BEAT. When The BEAT will not be able to assist all youth with their goals, other community services will be offered. Thus, selecting services for a youth will be based on the assessment, his background and goals, and other available information so that his needs

match the offered programming. The information collected will be helpful in assessing risks to other group members and ensure safe participation in the program.

The BEAT offers an opportunity for youth to connect with other services as needed, and will not exclude youth that are already connected to additional services. This is done to reduce barriers and align The BEAT with a wraparound approach.

Group safety

Carefully monitoring youth participants and quickly responding to emerging problems will help ensure group safety. Facilitators will have emergency contact numbers for each participant quickly accessible and the means to make phone calls. After school staff will be notified of the group's hours and routine to help make transitions from school to the group work smoothly and youth feel welcome after school hours.

Group safety will include overseeing group session conflicts. Conflicts in the group will be treated as processing and learning opportunities. Participants will be made aware of group dynamics in the screening process so members can make an informed choice whether or not to participate in the group.

An important safety precaution is skilful group facilitation including use of linking and blocking. Linking is used to connect a youth's feelings or actions to another person. This helps build connection between group members and stir meaningful group discussion. Blocking techniques are used to keep group work on track and defer when an individual attempts to take the group process in an undesired direction. An example of this is interrupting a lengthy story by asking the youth to relate the story to present feelings. As Corey et al. (2010) put it, "The skill here is to learn to block counterproductive behaviours without attacking the personhood of the perpetrator" (p. 44). These techniques help connect and build rapport amongst the group, protect individuals from disclosing too much

information, and keep the group engaged.

Screening Interview

Corey et al. (2010) describe providing adequate information intended to keep potential group members active in the decision-making process. Therefore, the screening interview will provide youth with information on the nature, purpose and the goals for the group (p. 182). Confidentiality, consent to participate in the program along with information on the orientation, roles, and qualification of the facilitators will be provided to youth (p.182). An assessment of any dual relationships regarding facilitators and youth participants will need to be conducted and discussed to ensure confidentiality and safety in the group.

A note of caution which Corey et al. (2010) mention in the screening process is not to bombard a potential participant with too much information. It is important to keep information concise, use youth friendly language and allow time to answer questions throughout the process, all which will aid in the decision-making process for the participant (p. 123).

Cultural Safety in the Screening Process

The following list highlights areas that need to be considered to ensure youth-centred and a culturally sensitive approach is taken in screening youth.

- Take into consideration the setting of the screening interview along with seating arrangements. This is to be aware of the hierarchy adults can have over youth and to make the space comfortable and relaxed. The counsellor or social worker needs to ensure a youth feels comfortable, welcomed and heard, not trapped or disciplined through the meeting arrangements.
- Limit the amount of paper and pens in the room. Have little to no forms, and if there

are forms let the youth have a copy or fill out the information that is required. The interview process needs to be casual and focused on the process the youth seeks, not to list negative behaviours. Keep focused on the strengths the youth possesses or has potential for.

- The use of visuals of The BEAT activities might be of assistance in the screening process. Having a display of equipment, food, posters and brochure of the program will help give a reference to a youth that does not know what to expect from the program.

Conducting a Screening Interview with a Youth

The screening interview is conducted by the program's counsellor or social worker with the youth, and occurs at school. During this conversation, an overview of the program is provided to the youth and any questions are answered. The information shared includes the following details.

Basics of the program: An after-school programs that encourages youth to hang out doing activities, eating food and learning skills for two and half hours once a week. All youth involved go through the same type of meeting with the counsellor or social worker and are male youth ages 11-14. Group size is suggested to be 10-12 youth and three facilitators. Two of the facilitators are volunteers that enjoy working with youth and have been trained with the program material to teach and support youth. One paid facilitator helps support the volunteers and youth and is trained in the material. The paid facilitator also connects with agencies present in referral process to ensure everyone is doing their part to support the youth's goals. There are 11 sessions and two follow-up sessions to the program.

Purpose: This is a prevention program that builds healthy relationships and communication skills through activities with peers. List examples of activities and what a session entails.

Goals: The program hopes to create opportunities for youth to experience new ways to deal with conflict, stress, pressure and be active in a positive way to resolve issues that are in his control (behaviour, choices, problem-solving, etc.).

Consent: Discussion around if the youth wants to join or at least try one session and the need for his signed consent (guardian will also give consent when possible, including MCFD consent).

Evaluations: There are four evaluations. The counsellor or social worker conducts a pre and post program evaluation to demonstrate the results of the program to the involved agencies. These evaluations are not conducted with the youth. The pre and post evaluations use the weekly observations from the sessions (Facilitator's Wrap Up), along with the youth's feedback from the midpoint and final evaluations. The third and fourth evaluations are brief and ask youth for their feedback on the program and whether there are noticeable changes in their lives. Examples of the evaluations by youth are in the appendices (Appendix C and D).

Discussion of the youth's strengths and individual goal setting begins at the screening interview and is followed up on throughout the program. Appendix A gives an overview of possible goal setting questions to pose with the youth.

Stakeholders Evaluations

As described during the screening interview, two of the evaluations will use pre and post measures. These will be tailored to the specific needs of stakeholders and the youth involved. The intent of these evaluations is to measure the effectiveness of the program in relation to change in the youth. Evaluations will incorporate the youth's goals (such as less fighting at school), desired school and RCMP outcomes (such as more empathy towards others or less negative involvement with RCMP) and Native Friendship Centre objectives (such as making gains towards a healthier lifestyle). All stakeholders will review the pre and

post evaluation forms. This allows the community to support and celebrate the youth's goals and accomplishments, and brings different perspectives on the youth's gains.

Youth Evaluations

Youth participants will be given a midpoint and a final evaluation to collect their feedback on the program and reflect on personal successes. In order to take precautions with how evaluations are used and perceived by the youth, facilitators may use a more interactive method to gather feedback for the midpoint and final evaluations. An option to the written form (Appendix C and D) would be to ask the group each question and allow each to indicate his response using signals. For example, youth could stand to one side of room if they found the lessons very useful, in the middle if the lessons were somewhat useful or to the other side if the lessons were useless. Gestures such as thumbs up, sideways or down are another option. If youth permit it, facilitators can record the feedback by taking photographs and these can be given out at the follow up session as a memento.

Family Reference

The Family Reference section is listed as an option at the end of each session with youth. These topics are given to incorporate youth sessions into the home environment and connect with family members.

Post Evaluations

The program counsellor or social worker meets with the stakeholder committee to review the post-evaluation successes and progress each youth has made. To aid this, refer to Personal Strengths Post-Evaluation (Appendix B).

In their final group evaluation, youth report on their progress with their goals along with support of the facilitators' weekly wrap up notes. All information is presented and discussed openly with the stakeholders at the table. Plans for connecting youth with future

services are developed and the committee takes responsibility to ensure each youth receives services as discussed.

Group Huddle Follow up Sessions

Two weeks after the end of the group, invite all youth members to return to participate in a follow-up session. At the end of this follow up session, invite youth to join at the end of the school term (December and or June) to complete a last follow-up session.

Alumni youth are invited to join in the next rotation of the program to participate and share their experiences of the group with new members, choosing what sessions they want to join in again. Facilitators and school staff will provide support by reminding the youth when to come again.

The BEAT: A Gang Prevention Program Manual

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The BEAT Session # 1 - Respect

This session is to provide an overview of the program, setting the stage for the sessions and topics to come. The program's purpose, code of conduct and expectations on how the group will run are also covered. Youth will review their personal goals. A main focus of this session is to build rapport between facilitators and youth and with youth amongst each other to create a welcoming foundation.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop teamwork and communication skills
- Identify group participant's goals
- Develop group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #1

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome with icebreaker (20 mins)	To create welcome and safe environment and begin building rapport. To provide and clarify program overview with the group.	Music (CD player or iPod with speakers) Optional deck of cards Display items to represent each activity in today's session such as rubber chicken (activity), basketball (recreation), mug of hot apple cider (snack), etc.	
Program Respect (20 mins)	To discuss the group's purpose and ways the program will provide help. To openly discuss group respect and a code of conduct needed to run a safe and open-minded group for the youth to be comfortable in.	Chart paper and markers Question box	
Activity (5 mins)	Develop and increase group cohesiveness.	Facilitators will need to choose and organize supply materials needed. Review resource: http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf	
Recreation (35 mins)	Team building to develop and increase group cohesiveness.	In gym or outdoors with floor hockey or basketball equipment	

Snack (30 mins)	Discuss healthy eating choices and the importance of food preparation skills.	Option to provide cheeses, crackers and warm apple cider	
Group Planning - Respect (20 mins)	What can facilitators hope to see from youth on a weekly basis, and for youth to think about setting their own goals.	Paper, pens and clip boards Five Step Ladder handout Interview – Goal setting for youth to review	A and E
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.	Sit in circle to discuss	
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators discuss with each other and document on positive progress of each youth. Documentation on progress aids in final evaluations.		
Optional Family Reference	To connect today's group session with family work.		

Welcome

To create an open and trusting environment all senses need to be stimulated in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background that is of interest to one or more of the facilitators or youth in order to help stir conversation amongst youth. Youth will be anxious about the group and may not comprehend all that is being said. The use of visuals helps build a framework of what to expect. A display of items that will be used in each activity in today's group will help stimulate the senses (i.e., rubber chicken for ice breaker, basketball for recreation, cup of cider for snack, etc.).

Begin with facilitators and youth sitting in a circle. Facilitators begin with introductions of themselves and share their personal interests along with their interests for being a part of the program.

Icebreaker

Facilitators will need to take time to read the group's level of anxiety and proceed with their best judgement on what type of icebreaker to use with the group; facilitators are welcome to use an icebreaker of their own choice. Remember to have fun! Facilitators will need to introduce the icebreaker and explain how the game works to the group.

Note: Facilitators need to be genuine in their interactions with youth and to be aware of their roles as mentors to the youth. What said and how you speak with the youth will impact your relationship with the youth. Keep youth involved and engaged in the activities and everyone is safe.

Suggested icebreakers:

- Open with a musical game where participants walk around the room to music, stopping when the music does. At this time a facilitator shouts out a question to ask the person closest to you, such as, what is their favourite colour (other questions can be what is your favourite meal, or sport, or car, etc)? Where were you born? Do you have siblings, if so how many? The point of the ice breaker is to lighten the mood and lessen the anxiety in a group's first meeting by relating to one another. Facilitator's must also participate with the youth in the icebreaker.
- Have youth paired up and each pair draw a card from the deck. Depending on the card drawn the participant will be asked to answer a certain number of questions (similar to those in the prior activity). Cards numbered two to nine cards mean two to nine questions, a Jack is three questions, a Queen give the individual the choice how many to answer, a King means someone else chooses the amount of questions (max. six), and for an Ace the facilitator chooses the amount of questions to answer)

Finish the icebreaker activity with one facilitator identifying common theme(s) in the group to promote group cohesiveness.

Program Overview And Respect

Discuss with the group what they recall from the screening process regarding the group's purpose. Also discuss what are the participants' initial thoughts about the group and what do they hope to learn or achieve.

Discuss with the group confidentiality including how it is tempting to talk about with others about what happens in the group but the importance of ensuring that personal stories are not shared with others. Trust is something that is built overtime and everyone is accountable to each other when in the group. What is said in group stays with the group.

Discuss the concept of respect towards others in group setting. Ask the group to consider how a code of conduct based on respect is important, and how it might be upheld in the group. Highlight everyone has a role to support one another. Ask participants to brainstorm rules they want to have in the group, keeping mind what will help build trust amongst one another. One option is to use a five finger contract that can be used as a metaphor and visual for the group for the core group values in the code. Codes of conduct can be general or specific; use what is most relevant for the group. Use chart paper to record the groups input. Suggested questions to ask the group are:

- How do you think we should treat each other in this group?
- What steps should we take to include everyone in the group?
- What should we do if someone leaves the group during session?

Question Box

Have a question box available for the youth to enter questions anonymously. Have pens and slips of paper ready and visible for participants to use. The question box is optional and needs to be accessible. Let the youth know that questions written and entered in the box will be read by the facilitators after each session, and they will answer the questions at the beginning of the next session.

Activity

An activity to help build group cohesiveness is chosen by the facilitators (group juggle, human chain challenge, etc).

Activity should be brief and physical. A good resource is *the 40 Ice Breakers for*

Small Groups produced by Grahame Knox which can be found online at: http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf. Review this resource to see if any would suit The BEAT. After the group activity, debrief the highlights of the activity and see if the group would enjoy trying this activity at another session. Make note to repeat activity at a later session if youth ask for it.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Facilitators provide a healthy snack for participants (such as cheeses, crackers and fruits). First, discuss with the youth what healthy foods they enjoy and dislike. The snack component of the program will allow youth to help learn life skills in food preparation, while practicing healthy eating. Discuss how the group will rotate with two helpers in food prep each week and ask for the first pair of volunteers for next session.

Note: In supplying foods for the group aim to please most needs with the snack. Many youth might not enjoy fruits and vegetables. Facilitators should look at this as an opportunity to introduce participants to new foods and consider challenging them to take one bite of something new or unique. For example bring in dragon fruit, lemons, cranberries, melons or pair raw foods with a complimentary flavour such as apple and peanut butter or pears and white cheddar. Food preparation will follow any food allergies or dietary needs noted in the screening.

Group Planning – Respect

Discuss the program overview with the youth, and what topics will be brought up in the group (relationships, influences, beliefs, norms, identity, conflict resolution, how to deal with anger, stress, isolation, communication skills and transitions in life). The program also offers a time for recreation sports after school and provides additional supports as needed (referral services).

Facilitators will discuss current expectations for youth to attend on a weekly basis. Review the five step ladder and ask for the youth's feedback on tailoring the ladder to suit their own needs (Appendix E). Discuss what completion of the program might look like for some participants (attending program until all sessions are completed, attending half sessions on a regular basis, etc.). Youth are asked to think about setting one minor and one major goal for participating in the group. Ask the youth what success looks like to them and how the facilitators or the group can help them achieve it. For example, completing something fully, or getting it halfway done, or giving it a try are all examples of success. Ask the youth how they know when they are successful? Facilitators discuss their role in the group to help each youth succeed in his goals.

Next, have an informal discussion about what is currently important to youth. Potential topics include hobbies, interests and relationships. Facilitators can make links within the group using similarities to build cohesion and evoke goal-setting ideas. If there are signs of connection between youth, consider pairing off and having partners interview each other about their goals for The BEAT. Ask the pairs to think about the goals they set during

the screening process and what they might want to add or change.

Discuss with the youth the five step ladder and if youth are interested in using the ladder structure as reference for their own goal setting (Appendix A and E). Have the pairs write down their answers. Then after have a group discussion about a few of the goals set. After allow time for the youth to reflect on their goals and change their goals as they see fit.

Group Debrief

Facilitators and youth sit in a circle and discuss the highlights and the lows in the group that day. Facilitators may choose a feedback topic to help youth engage in conversation such as what they liked about the ice breaker or snack, name one thing that they would like to change in the group (such as, more time to talk with others, or less time with snack break), etc.. Note desires expressed and see if the program can accommodate them.

At the dismissal of the session, one facilitator leads the majority of the participants to the door while the other facilitator stays in the main room with the remaining participants (if any). Youth will need to be escorted out of the school building and ensured they have been picked up or follow their plan of departure (such as walking home, older sibling picks them up etc.).

Facilitator's Wrap Up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

Today's topic focussed on setting a respectful environment along with goal setting. Discuss with families their strengths as a family unit and individually what they bring to the

family. Families discuss how these strengths are (or can be) strengths to help move the family towards their goals.

The BEAT Session # 2 –Relationships

This session provides an overview of what makes a relationship healthy. This session also continues to build rapport between facilitators and participants and amongst participants.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop teamwork and communication skills
- Discuss the importance of relationships
- Develop awareness of healthy and unhealthy relationships in youths' lives.
- Increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #2

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (15 mins)	Make objective to keep an open atmosphere by answering questions and ensuring youth understand what the group's purpose is.	Question box Feeling words	F
Activity (10 mins)	Increase group cohesiveness.		
Recreation (30 mins)	Team building and increase group cohesiveness.	Gym or outdoors, sport equipment	
Snack (30 mins)	Life skills in food prep, serving, budgeting and planning.	Juices, fruits, granola (low in sugar)	
What Makes A Relationship Healthy (45 mins)	Look at what relationships mean to youth: the good, the bad and the ugly.	Circles handout Internet and projection. Use of a culturally appropriate TV show for the group	H
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To transition to the session's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators discuss with each other and document the positive progress of each youth. On-going documentation on youth's		

	progress to aid in final evaluations.		
Optional Family Reference	To review the importance of healthy relationships and how relationships evolve over time.		

Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

While in a circle ask the group to state in one or two words how they felt about the last session. Write a list of emotions and feeling words on the board for youth to use as a reference (refer to Appendix F for ideas).

Activity

From Knox's 40 icebreakers for small groups - Chocolate Chomp. Note that in rare cases a youth cannot eat chocolate so have an alternative food or choose an alternative icebreaker from Knox's 40.

Ask everyone to sit in a large circle on the floor. In the middle of the circle place a large unwrapped chocolate bar on a plate, along with a knife, forks and three items of clothing: gloves, scarf and a cap. Each person in the circle takes a turn at rolling a dice. On throwing a six they run to the middle of the circle, put on the items of clothing and try to eat as much chocolate as possible. However, they can only cut it with the knife and pick it up with the fork. As soon as someone else throws a six, they run to the middle, put on the gloves, scarf and cap, sending the first person back to the circle. Continue until all the chocolate is eaten.

After the group activity debrief the highlights of the activity and if the youth would enjoy trying this activity at another session. Take note and repeat activity at a later session activity if successful.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth a vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate with youth, show enthusiasm, and support youth on both teams.

Snack

Today's snack is prepared by two youth helpers and a facilitator. Suggested foods include sugar free juices, exotics fruits slices (pineapple, dragon fruit, etc.) and granola bars or energy bars. The group can start with the fluids while the rest of the food is being prepared.

Facilitators can discuss that while eating some food like chocolate bars is not a “bad” food, it is one only to eat as a treat once in a while. Compare two food labels, one of the chocolate bars used in the chocolate chomp and another from the juice or granola. Highlight the fat, sugar and sodium and compare the differences. Let the group know in another session they will take a more in depth look daily intakes of what the body needs.

Discuss with the group the need for food safety procedures and why procedures such as hand washing, tying hair back and keeping perishable foods cool when served are necessary. Discuss with the group that over the next several sessions an interactive website on caring about food safety will be shown (<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/food-safety-module/files/home.htm>).

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session’s snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

What Makes A Relationship Healthy?

Ask the group what qualities do they appreciate in a friendship and why? Discuss qualities of a good friendship (such as, someone that listens, similar interests, cares about you, etc.). After some discussion, ask what makes a poor friendship (lack of understanding, aggression, too much teasing/yelling, silent treatment, etc.). Facilitators speak about how some friendships change over time and ask youth to reflect on their earlier friendships from grade one compared to their friendships today. What are qualities that have remained the same and what qualities have changed? Then ask the group to discuss the question, “How do we know when a friendship is no longer healthy or good for us?” Facilitators support youth as they explore their thoughts. Ask the group, “What makes a best friend?” Discuss common themes that youth present in these discussions, such as qualities like, trust, respect, loyalty, humour, etc. Discuss why these qualities are important.

Next, further the discussions by asking a series of questions (select most appropriate questions):

“If we have an unhealthy relationship how do we end the friendship?” Facilitators jot down ideas from the group on the blackboard. Ask the youth if a friend has ever dumped them and if it was over a period of time or suddenly? How did it make them feel? Is there anything from the experience that they respected about the manner it was handled in? What are ways to stand up to or get out of a friendship to end it? Discuss ideas without judgement including stated ideas such as ignoring the other person, becoming active in other healthy activities, gaining new friends or directly speaking with the friend about the situation.

Next, using the circle template paper (Appendix H), ask the youth to write down two of their supports, friends and family members, inside the upper two circles and list qualities that they like and dislike about them. In the middle circle, instruct the youth to look at qualities where their friends and family overlap. List those qualities in the middle circle and include their supports’ communication styles (aggressive, passive, assertive).

Ask youth to share their comments from the middle circle, asking if they can see similarities between their friends and family. Have an informal conversation about their responses. Are there qualities the youth see in friends and family that are important to them?

Next ask the youth, “What if your relationship isn’t healthy with your family for reasons like substance use, lack of communication skills, baggage? Who or what do you rely on to be a support in your life (books, movies, friends)? Who is a role model to you?” If

youth cannot think of healthy qualities in their family and friends, ask the youth to think of healthy qualities they would like to see in their family.

Group Debrief

Group participants are asked, “Who was your role model when you were younger?” Give a thumbs up if they are still your role model today or a thumbs down if they aren’t. Discuss if time permits.

Facilitator’s Wrap Up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual’s progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator’s are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

For the parents, ask them to list healthy relationships they had when they were their youth’s age, and ones that they have today. What qualities did you appreciate that have remained over the years and why is this important to them?

The BEAT Session # 3 – Let's Communicate

This session builds on healthy relationships by putting communications skills into practice.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop teamwork and communication skills
- Increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #3

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (10 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box Feeling words	F
Activity	Increase group cohesiveness.	Chosen by facilitators	
Recreation (30 mins)	Team building and to increase group cohesiveness.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	Life skills in food prep, serving, budgeting and planning.	Prepare snack planned by last week's helpers. Optional snack: hummus/healthy dips, carrots, rice crackers and small bok choy	
Let's Communicate (45 mins)	For youth to recognize their communication style and practice new skills for conflict resolution.	Chalkboard, chalk or chart paper and markers Assertiveness handout Video projection, computer with Internet connection	G
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at		

	after core group work.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators discuss and document on positive progress of each youth. On-going documentation on progress to aid in final evaluations.		
Optional Family Reference	Awareness building for family communication and seeking areas to improve upon.		

Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

While in a circle ask the group to state in one or two words how they felt about the last session. Write a list of emotions and feeling words on the board for youth to use as a reference (refer to Appendix F for ideas).

Activity

Facilitators bring in their own or researched ideas. The activity should be brief and involve movement. A good resource is the *40 Ice Breakers for Small Groups* produced by Grahame Knox which can be found online at:

http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf

Suggestion: Telephone game. Start with one person whispering a message and passing it along to the next person in the same fashion. Last person who receives the message states it out loud to see if it is correct. Debrief activity relating to how good communication skills are needed on a daily basis.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Prepare and serve food planned by last pair of helpers for today's healthy snack. Suggestion: Hummus or other healthy dips with rice crackers, carrots and small bok choy.

An option for the group is to work through the several modules from BC Ministry of Health on food safety. Facilitators can discuss with the group that over the next several sessions an interactive website on caring about food safety will be shown for everyone to

learn about at: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/food-safety-module/files/home.htm>. Each module will take approximately fifteen minutes.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

Communication skills

Discuss how resolving conflict is largely based on how we communicate. Discuss the differences between passive, aggressive and assertive styles of communication. Ask youth to look over the handout provided and identify their communication style (Appendix G).

Discuss the importance of being assertive in conflicts with friends or family. Facilitators can give an appropriate example from their lives and how they use assertive communication. Discuss the following points as tips to being assertive in resolving conflict. From Harper (2004).

- Being assertive is setting limits and allowing room for the other's perspective.
- Being assertive is validating and letting the other person tell their story, ensure safety and stay future-focussed when discussing an issue.
- Validate and keep focussed on the problem at hand (not several that have built up over time).
- Resist defending self. Validate and prioritize the issue at hand and finding a solution.
- Create safety and use "I messages" (I'd like..., I prefer., I feel...).

To put today's discussion into practice, read out the scenario below for youth to act out using the three different communication styles. Youth are allowed to try the scenario several times if needed.

Scenario

Sam doesn't want to have his brother hang out with him tonight. Using passive, aggressive and assertive styles, allow youth to take turns being Sam telling his brother his wishes. Facilitators can make this a challenge for youth with recognition given to each youth for something unique about their approach. Awards can be made for things like handling the situation with the most respect, timidity or harshness, creativity, or for strong acting. Prizes can be given to all youth to highlight the strengths of each.

Body language. Discuss with the group that being assertive is not only in what we say but how we act. 90% of what we are saying is taken in from body language. Discuss what body language is, and allow for demonstrations of how body language has a bigger impact than spoken words.

Have the group watch a few minutes of a TV show on mute and see if they can still follow the conversation. Ask the youth what type of body language cues they pick-up on. Play the same clip over again with sound and see how accurate the youth were.

Discuss with the youth how watching a person's actions says a lot about them and how they will treat others, and how this can help screen for red flags with friends.

Deep Breathing

Discuss the importance of remaining in control of thoughts and being able to settle oneself down when being triggered. Reinforce that this is a huge strength and an invaluable skill. Ask the group to discuss ways participants calm themselves when angry.

Introduce a few grounding exercises with the group such as asking someone to name five red objects in the room, or five sounds they can hear. Note that grounding exercise should be conducted with the participant's eyes open and speaking out aloud, allowing the youth to connect with the present moment and their surroundings. Next, review deep breathing technique using a mindful stance. Ask youth to sit quietly, upright and with legs uncrossed, have a soft gaze or closed eyes, and allow thoughts to melt away. As a group, practice the stance and the deep breathing, taking five seconds to fully inhale and then exhale over a three minute duration.

Debrief by asking how the deep breathing felt, and who could take five seconds or longer (and who was shorter). Discuss how clearing the mind is important to calm oneself, and try the exercise again. This time give prompts to the youth on letting go of thoughts using guided techniques such as catching oneself thinking and resetting to thinking about nothing, or focusing on the breath as it comes in and out of the lungs, nose, and mouth, or letting ideas float away like a bubble in the air, etc.

Group Debrief

Group participants are asked to share what made them think during today's session?

Facilitator's Wrap Up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

Take a snap shot of the family's communication styles and perceptions in a sculpture. Using an adapted Virginia Satir's sculpting method, ask family members to take turns

creating a common scene with family members that demonstrates how the family functions or communicates at home. Ask the family to comply with whatever the sculptor asks of them when designing the scene. Begin by asking the sculptor to create a scene with posing family members of what a good day in the home looks like. Debrief and then ask them to create a sculpture of what a bad day looks like. Debrief and allow family members to continue creating various suggested scenes, or ones of their choosing. If this activity is done, it is important that it is skilfully facilitated and any issues raised be handled appropriately such that no harm occurs through the activity.

After the activity allow time for the family members to process the sculpting. Ask members to comment on what ideas, thoughts or feelings came up for them as they completed the exercise. What did they learn or find interesting about themselves or another family member?

The BEAT Session # 4 – Communicating

This session builds on what are healthy relationships by exploring communication skills.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop communication skills
- Increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #4

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (10 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box Feeling words	F
Activity (15 mins)	From members to look to alternative methods to communicate with one another.		
Recreation (30 mins)	To increase group cohesiveness and build fitness skill.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	To refuel after school and after physical recreation. To help build life skills in foods.		
Communication skills (40 mins)	For participants to explore healthy communication skills to seek and build healthy relationships.	Paper, pencil crayons, sharpener Video clip of (TV show) The Simpson's family	
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators note on positive progress of each participant.		
Optional Family Reference	Building awareness to family communication skills.		

Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

While in a circle ask the group to state in one or two words how they felt about the last session. Write a list of emotions and feeling words on the board for youth to use as a reference (refer to Appendix F for ideas).

Activity

Split the group into two and play Charades. Debrief after the activity and talk about how supporting one another to be expressive can evoke more understanding from others when compared to not expressing thoughts or emotions. Let the group know that today's topic is about expressing emotions.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Suggested snack: smoothies with low fat milk, yogurt or silk soya and fruits.

Return to Canada's food guide at the "others" food category. Discuss why these foods are meant for occasional consumption as a treat and not daily.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

Communicating

Begin today's session in a circle. Open the group with a conversation on how we can communicate directly and indirectly so the group understands that we express ourselves in many more ways than just words (e.g., what we wear, tone of voice, our body language, our choices and behaviours, etc.). Next, ask the group in what ways do they express their emotions to others indirectly or directly? How do you let others know when you are stressed out, angry, tired, annoyed, etc.? Ask participants if anyone has ever misread their message? What happened and what was the experience like? Break group into pairs and ask them to use three different tones of voice when asking the other person the question, "Can I talk with you right now?" Debrief activity examining the different meanings behind the tones and what people felt.

Practicing listening skills

Discuss the importance of listening skills, which helps strengthen our decision-

making. Listening actually creates a workout for the front of our brains. When we actively listen to others we are helping build a direct pathway to the front of our brain that helps sort through information, emotions, and options in order to make decisions. The more accurate the information we have the more accurate we can be in our communications with others.

While youth are still in pairs ask them to interview each other asking two questions:

What is a positive experience and what has been a hard decision in your life?

After both youths have answered these questions debrief with the entire group asking people that were listeners to sum up what their partner said and what emotions stood out for them?

Pairs will need to ask their partner if they can share personal details to the larger group. If not then general themes will be used.

Perspective Taking

Understanding what another person is feeling takes time to get good at. Perspective taking is about stepping into someone else's shoes, as though you are experiencing it yourself. This helps us understand a person's behaviour or situation. Perspective taking helps you communicate, be better friends, and negotiate solutions.

The Talker and The Listener Exercise

Group exercise. Have a variety of small objects with different textures (a rock, pine cone, feather, shell, marble, etc.). Ask for half the group to be a "talker" and half to be a "listener." With the listener blind-folded, the talker describes an object (out of view of the guesser) using as much detail as possible without stating what it is. The listener listens to what is being described, trying to imagine what it feels like in the hands of the talker, and guesses what the object is. Facilitator can prompt the talker by asking them to describe the object's colour, shape, size, lines, and edges (hard, soft, etc.). Rotate through all volunteers.

Debrief the activity looking at how this exercise is related to expressing our emotions. For example, anger can range from mild to extreme. How would you describe your anger to someone: its size, shape, weight, colour and temperature? Can you imagine what an emotion feels like when someone else is feeling it?

Lastly, show a clip of a family argument from Simpson's TV show. Ask the youth to watch for and describe the behaviours the characters' communication styles during an argument. "What did they notice?" "What types of emotions were conveyed by the characters?" "When and where did communication break down between each other?" Ask the youth to think of what ways of using direct communication to negotiate a level of fairness to all members involved, refer to the skills practices earlier in the session.

Optional: Showing gratitude

Facilitators will need to assess if this would be a beneficial exercise. If the youth have a hard time identifying someone or something they are grateful for, it may stir up negative feelings. When we feel thankful and appreciated our bodies react by calming down, feeling content and sometimes feeling more motivated. Doing good deeds also gives a feeling of satisfaction and over time give us a positive attitude toward school and others, opening our minds up to learning new things.

Using paper and pencil crayons allow the youth to sketch out an object(s) or person they are grateful for. After have a group discussion asking each youth in the group to explain why they are grateful.

Lastly, pose a challenge to the group to complete by next session. Ask the youth to express

gratitude to someone they know and report back at next session.

Group Debrief

Buddha time! Take time to practice deep breathing for three minutes as a group. Instruct the youth to try tuning out the room's noises (clock ticking, furnace running, people outside of the room) and focus on just their breathe without thinking about anything else. After the exercise remind the youth that the group is coming to a close soon and ask for youth to write down suggestions on activities and snack ideas for their last session.

Facilitator's Wrap Up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

Explore with the family what family chores are delegated in the house and the arguments that arise around chores. Identify with family members what directions are clear and might be unclear in expressing or receiving directions to completing chores. Work through communication skills of active listening, perspective taking, body language and tone, etc. After, have family members discuss one common argument regarding a chore with each member playing the role of as the listener, the speaker, and the coach. Each member is allowed time to discuss their perspective about the issue and negotiate a solution.

The BEAT Session # 5 – Influences (What it Means to be a Man)

This session builds on healthy relationships by exploring influencing factors that shape our identity.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop teamwork and communication skills
- Discuss larger concepts that shape who we are
- Increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #5

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (10 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box Feeling words	F
Activity	Increase group cohesiveness.		
Recreation (30 mins)	Team building and to increase group cohesiveness.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	Life skills in food prep, serving, budgeting and planning.	Healthy grains vs. less healthy grains Food for Thought handout	I
Influences, What Does it Mean to be a Man? (45 mins)	For participants to discuss societal pressures on male stereotypes and to reflect on their own lives.	Chalkboard, chalk or chart paper and markers Video projection machine with internet connection	
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators discuss with each other and document on positive		

	progress of each youth. On-going documentation on youth's progress to aid in final evaluations.		
Optional Family Reference	Awareness building to media influences.		

Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

While in a circle ask the group to state in one or two words how they felt about the last session. Write a list of emotions and feeling words on the board for youth to use as a reference (refer to Appendix F for ideas).

Activity

Facilitators bring in their own or researched ideas. The activity should be brief and involve movement. A good resource is the *40 Ice Breakers for Small Groups* produced by Grahame Knox which can be found online at:

http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Prepare and serve food planned by last pair of helpers for today's healthy snack. Suggestion: Provide a debatable food topic such as, white sandwich bread versus whole grain, or soya milk versus cows milk. Allow the youth to read the food nutrition labels to compare and consider the pros and cons of each. Refer to Appendix I for supplemental resource on wheat.

An option for the group is to work through the several modules from BC's Ministry of Health on food safety: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/food-safety-module/files/home.htm> Each module will take approximately fifteen minutes.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

What Does it Mean to be a Man?

Briefly review the prior session. Ask youth what they recall about resolving conflicts? Did anyone notice when they were being passive, assertive or aggressive? Did anyone try to communicate differently? How did this turn out?

Open group discussions about the statement, “What does it mean to you to be a man”? Discuss gender stereotypes that can impact how we act and what we wear.

Create three columns on chart paper. Ask the group to list examples of movies, TV shows or ads that portray men (i.e., Batman). Write out the responses from the group on the chart paper in first column. In the second column write the type of behaviours men show. In the third column write the responses to the question, “What are things said by people when you are not acting “like a man”? Ideas put forward may include wimp, pussy, etc. Slang is appropriate in this context to explore the emotion it conveys.

From the first and second column, discuss these generalized expectations (stereotypes) and what problems can be caused for those listed in the first column. What can happen in such a person’s life? Facilitators discuss with the group how many youth their age struggle physically and emotionally if their body type does not fit these expectations. How do stereotypes affect us?

Discuss male role models that aren’t stereotypical and see who the participants come up with. Facilitators should be prepared with several male role models that are culturally relevant to stir conversation, such as modern day hip/hop or rappers/singers, actors, philanthropists, etc.

Ask the youth to describe what these men have done with their lives and have provided to society. Discuss what these men look like, act like, use images of them.

Next, start a new chart with two columns. In the first column, write responses to the question, “How are gangs portrayed in the media (movies, music, etc.)?” In the second column, write responses to the question, “How do you or other people respond to these images, ideas and songs?” What are similarities between “being a man” and being a in gang (highlight stereotypes focused on masculinity)? What are stereotypes and not true? What are the underlying issues for members to join a gang? What does it really mean to be a man?

Lastly, show the movie trailer *The Mask You Live In* on YouTube from therepresentationproject.org (total running time of 3:10 minutes). Have both the youth and facilitators to write down on a piece of paper what emotions they felt when watching the video. Ask the group to consider what it would feel like if they did express these feelings to a friend or family member. Would they be accepted or ridiculed?

Group Debrief

Group participants are asked to describe their thoughts on the video trailer – *The Mask You Live In*, using one or two words.

Facilitator’s Wrap up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual’s progress on the five step ladder.

- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

This activity focuses on awareness of media influences in our lives. Ask the family to pay attention to newscasts, shows and videogames that depict gangs as they watch TV throughout the week, and keep a tally of the amount of coverage and the general messages portrayed. Ask the family to describe how similar or different the people portrayed in the newscasts were to them, and any impact on them when watching the people portrayed in the news. Then, discuss the following research with families.

Media is a powerful tool that transmits information and news, and the ability to shape opinions. Knowing facts and the context from fiction are important filters and tools for youth and families to be equipped with to help support one another.

Grekul and LeBoucane-Benson (2008) reported on the influence and impact media holds regarding recruitment of youth into gangs. Wyrick and Howell (as cited in Chatterjee, 2006) described the media influence on youth as a misunderstanding, labeling and mistrust of a gang function and stereotypical gang activity that is further glorified as a rewarding lifestyle in the media. These misunderstandings are fed by the fascination and terror of the public of violent gang activities creating a surge in public concern and awareness (Fin-Aage & Tusinski, 2007; Grekul & LeBoucane-Benson, 2008). A study regarding print media showed the media's portrayal of gang violence lacked the bigger concern of social development such as poverty, systemic and social issues that need to be addressed (Finn-Aage & Tusinski, 2007; Sorinmade, 2012). What are a family's opinions regarding gangs and the impact they have in the Prince George community. What are ways parents can combat media influences?

The BEAT Session # 6 – Norms

This session builds on healthy relationships by exploring influencing factors.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop teamwork and communication skills
- Discuss larger concepts that shape who we are
- Develop and or increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #6

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (10 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box Feeling words	F
Activity (5 mins)	Increase group cohesiveness.		
Recreation (30 mins)	Team building and to increase group cohesiveness.	Gym or outdoors, sport equipment	
Snack (30 mins)	Life skills in food prep, serving, budgeting and planning.	Marshmallow rice balls and dried fruits	
What Is A Norm? (30 mins)	To bring awareness to societal and family norms and ideas on when norms need to be shifted.	Internet, computer, projection Facilitators choose a selection of culturally relevant media clips on norms	
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.	Paper and pens	
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators note on positive progress of each participant.		
Optional Family Reference	Building a variety of methods to teach, support and parent children and youth with their house chores.		

Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

While in a circle ask the group to state in one or two words how they felt about the last session. Write a list of emotions and feeling words on the board for youth to use as a reference (refer to Appendix F for ideas).

Activity

Facilitators bring in their own or researched ideas. The activity should be brief and involve movement. A good resource is the *40 Ice Breakers for Small Groups* produced by Grahame Knox which can be found online at:

http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth a vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support the youth on both teams.

Snack

Prepare and serve food planned by last pair of helpers for today's healthy snack. Suggestion: "porcupine" rice marshmallow balls with toothpicks of dried and fresh fruits stuck in the balls.

Discuss with the group the many jobs and careers there are in the food industry including chefs, sous chefs, nutritionists, servers, fast order cooks, recipe makers (e.g., that find new recipes to make use of rice cereal) and so forth. The more a person learns about food and its qualities, the more they can do with food and gain new skills. Even if it just to make a tastier meal at home!

An option for the group is to work through the several modules from BC's Ministry of Health on food safety: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/food-safety-module/files/home.htm>. Each module will take approximately fifteen minutes.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

What Is A Norm?

Facilitators begin today's discussion on norms by viewing a few of the selected media clips of family norms such as, Family Guy, Modern Family, Simpsons, etc. Show a couple of clips and discuss the norm it demonstrates asking the youth to identify other norms in the show. Then look to specific norms of societal, local (Prince George community) and their own family cultural norms to discuss.

Examples are listed below if needed to help stir discussions:

Societal norms

- Most youth graduate from grade seven when they are 13 or 14 years of age.
- People don't steal from each other.
- Westerners eat three meals a day.

Local Prince George norms:

- Most people stay indoors when it is dark and cold out.
- Substance use is common for youth (alcohol and drugs).

Family norms:

- Mom always eats at the table.
- Everyone is quiet at bedtime.

Next, divide the group into three smaller groups ask each group to brainstorm a list of Prince George community and family norms on chart paper. Ask the groups to now think about what type of norms exist about substance use. Have a group discussion about how these norms affect and possibly pressure other people to conform. After the lists are created, ask if any youth can relate to others' family norms and why.

Ask the smaller groups to regroup into a larger group and form a circle for a group chat. Have a group discussion about how norms can shape us. When possible, relate back to points listed on the chart paper or from last session regarding what it means to be a man.

Discuss with the group if norms are helpful to know when getting to know a person. Why or why not? How can norms be harmful to us or others? Lastly, discuss how norms can shift. What does it take to make a new norm? Give examples, such as, most children are cared for by extended family members (aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.) or at daycare centres nowadays– how did this change happen? Refer to changes in the workforce, economy, education, etc. Last, ask the group if there are any norms they would want to change today?

Group Debrief

Group participants are asked to make a wish so big it could change the world. Ask what each would wish for. Paper and pens are given to participants to take their time and think about their answers. Participants are asked to share their wish with the group. Discuss how their wish would impact their friends and family.

Facilitator's Wrap Up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How

- are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

Responsibility at home. Every family member has a responsibility to the home they live in. The majority of life skills with children and youth are learned at home.

Think about when you were growing up and what your chores involved. Think about how you learned to do them and how you can help teach, support and parent your youth about house chores. There are benefits to having children involved in helping around the house from an early age.

The BEAT Session # 7 – Anger

This session builds on ways of exploring emotions, and how emotions can impact our actions. Anger is a normal reaction when frustrated and upset. Today's session focuses on identifying what happens in our bodies when we are angry, and how to safely express anger.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop initial skills in understanding and handling anger
- Increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #7

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approximate time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (5 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box Feeling words	F
Activity (20 mins)	Increase group cohesiveness.		
Recreation (30 mins)	Team building and to increase group cohesiveness.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	To refuel after school and after physical activity. To help build life skills for healthy eating.		
Anger (30 mins)	Learning preventative measures to manage anger.	Paper and pens	
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators note on positive progress of each participant.		
Optional Family Reference	To learn preventative measures to manage anger	Paper and pens	

Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

While in a circle ask the group to state in one or two words how they felt about the last session. Write a list of emotions and feeling words on the board for youth to use as a reference (refer to Appendix F for ideas).

Activity

Pillow Beat Down

This exercise is to support the youth to explore healthy and safe ways of expressing their anger. Create a circuit of stations for youth to try different exercises in releasing pent up emotions (tension/anger/sorrow). Even if a youth isn't feeling pent-up emotions, encourage them to try the stations and see who can do it with the most style. Facilitators will need to offer a cool down exercise to help the group calm down from the activity. One option is to have a group walk outside as a cool down.

Station one – twist a towel, or pull one with another youth/facilitator (tug-of-war).

Station two – pound a pillow or mat with your fists or a tennis racket

Station three – scream into a pillow (louder will gain more style points)

Station four – have a temper tantrum on your bed/mat

Station five – growl, howl, wail, laugh, cry, yell, or any other kind of noise and movement.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Provide a healthy snack such as hummus and veggie dips with reduced salt and fats served with pita or rice crackers.

Talk about the importance of looking at labels on packaged foods and what the daily intake means. Note that reading can be problematic with some youth and adjust the lesson if needed to focus looking for clues on packages that gives important information to assess the products nutrition. Point out the salts, fats and sugars in products and examine what happens when you combine several products to make a single meal (such as, a sandwich with bread, cheese, mayo, processed meats, etc). Examine the total sodium, fats, and sugars in a meal.

An option for the group is to work through the several modules from BC's Ministry of Health on food safety: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/food-safety-module/files/home.htm> Each module will take approximately fifteen minutes.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

Anger

Begin today's discussion by exploring warning signs of anger including what they look like and feel like in the body (i.e. tired, hungry, tense body, clenching hands or teeth, etc.). Discuss each person's own warning signs and how to recognize them. Explore what warning signs come first so building anger can be recognized early. Discuss techniques to help discover subtleties in your body when you are feeling tense or getting upset. Facilitators are welcome to discuss their own body cues to help stir group conversation.

Anger Scale

Next, ask the youth to write down their body cues and adapt their warning signs into a 5 point scale using words or illustrations. Give the example of an emotion scale:

1. being at peace (deep slow breathes)
2. feeling pretty relaxed (smiles, no tense muscles)
3. feeling upset (neck muscles tighten, palms get sweaty)
4. being angry (teeth clench, heart pounds quickly)
5. feeling rage (overwhelmed and body going flaring around fighting someone).

Allow time for youth to write their own personalized scale and ask for everyone to share their scale. This exercise is to allow the youth to become aware of their triggers. Ideally with this awareness youth will be able to intervene at earlier signs and prevent a blowout of anger. Youth can be offered the option of acting out the warning signs on their anger scale rather than writing them out so that the activity is more active and interactive.

An option is to have a discussion on Cognitive Behaviour Theory or Mindfulness to help the youth put into context how awareness allows them to control their thoughts and emotions which lead them to redirect their actions. This helps to prevent overreactions by intervening at earlier warning signs of anger.

Building Awareness

The next step is to look at cues that trigger frustration and unresolved conflict such as things that have built up over time in a relationship. Ask the youth to list an event or trigger that causes an emotional response that registers on their anger scale. Ask the youth to look at the paper and see if there are any patterns they notice (do these events happen at a certain time of day, or when with or without someone?). Lastly, ask the youth to take time to be aware of what might be triggers for them throughout today's session and note them on the back of the paper of their anger scale.

Deep Breathing

Facilitators will need to discuss the importance of remaining in control of thoughts. Being able to settle oneself down when being triggered is a huge strength.

Ask the group to discuss helpful ways for someone to calm down when angry? Discuss a variety of techniques including music, exercise, food, drawing, dance, etc. Afterwards, ask the group if they have ever tried deep breathing. Ask youth to demonstrate the technique if they are familiar with it. Demonstrate how the technique is used and discuss using a mindful stance to practice deep breathing (to sit up quietly with legs uncrossed (to allow oxygen to move throughout the body), soft gaze or closed eyes, etc.). Have the group practice the stance and the deep breathing, taking five seconds to fully inhale or exhale over a three minute duration.

Debrief by asking how the deep breathing felt, and who could take five seconds or longer (and who was shorter). Discuss how clearing the mind is important to calm oneself, and try the exercise again. This time give prompts to the youth on letting go of thoughts using guided techniques such as catching oneself thinking and resetting to thinking about

nothing, or focusing on the breath as it comes in and out of the lungs, nose, and mouth, or letting ideas float away like a bubble in the air, etc.

Last, discuss with the group that although we can be aware of our anger, it may be hard to always understand why we feel it. Anger can be a result of exposure to a traumatic event which can leave us feeling unsafe, or anger can be a way of responding to other emotions like hurt or fear. It is important that we learn to find safety with someone and explore ways to work through hard things that have happened to us, or hard emotions.

Facilitators offer referral services, and all youth can ask to speak with any one of the leaders during or after group. Remember the anonymous question box can be used to ask any type of questions. Just let the youth know that you'll support them or can help find them support they are looking for.

Group Debrief

Ask the youth to name one activity they did in group today and to rate it with a thumbs up or thumbs down.

Facilitator's Wrap up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

Ask the family to identify warning signs that hint at building anger. This includes physical and physiological triggers (thoughts, emotions, teeth grinding, etc.), looking for cues that trigger frustration and unresolved conflicts that may result in angry outbursts. Seek and

identify patterns of being angry. Is it during a certain time of the day such as when hungry, at work, at home, with someone?

Discuss with entire family the idea of creating a vocabulary list of emotions to help each other express anger in alternative manner. Drawing pictures with the emotion list below can be used for family members to point at when words won't flow.

Discuss ways parents deal with anger and how parent can calm himself or herself down when upset? Explore how techniques can be shared with the children.

Demonstrate and practice deep breathing technique with a mindful stance. Debrief asking how the deep breathing felt. Discuss how clearing the mind is important to calm oneself and try the exercise again using prompts to the family to let go of thoughts and focus on the breath coming in and out of lungs, nose and mouth.

The BEAT Session # 8 – Conflict Resolution (the power of negotiating)

This session introduces ways of recognizing needs and resolving conflict.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop initial steps in conflict resolution skills
- Identify misunderstandings by using communication skills

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #8

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (15 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box Feeling words	F
Activity (10 mins)	For members to look for alternative methods to communicate with one another.		
Recreation (30 mins)	To increase group cohesiveness and build fitness skills.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	To refuel after school and physical recreation. To help build life skills.		
Conflict Resolution (40 mins)	For participants to explore resolution skills and how to resolve conflict fairly. To put into practice school wide respect or conflict resolution program, and review its steps in scenarios outside of the school community.	Conflict scenarios to be given out to participants Reference for facilitators to learn about the school wide respect or conflict resolution program	J
Group Debrief (15 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators note on positive progress of each participant		

Optional Family Reference	For family members to be familiar with conflict resolution skills and to practice them in the home with the family.	School conflict resolution program to be given out in hard copy to families for reference	
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Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

While in a circle ask the group to state in one or two words how they felt about the last session. Write a list of emotions and feeling words on the board for youth to use as a reference (refer to Appendix F for ideas).

Activity

A suggested activity is the Sort-Them-Up game. Divide the youth into two groups and ask them to line themselves up from the shortest to tallest and see which group does it the quickest. After, do another round of the same activity without words. Lastly, ask the youth to line up from youngest to oldest without using words. After, discuss with the groups the processes they used to complete these tasks. Discuss what types of communication skills were used including body language, gestures, signals and written cues. Note that people have a variety of ways to communicate, solve problems and complete tasks. Knowing how to express oneself is sometimes about experimenting and using a different approach to a situation.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Provide a healthy snack such as low fat, low salt hot dogs, whole wheat buns, or make toasted bagels with cheese.

Discuss with the youth that the average amount of calories for males ages 11-14 is 2500 to 3000 calories per day and is dependent on an individual's daily physical activity levels.

If the group has not done so already, work through one module for the BC Ministry of Health on food safety <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/food-safety->

[module/files/home.htm](#) Each module will take approximately fifteen minutes.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

Conflict Resolution

Begin today's topic by staging and dramatizing a conflict between two of the facilitators over a minor concern, perhaps who's turn it is to help with clean up after the snack. Demonstrate communication skills that help resolve the situation, and a compromise or win-win outcome. Turn to the group and discuss what just happened.

Conflict resolution is about finding ways to create an understanding between parties involved. The better you are able to communicate your concerns with others, and hear their concerns, the better the chance you have of coming to a positive solution for both.

Conflict resolution is a skill that is helpful in every aspect of our lives, from negotiating house chores and deciding who's turn it is to play a game, to wages when you have career. The trick to finding a resolution is to give space and time to think about it, and being to talk it out with the parties involved.

Six Step Guide to Resolving Issues

Write on the board the following six-step guide to resolving issues:

1. name the issue and get the facts
2. describe its impact
3. look at what you want to resolve and why
4. open the floor to ideas
5. negotiate your point of view
6. find a outcome that is acceptable to both

Point out the importance of negotiation skills. These skills can help you be better understood, respected and able to achieve your goals. If possible, list examples of famous people that are known for their negotiating skills (use culturally relevant examples such as Bono from U2 who uses negotiation skills to raise awareness on a variety of issues including AIDS relief in Africa). If a person or a rock band can help make changes through negotiation, this is powerful stuff!

STAR

Let's look at the basics of becoming a negotiator. Use the acronym STAR (Stop, Think, Act, and Responsible) as a tool to talk about how to resolve conflict and negotiate.

1. Stop what you are doing, saying, and thinking. Pause and reset to avoid being impulsive and reactive.
2. Think of what the issue you have with that person is, and what choices you have to discuss the concern with them on level playing field (being calm and rational).
3. Act on your best idea by using the six step guide to resolving issues.
4. Be responsible for your actions, even if you made a mistake. This will help build your reputation as a good, fair negotiator.

Next, review the six step guide to resolving conflict and practice how they can be used in the following scenarios. Facilitators will act out the first scenario below including resolving it to demonstrate the process to the group. Explain that the group will then go

through each step of their own scenario to practice resolving a conflict with the skills discussed today.

Practice Scenario

Mark is being teased about his new shoes by his friends. He is trying to roll with the punches but when they tease him and make him look like a fool in front of the girl he has a crush on, he is furious and wants to punch every one of them.

Then split the youth into three groups. Give each group one of the following scenarios to act out and resolve (Appendix J). Ask each group to practice acting out the scenario in their group, encourage participants to embellish the stories as they see fit before working through its resolution.

Group Debrief

Ask the group what the world would be like if there was no conflict. Finish with pointing out the some conflict is good as it makes you find new solutions and make positive changes.

Facilitator's Wrap up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

Today's topic focussed on conflict-resolution skills. Family members are given information about conflict styles and conflict-resolution strategies and encouraged to speak about how conflict is handled in the home. Discuss what areas of communicating their needs and emotions they are interested in working on. Individual and family work is given to practice new skills.

The BEAT Session # 9 – Isolation, Loneliness - what to do when you feel alone?

This session explores coping skills when feeling lonely, down, or anxious.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop coping skills
- Increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #9

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (15 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box	
Activity (10 mins)	For members to look to alternative methods to communicate with one another.	Optional: paper and pens	
Recreation (30 mins)	To increase group cohesiveness and build fitness skills.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	To refuel after school and physical recreation. To help build life skills in foods.	Canada food guide for each youth	
Loneliness (45 mins)	Today's session will focus on loneliness, stress, anxiety and what youth can do to help prevent and cope with it.	Check List for Unfriendly Behaviours PG Youth Activities sheet Group access to computers and internet	K and L
Group Debrief (20 mins)	To create a transition to the group's end. Allow facilitators to assess where youth are at after core group work.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators note on positive progress of each participant.		

Optional Family Reference	Building conflict resolution skills.		
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Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code. If no questions recap from last session by asking if anyone gave further thought on what the world would be like with no conflict.

Activity

A suggested activity is Desert Island. Give everyone paper and pens and describe the following scenario: You are about to be sent to a deserted island; write down the top five items you want to bring with you. Allow time for the youth to think of ideas and then ask for volunteers to share what they choose to bring with them.

After ask youth what is the first thing they would do if they were saved and returned home.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Suggested snack: low fat yogurt sprinkled with chopped nuts or fruit (be aware of any allergies).

Discuss with the larger group how to plan for a weeks worth of healthy snacks or meals to try. Break into three smaller groups and using the Canada's food guide plan seven balanced healthy snacks and meals. Review Canada's food guide with the larger group, pointing out the importance of the last two pages. Canada's food guide can be downloaded, printed or ordered free of charge from <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

Loneliness

Begin group discussion by exploring how feeling lonely feels, and how it can drag emotions and energy down, leaving us in a miserable mood and with a miserable outlook on life. Remember how our thoughts impact our emotions and actions? Loneliness is a good example of this cycle of building negative ideas (towards ourselves and others) when we feel

isolated and alone. Loneliness can look different in people. Some people might lack friends and feel lonely, and some may have many friends and still feel lonely. Loneliness can make us feel invisible or that we don't belong. It is important to recognize when we feel lonely and how it impacts us.

You can take steps to help build skills and turn your mood to a positive one. Something that helps is getting involved in the community (clubs, activities) at school or outside of school.

Using the handout on the personal check list from Appendix K ask youth to check off which warning signs might apply to them that might be making it harder to make friends.

Let the youth know if they checked off one, some or all of the boxes listed not to worry as these are areas that can be turned around. Skills can be learned such as active listening, negotiating skills, etc., and this group helps these skills.

First, look at your mood and try making a small step to bring in more happiness. Your mood affects how you treat others and yourself. Try a few tricks to see if it helps lift your mood. Exercise, walking, or try doing acts of kindness can help.

Second, loneliness can be linked to worry. When these worries become tough to manage you could feel anxious or depressed. Being aware of signs of anxiety and depression help prepare a person to take action. Keep in mind what you think can play tricks on us, effecting our mood, body and relationships. As a group, go online to the resource <http://www.dwdonline.ca/realistic-thinking>. This site looks at anxiety and depression and talks about the differences between depressed thoughts and realistic thinking. Allow youth to explore the site and discuss.

Helping to cope with stress, depression or loneliness is about having a variety of tools to use. Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing may help in some situations but not in all. It is important to keep an open mind and try something that you may not normally do in order to relieve your stress or depression. Check out the online resource www.mindcheck.ca. It is for young people to check out how they are feeling and get connected with mental health care services if needed.

Facilitators can remind youth that they are here to support and can be approached for help anytime during group or after.

There are a variety of great online tools that are informative and interactive for youth to use in taking steps towards releasing tension such as:

Kids Help line for teens - <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/Teens/YourSpace.aspx>

With games and tools like Worry Rockets -

<http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/Teens/YourSpace/Worry-Rockets.aspx>

E Couch - https://ecouch.anu.edu.au/new_users/welcome01

Or try a mobile app such as, <http://www.anxietybc.com/mobile-app> that helps track stress levels and offers skills to coping with stress.

As another resource review, Appendix L with the group for community activities that youth might be interested in.

Optional: For facilitators to research about community/civic projects being offered. A variety of community projects have been offered in the past that would interest some youth including painting city banner flags, designing wall tiles for the Paediatric ward at the local

hospital, and city street clean up crews. Look to see if there are any community projects that the group or individuals would be interested in trying.

Group Debrief

Ask the youth for one they did not like about today's talk and one thing that they enjoyed about today's session.

Facilitator's Wrap up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Resource

Awareness of your youth's social connection to others can help you support your child. Focus on one or two areas of social skill improvement that you think you can help your youth learn or practice more at home. For instance, if your youth is demanding and uncompromising, work with him to teach him how to get what he wants by meeting others midway.

Try role playing a scenario to teach your youth skills in making compromises or working towards a win-win outcome. This can bring humour and a relaxed tone in approaching sensitive topics like making friends. Parents can also try using real life examples when out with the youth; parents can privately point out good examples of other youth/children using pro-social skills. Just be aware not to inadvertently guilt your youth by implying that she should be more like someone else's child.

Or

Do a mini lesson on neurobiology to help map what is happening in our brains when we are making decisions and what controls our emotions and motivation. Have colourful pictures of brains to help describe how things work. Discuss with families the three main components in the limbic system (amygdala, prefrontal cortex and hippocampus). Create a visual of the three main components and talk about on how theses components work together and how they affect our decision-making processes. Explore how when the brain can function most clearly when we are calm, content, and how we can help our brain by remaining calm when faced with an issue, such as a conflict, so we can sort out and communicate our needs.

The BEAT Session # 10 – Family/Identity

This session allows youth to examine their self-identity through their family and individual strengths.

Session's Objectives:

- Develop communication skills
- To create a positive self and family image
- Increase group cohesiveness

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #10

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (10 mins)	Answer any questions from the question box, keep an open atmosphere.	Question box	
Activity (15 mins)	For members to look to alternative methods to communicate with one another.		
Recreation (30 mins)	To increase group cohesiveness and build fitness skill.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	To refuel after school and after physical recreation. To help build life skills in foods.		
Identity (30 mins)	For participants to explore their identity and what makes them proud.	Circles handout Large poster paper and drawing supplies, markers, pencil crayons, etc.	H
Group Debrief (15 mins)	Looking at the bigger picture of one's future.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators note on positive progress of each participant.		
Optional Family Reference	To look at family strengths to help meet family goals.	Paper and drawing	

		supplies	
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Welcome

Continue to maintain an open and trusting environment, stimulating as many senses in a relaxing manner. Have culturally relevant music playing in the background and use visuals to create a framework of what will be presented in today's session. A visual display of items can be used to represent each activity (i.e., materials for ice breaker, recreation, snack, etc.).

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Review confidentiality along with the code of conduct and ask if there are any questions or changes to make to the code.

Ask youth to share about their experiences in attempting and completing the challenge set last session (to give gratitude).

Activity

Repeat a favourite activity that is chosen by the youth or split the group into two smaller groups and play a quick game of charades.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Provide a healthy snack such as healthy food from one or more of the group members' culture.

Option: Group lesson can discuss trying new or unique foods and how what we eat can say a lot about who we are.

Brainstorm and plan with the two youth helpers the types of healthy foods to prepare for next session within the given budget. Discuss with the volunteer youth next session's snack, which will help in choosing foods that are appropriate for the lesson. Also discuss with the larger group the next set of youth volunteers that will work in snack preparation.

Identity

Where we come from influences who we are (region, family, ethnicity, etc). Finding out who we are can take a long time to discover, but knowing our strengths and ourselves is also about knowing our family and cultural roots. Facilitators will need to be aware of youth that may find this topic hard and adapt this exercise as needed. For example, youth in care or who have significant substance use concerns in the household may find it be asked to take on a strength-based view of their family. A youth faced with a tremendous amount of loss or feelings of deficits in the family may be triggered. An alternative is to ask youth to think of superheroes or famous people they admire and what qualities and characteristics they can or hope to relate to.

As participants to think about characteristics or qualities that they like about people that they relate to such as family (e.g., meals, sense of humour, closeness to a sibling, family trips, etc.). Using the paper provided, write in one circle on the left about family qualities (Appendix H). Now have each think about his strengths, interests or things that he is good at doing. If he needs help, think back to the screening interview and the strengths listed then.

Write these qualities into the right circle leaving the middle circle blank.

Discuss with the group some of their answers to the questions about family and individual qualities. Then ask the youth to look at overlapping or similar qualities that their family and they have. Look at what is already written in the circles and in the middle circle write down the qualities that overlap and are similar.

Family Crest or Personal Logo

Use the words listed in the middle circle to create a personal logo, or a crest that represents these qualities. For example, a lion could represent courage or being loud, or an owl could represent wisdom or an ability to stay up late—let youth decide on the meaning. Youth can create their own symbols as long as they are not related to a company brand. Youth are encouraged to be creative and have fun coming up with images that represent who they are. Last, ask each youth to name a motto that would be stamped at the top of their logo or crest. Facilitators are encouraged to participate and create their own crest along with the youth.

Debrief about the process and the ideas that lead to the images created. Ask if youth know of an existing family crest or clan and discuss family history.

An alternative to this exercise is to ask the participants, “What do you want people to remember about you 75 years from now?” Using only images, draw a picture based on who you are today (as opposed to when you are rich and famous in the future). For example if a youth is really accomplished at video gaming, perhaps he will want to be known for his fine motor skills, and eye and hand coordination.

Group Debrief

Ask the youth if they were to find a time capsule in the future from themselves now, what would they hope to find in it and why? After the discussion remind the youth that the group is coming to a close soon and ask for youth to write down suggestions on activities and snack ideas for their last session.

Facilitator’s Wrap Up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual’s progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?

- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

List family strengths and look at characteristics and qualities that might be passed down from their parents/caregivers and extended family. Ask what are important qualities that exist or that family members would like to see more of in the home, and draw an image of an ideal family time together.

Debrief about images created by each family member and discuss how their strengths achieve this or could achieve their ideal family time. This activity is to focus on the strengths and skills that already exist in the family and move away from blame.

The BEAT Session # 11 – Transitions

This session is designed to celebrate the group's progress and give closure to the group's completion.

Session's Objectives:

- To celebrate group and individual successes
- To plan for post-program evaluations
- To plan for follow-up sessions (Group Huddles)

Facilitators Guidelines for Session #11

Total session length = 2.5 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (15 mins)	To answer questions and provide a safe and positive space to end programming.	Question box	
Activity (15 mins)	To provide the youth with an opportunity to replay favourite activities.		
Recreation (30 mins)	To provide a fun-filled time.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (30 mins)	To celebrate with a snack feast!		
Transitions In Life (30 mins)	For youth to explore their expectations of upcoming life transitions (high school, group ending, etc). Along with exploring healthy coping skills to deal with stress.	Story board/Comic strip (make three copies for each youth) Cards with personalized messages to each youth Group completion certificates Army dog tags	M and N
Group Debrief (30 mins)	To provide a snapshot evaluation of what the youth thought of the program and to discuss next meeting for post-evaluations and Group Huddles.		

Facilitator's Wrap Up	Facilitators note on positive progress of each participant.		
Optional Family Reference	To provide a safe space for family members to end group process.		

Welcome

Take requests for music or allow youth to bring in their own music to play throughout the welcome and snack and discussion part of the group. Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering all questions from question box (if any). Ask youth to share their initial thoughts about the group and their thoughts now that they are finishing the group.

Activity

Today's activity can be a repeated favourite of the group's.

Recreation

Again ask if the group has a favourite game from a previous sessions that everyone wants to play, or look at changing the setting of the game (e.g., taking it outside no matter what the weather) to make it a unique and fun experience in the spirit of today's last session.

Snack

Keeping with the celebratory spirit, prepare a healthy snack like frozen yogurt with no sugar candies, sugar free cake or items the group voted on for their celebration snack. Consider requests for less healthy foods and discuss with the group about eating high sugar and fats foods once in a while.

Have time for youth to hangout listening to music and enjoying their snack, allow youth to take home any leftovers if desired.

Transitions In Life

Discuss life transitions such as, moving on to high school, puberty, and coming to the end of The BEAT. Transitions happen throughout life and discuss the value of being able to work though, adapt to, and find opportunity in these changes. This can be an opportunity to review the connections between thoughts, feelings and actions. Discuss the type of emotions felt with the group ending. Discuss what participants will do after school now? Facilitators will need to support youth in connecting with community services and clubs as needed. Planning for youth can be done at the post evaluation meeting in a week's time.

Next, explore what coming of age means to youth. Handout three pages of Appendix M and ask the youth to write a movie script, or to depict themselves in a comic strip, showing how they think their coming of age will look like. Ask the youth to include changes that might happen with their mind, emotions and body as they get older or transition to high school.

Discuss self-care when dealing with the stress of life transitions. Have participants share what helps each release tension (such as exercise, listening to music, playing video games, hanging with friends). One option is for the youth to silently act out their script to the group similar to a silent movie or Charades. Discuss the pros and cons of various kinds of

self-care and ask if there are any they haven't tried but would like to.

Ask the youth to continue with their movie scripts or comic strips by adding in self-care activities. What would it look like to try something new to keep healthy?

Last, facilitators present individualized, signed cards to the youth highlighting some of the strengths they saw in action over the duration of the group. Certificates of program completion and Army dog tags with The BEAT Alumni stamped into it is awarded to each youth (key chain or necklace style) in a formal or informal manner, based on what the facilitators think is best suited for the group members (Appendix N).

Group Debrief

In a circle setting, ask the group to describe The BEAT in six words or less. After, describe how the paid facilitator will meet with each participant in the next week to complete the post-evaluation. The youth and facilitator will meet with the screening committee to review their goals, report their progress in-group and make future plans for services as needed.

Facilitator's Wrap Up

After participants have left, review questions from the question box. Discuss and allow time to prepare answers for next session. Always ask for expert help in areas that are not familiar to facilitators (optional to bring in guest speakers if needed). Be aware that facilitators are mentors to the youth and what you say and how you act in answering these private questions will impact your relationship with the youth. Always be youth friendly and professional in answering these questions.

- Briefly reflect and document on each individual's progress on the five step ladder.
- Review individual youth goals and progress made towards achieving these goals.
- Journal any suggested changes to the lesson or feedback on existing activities and communication tactics. Was it culturally relevant? Were the activities effective in achieving lesson objectives?
- What are the group dynamics? How are participants interacting with each other? How are the facilitators contributing to this?
- Did any culture-related issues arise? Any suggestions on how to correct issues?
- Did the session help build cohesiveness? Why or why not?
- How effective were the facilitators in teaching and supporting the youth to process their experiences and learn new skills? Are the facilitators effectively working together?
- Take a moment to debrief on how the facilitator's are managing their own feelings or triggers in delivering the program? What supports or outlets are helping them?
- Any referral services needed for youth at this time? Discuss with supervisor options considered before approaching the youth to ensure appropriate services.
- Prepare for the next lesson including ensuring all elements are as culturally-relevant and engaging as possible to help ensure continued participation and motivation.

Optional Family Reference

Provide a closure celebration session with families highlighting their personal successes at home and in-group. Recap the group's progress and allow time for family members to share their feedback to help improve the family program.

The BEAT Group Huddle #1 - Follow up Sessions

These sessions are to review, reinforce and maintain skills learned in previous group sessions. It also provides a venue for youth to report back on how they are doing and receive support and encouragement.

Objectives:

- Review and help maintain communication skills
- To allow youth to share their personal experiences in using their skills learned in group
- To increase a youth's on-going support in the community and maintain a sense of belonging to the community

Facilitators Guidelines for Group Huddles #1 Total session length = 2 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (10 mins)	Answer any questions, keep an open atmosphere.	Feeling words	F
Activity (15 mins)	For members to look to alternative methods to communicate with one another.		
Recreation (30 mins)	To increase group cohesiveness and build fitness skill.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (20 mins)	To refuel after school and after physical recreation. To help build life skills in foods.		
Review (25 mins)	Discuss communication skills and continue to enhance.	Paper for Anger scales	
Group Debrief (20 mins)	To transition to the end of the group huddle.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	To note the positive progress of each participant.		

Welcome

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle, warmly welcoming them back and answering questions (if any). If there are no questions, review the objectives of the Huddle Group. While in a circle, ask the group to do a check-in on how the last 2 weeks have been and express how they are feeling (See Appendix F).

Activity

Activity can be chosen based on how the youth reports they are doing, or facilitators can use the option of repeating the Pillow Beat Down activity.

This exercise is to allow the youth to explore healthy and safe ways of expressing their anger. Create a circuit of stations for youth to try different exercises in releasing pent up emotions (tension/anger/sorrow). Even if a youth isn't feeling pent-up emotions, encourage them to try the stations and see who can do it with the most style.

Station one – twist a towel, or pull one with another youth/facilitator (tug-of-war).

Station two – pound a pillow or mat with your fists or a tennis racket

Station three – scream into a pillow (louder will gain more style points)

Station four – have a temper tantrum on your bed/mat

Station five – growl, howl, wail, laugh, cry, yell, or any other kind of noise and movement.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate with youth in the sport showing enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Provide a healthy snack such as hummus and veggie dips with reduced salt and fats served with pita or rice crackers.

Discuss if youth continue to read labels on packaged foods and consider their daily intake requirements. For youth that dislike or struggle with reading, the group can examine the marketing of products and explore how accurate the images represent the product. Ask if anyone has calculated products' daily intake values to make a meal (such as, pizza and pop, etc). Review a few product labels by examining the total sodium, fats, and sugars listed.

Anger

Begin today's review on warning signs of anger and what they look like and feel like in the body (i.e. tired, hungry, tension in body, clenched hands or teeth, etc.). Openly discuss with the group the importance of knowing our own warning signs. Discuss techniques to help discover the signs in your body when you are feeling tense or getting upset. Facilitators are welcome to discuss their own body cues to help stir group conversation.

Anger Scale

Review the anger scales by asking youth to create an updated version of theirs.

Building Awareness

The next step is to look at cues that trigger frustration and unresolved conflict such as things that have built up over time in a relationship. Ask the youth to list an event or trigger that causes an emotional response that registers on their anger scale. Ask the youth to look at the paper and see if there are any patterns they notice (do these events happen at a certain time of day, or when with or without someone?). Lastly, ask the youth to take time to be aware of what might be triggers for them throughout today's session and note them on the back of the paper of their anger scale.

Deep Breathing

Discuss the importance of remaining in control of thoughts and being able to settle oneself down when being triggered. Reinforce that this is a huge strength and an invaluable skill. Ask the group to discuss ways participants calm themselves when angry.

Review a few grounding exercises with the group such as asking each youth to name as many green objects in the room as they can, or to name five sounds they can hear. Note grounding exercise should be conducted with participants' eyes open and speaking out aloud, allowing the youth to connect with the present moment and their surroundings. Ask the group if they all feel comfortable to review and practice deep breathing technique using a mindful stance. If so, ask youth to sit quietly, upright and with legs uncrossed, have a soft gaze or closed eyes, and allow thoughts to melt away. As a group, practice the stance and the deep breathing, taking five seconds to fully inhale and then exhale over a three minute duration.

Debrief by asking how the deep breathing felt, and who could take five seconds or longer (and who was shorter). Discuss how clearing the mind is important to calm oneself, and try the exercise again. This time give prompts to the youth on letting go of thoughts using guided techniques such as catching oneself thinking and resetting to thinking about nothing, or focusing on the breath as it comes in and out of the lungs, nose, and mouth, or letting ideas float away like a bubble in the air, etc.

Group Debrief

Sitting a circle ask the youth to reflect and share how life is going for them over the last two weeks. Youth can also choose to give a thumbs up or down to generally state how they are doing. Encouragement and support are given, both by facilitators and fellow participants.

Facilitators discuss when the next group huddle will happen and any business regarding organizing alumni to help with the newest recruits to The BEAT.

Facilitator's Wrap Up

Report on individuals progress, and suggested changes to the session materials to enhance the review session for youth.

The BEAT Group Huddle #2- Follow up Sessions

These sessions are for maintenance and review of learned skills in previous group sessions. It also provides a venue for youth to report back on how they are doing and receive support and encouragement.

Objectives:

- Review and help maintain communication skills
- To allow youth to share their personal experiences in using their skills learned in group
- To increase a youth's on-going support in the community and maintain a sense of belonging to the community

Facilitators Guidelines for Group Huddles #2

Total session length = 2 hours

Activity (approx. time allotted)	Purpose	Supplies	Appendix
Welcome (10 mins)	Answer any questions, keep an open atmosphere.	Feeling words	F
Activity (15 mins)	For members to look to alternative methods to communicate with one another.		
Recreation (30 mins)	To increase group cohesiveness and build fitness skill.	Gym or outdoors with sport and safety equipment needed	
Snack (20 mins)	To refuel after school and after physical recreation. To help build life skills in foods.		
Review (25 mins)	Discuss communication skills to continue to enhance.	Review – Six Step Guide to Resolving Issues	O
Group Debrief (20 mins)	To transition to the end of group huddle.		
Facilitator's Wrap Up	To note on positive progress of each participant.		

Welcome

Facilitators begin session by gathering youth into a circle and answering questions (if any). If no questions review the objectives of the Huddle Group. While in a circle ask the group to do a check-in explain how they are feeling using one or two words (See Appendix F).

Activity

Ask youth to pick a favourite activity or follow with the suggested activity: Pillow Beat Down

This exercise is to allow the youth to explore healthy and safe ways of expressing their anger. Create a circuit of stations for youth to try different exercises in releasing pent up emotions (tension/anger/sorrow). Even if a youth isn't feeling pent-up emotions, encourage them to try the stations and see who can do it with the most style. Remember to have a cool down exercise with the group once the beat down is completed.

Station one – twist a towel, or pull one with another youth/facilitator (tug-of-war).

Station two – pound a pillow or mat with your fists or a tennis racket

Station three – scream into a pillow (louder will gain more style points)

Station four – have a temper tantrum on your bed/mat

Station five – growl, howl, wail, laugh, cry, yell, or any other kind of noise and movement.

Recreation

Group votes on choosing a sport to play in the gym. Facilitators will need to have access to gym equipment and prepare for set up and take down of equipment. Facilitators offer the youth to vote between two sports. Facilitators need to participate and show enthusiasm and support to youth on both teams.

Snack

Provide a healthy snack such as, cheese and crackers. Review basics skills of buying, storing, and preparing foods (cleaning, cooking).

Ask if youth continue to read labels on packaged foods and consider their daily intake requirements. Ask if any of the youth have calculated product daily intake values in making a single meal (such as, pizza and pop, etc). Review a few product labels by examining the total sodium, fats, and sugars listed.

Conflict Resolution

Begin with a review of how conflict resolution is a skill that is helpful in every aspect of our lives, from negotiating house chores and deciding who's turn it is to play a game, to wages when you have career. The trick to finding a resolution is to give space and time to think about it, and being to talk it out with the parties involved. Review the six steps to resolving issues and STAR

Six Step Guide to Resolving Issues

1. name the issue and get the facts
2. describe its impact
3. look at what you want to resolve and why
4. open the floor to ideas
5. negotiate your point of view
6. find a outcome that is acceptable to both

Point out the importance of negotiation skills. These skills can help you be better understood, respected and able to achieve your goals. This is powerful stuff!

STAR

1. Stop what you are doing, saying, and thinking. Pause and reset to avoid being impulsive and reactive.

2. Think of what the issue you have with that person is, and what choices you have to discuss the concern with them on level playing field (being calm and rational).
3. Act on your best idea by using the six step guide to resolving issues.
4. Be responsible for your actions, even if you made a mistake. This will help build your reputation as a good, fair negotiator.

Ask the group to practice STAR using the following scenario:

Steve passes finally passes one of his social studies tests. His teacher asks to see him after class though, and tells him that while he passed the test, he has reason to believe that Steve cheated. Steve is pissed since this isn't true. The teacher doesn't give Steve time to respond, only telling him he'll be watching him more carefully and dismisses Steve. Steve is hurt and livid!

Ask the group to split up in to three smaller group and brainstorm ways Steve can handle this situation using the six step guide and STAR. Review handout provided in Appendix O.

Assertiveness

Discuss the importance of being assertive in conflicts. Facilitators can give an appropriate example from their lives and how they use assertiveness. Discuss the following points as tips to being assertive in resolving conflict.

- Being assertive is setting limits and allowing room for the other's perspective.
- Being assertive is validating and letting the other person tell their story, ensure safety and stay future-focussed when discussing an issue.
- Validate and keep focussed on the problem at hand (not several that have built up over time).
- Resist defending self. Validate and prioritize the issue at hand and finding a solution.
- Create safety and use "I messages" (I'd like..., I prefer., I feel...).

From Harper (2004).

Scenario

Based on ideas and resolutions brought forward with using STAR and the six step guide, Steve decides to speak with his teacher about the incorrect accusation. Using passive, aggressive and assertive qualities, have participants take turns being Steve, telling his teacher his concerns and ideas on how to resolve the situation. Facilitators can make this a point challenge for youth. The youth that handles the situation with the most skill, or by being overly timid or overly harsh wins a prize.

Remind participants how body language influences the message and conveys a deeper meaning. Using this awareness can help you be assertive.

Deep Breathing

Review the importance of remaining in control of thoughts and being able to settle oneself down when being triggered. Reinforce that this is a huge strength and an invaluable skill. Review a few grounding exercises with the group such as, asking each youth to name five blue objects in the room, or five sounds they can hear. Note grounding exercise should be conducted with participants' eyes open and speaking out aloud, allowing the youth to connect with the present moment and their surroundings. Ask the group if they all feel comfortable to review and practice deep breathing technique using a mindful stance. If so,

ask youth to sit quietly, upright and with legs uncrossed, have a soft gaze or closed eyes, and allow thoughts to melt away. As a group, practice the stance and the deep breathing, taking five seconds to fully inhale and then exhale over a three minute duration.

Debrief by asking how the deep breathing felt, and who could take five seconds or longer (and who was shorter). Discuss how clearing the mind is important to calm oneself, and try the exercise again. This time give prompts to the youth on letting go of thoughts using guided techniques such as catching oneself thinking and resetting to thinking about nothing, or focusing on the breath as it comes in and out of the lungs, nose, and mouth, or letting ideas float away like a bubble in the air, etc.

Group Debrief

Sitting a circle ask the youth to reflect and share how life is going for them over the last two weeks. Youth can also choose to give a thumbs up or down to generally state how they are doing. Encouragement and support are given, both by facilitators and fellow participants.

Facilitators discuss any business regarding organizing alumni helping with the newest recruits to The BEAT.

Facilitator's Wrap Up

Report on individuals progress, and suggested changes to the session materials to enhance the review session for youth.

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<http://www.opinion250.com/blog/view/19117/1/gang+crime+summit+action+plan+update?id=143&st=4929>

Appendix A

Informal Screening Interview – Setting Goals

(These questions are to be asked after orientation to the program and are completed with the youth).

Are there any concerns you have about joining The BEAT, such as who else is coming to it? Is there anything that may worry you if you attend? Is there anything you don't like about groups we can help with?

Let's look at your what your strengths are. What type of qualities makes you unique?

Examples could be your skills, things you are good at, resourcefulness, beliefs, supports in your life, etc.

What is something that you would like to get out of The BEAT? What is a goal for you? Or what would you like to get better at or change?

Examples such as life skills (leadership, healthy eating), physical activity (participation, attitude towards others, getting better at a sport), communication skills, social skills, family dynamics (communication, support, resourceful, etc.)

Appendix B

Example of Pre and Post Evaluations

(To be completed by the program counsellor or social worker and reviewed with stakeholders)

Youth's Name: _____ **Age and Grade Level:** _____

Personal Strengths Pre-Evaluation		Personal Strengths Post-Evaluation	
Begin by looking qualities that make the youth unique.		Was there an increase in positive behaviours or outcomes?	List observations or examples.
Overall Strengths (communication skills, being resourceful, beliefs, family support, etc)		Any new strengths developed?	
Physical Activity (Participation, interest, attitude towards)		Yes No	
Life Skills (knowledge about, practice of healthy choices, taking on responsibility, leadership)		Yes No	

Appendix C

Midpoint - Program Evaluation

What do you like about the program so far?

What would you like the rest of the program to look like?

What do you dislike about the program? What would you change?

Appendix D

Final Evaluation – Youth

Overall did you find the lessons useful in your life? *Choose one number from the scale to sum up your thoughts.*

1. Very useful
2. Useful
3. Maybe useful
4. Of little use
5. Useless

Do you feel you have learned a new skill? *Choose one number from the scale to sum up your thoughts.*

1. Yes
2. Maybe
3. No

Do you think The BEAT has helped increase an existing strength of yours? *Choose one number from the scale to sum up your thoughts.*

1. Yes
2. Maybe
3. No

Did you feel understood in the group? Do you feel you have received enough support or guidance?

1. Yes
2. Maybe
3. No

What did you like about the program?

What did you dislike about the program?

Appendix E

Five Step Ladder

Listed below is a modified S.T.A.R.S. five-step ladder that intends to better meet the target youth for The BEAT. The five step ladder will be reviewed with youth individually to see where he identifies his starting point and what he wants to achieve.

When discussing the ladder with a youth, consider comparing the steps to creative titles that a youth can relate to. For example the use of skateboarding terms might be appropriate as listed beside each step below.

1. Initial participation – Pop - attend at least one activity
2. Sustained participation – Carve – attend at least half of the sessions for at least two activities.
3. Skill development – Ollie- youth progressing from one recognized skill level to another within an activity.
4. Individual integration – Frontside - youth using skills learned in group in one or more instances
5. Program incorporation – Kingpin – youth using skills in a variety of settings (home, school, with peers, etc.) on a semi-regular basis.

Appendix F

Feeling or Emotion Words

AFRAID, AGITATION, ASSURED, ANXIETY, AWE, BOREDOM, COMPOSED, CONCERNED, CHEERFUL, CALM, CAUTIOUS, CRAZY, CRUEL, DEFEATED, DEPRESSED, DISGUSTED, DISTRACTION, DISTRESS, DREAD, EASY-GOING, ELATION,

ENRAPPED, ENVY, EXCITED, FEAR, FONDNESS, GLAD, GRIM, GRUMPY, HAPPY, HOMESICK, HOSTILITY, HURT, INSECURE, INTROVERTED, IRRITATION, INTERESTED, JADED, JITTERY, JOLLY, KEEN, KINDLY, LAZY, LONGING, LOVE, LONELY,

MAD, MODESTY, MISERY, NEGLECTED, NIRVANA, NEUTRAL, OPEN OUTGOING, OUTRAGE, OPTIMISM, PANIC, PASSIONATE, PEACEFUL, PITY, PLACID, PUSHY, QUEASY, QUIET, RAGE, RELIEF, REMORSE, SAD, SARCASTIC, SERENITY, SHAME,

SHOCK, SORROW, SORRY, SPITE, SURPRISE, SYMPATHETIC, TENDER, TERROR, THRILLED, TRANQUIL, UNCOMFORTABLE, UNHAPPY, UPSET, VAIN, VANITY, WEARY, WONDER, WORRIED, ZEST

Appendix G

Assertiveness

Being assertive means knowing when to speak up for yourself honestly and respectfully. Being assertive is the “sweet spot” between being passive or aggressive in our communications with others. An assertive person is not too timid or too pushy. Assertive people have the knowledge their feelings and ideas matter as much as the next person’s. Assertiveness shows respect in how we look at others and ourselves.

Assertiveness

- Confidence
- You can give an opinion or say how you feel respectfully
- Asking for what you want or need respectfully
- Disagreeing with someone respectfully
- A belief in yourself, your ideas, feelings and suggestions and the right to express them
- Saying no without feeling guilty
- You can speak for someone else
- Being resilient (able to deal with criticism, rejection and setbacks)
- Having role models for assertiveness
- Knowing your ideas were welcomed or assertiveness was rewarded in the past.

Passive

- Being passive is often feeling like you are being taken advantage of. Common feelings include hurt, anger and resentment.
- Lack of confidence
- Worry about pleasing others or being liked
- Worry whether others will disagree with or reject your ideas and opinions
- Feeling sensitive to criticism or hurt by past experiences when your ideas were ignored or rejected

Aggressive

- Being overconfident (cocky)
- Only your needs are met
- Focusing too much on only getting your opinions expressed
- Lack of consideration and respect for others’ point of view
- Don’t care to listen or ask for input from others

Keep in mind that passive people need assertive social skills from time to time. People with aggressive qualities need passive social skills from time to time. People with assertive

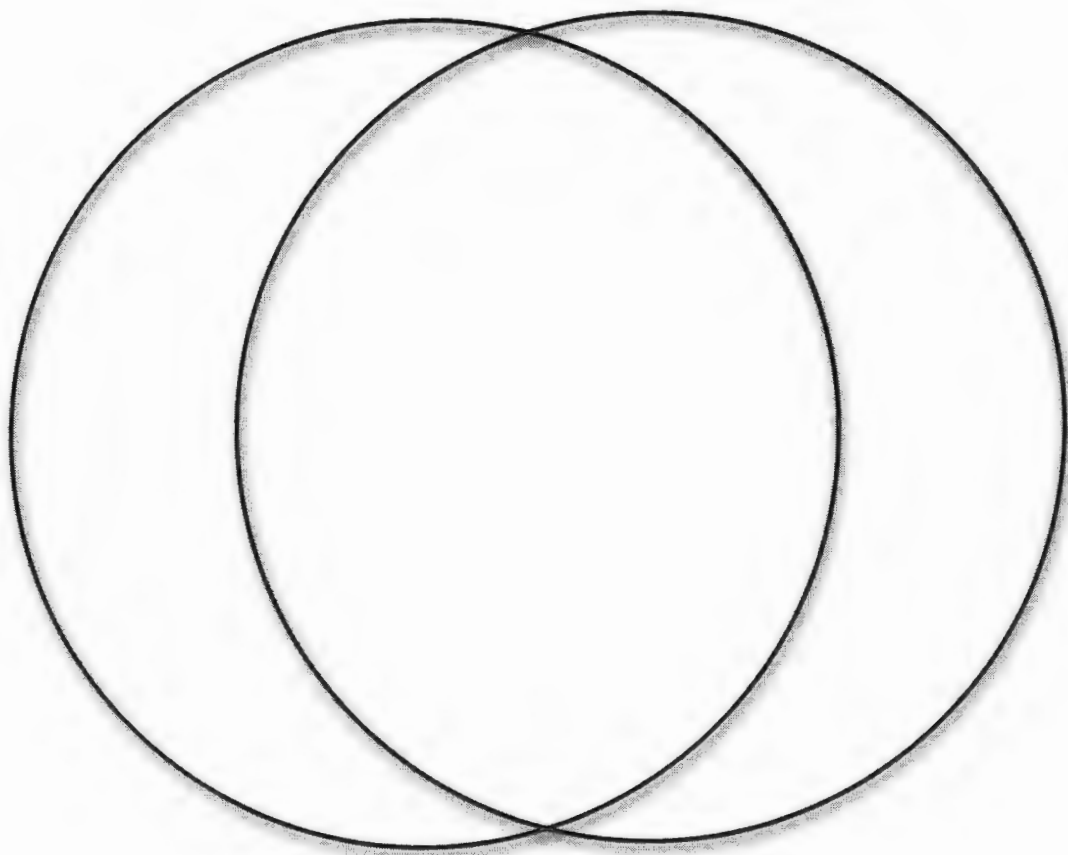
qualities typically balance the need to be aggressive or passive in the appropriate circumstances. Communications skills require practice.

First identify your dominant communication style (aggressive, passive or assertive) and build from skills in the areas that you need practice in to become assertive.

Look at online resources by Lewes (2012) regarding tips for teens to work on their communication style and qualities. Refer to

http://teenshealth.org/teen/your_mind/friends/assertive.html with the group.

Appendix H

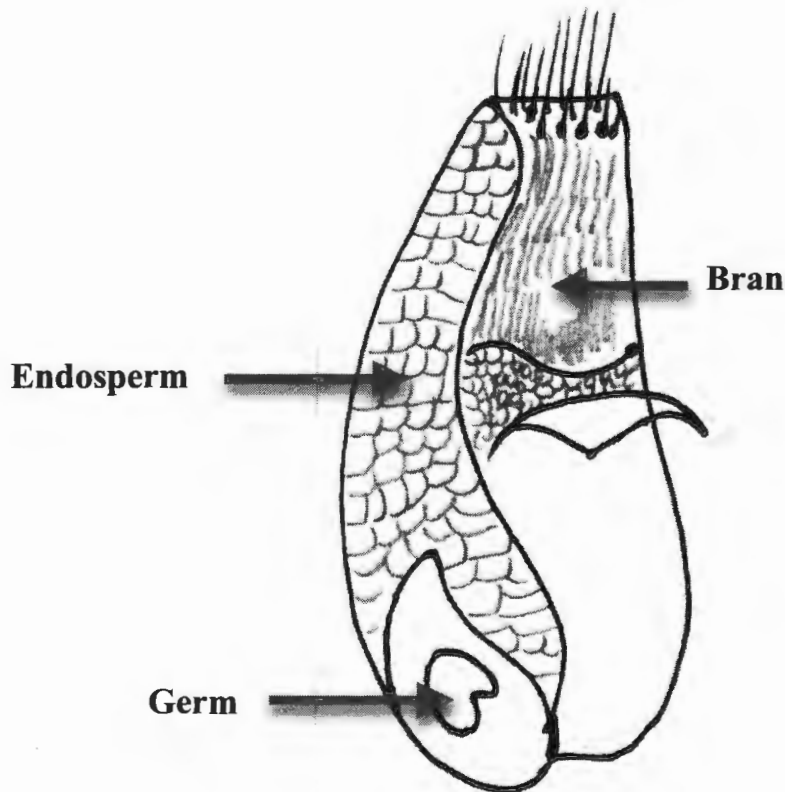


Appendix I

Food For Thought - Whole Grains

Wheat berries have three nutrient-rich parts: the bran (the outer layers), the germ (the innermost area) and the endosperm (the starchy part in between). Whole grain has the entire kernel of the grain: the bran, endosperm and germ. The majority of vitamins and fibre are contained in the wheat bran and wheat germ that is shed during the refining process for whole wheat and white flours. Whole grain contains all of the fibre, iron and B vitamins that nature intended because it does not go through a refining process. White grains/bread take wheat berries and through the refining process strips away most of the vitamins, calcium, iron and fibre (Barley, 2003)

Close up of a Wheat Kernel



Appendix J

Tools to Resolving Conflict

	STAR
Six steps to helping resolve conflict	Stop
1. Name the issue and get the facts,	Think
2. Describe its impact	Act
3. Look at what you want to resolve and why	Responsible
4. Open the floor to ideas	
5. Negotiate your point of view	
6. Find an outcome acceptable to both	

Conflict Scenarios

As a group, try to come up with three different ways to approach Phil, Dylan or Shawn to express feelings and resolve the situation using the six step guide. It is up to the facilitators whether the groups act out the resolution process or discuss it with the larger group.

Scenario #1

Phil tells his younger brother Wade that he will give him a ride to the movies on Friday night so he can go out with his friends. He asks Wade to give him a call for the pick up an hour before he needs the ride. Wade does this but there is no answer when he calls. As a result Wade is furious because he misses out meeting with his friends and seeing the movie.

Scenario # 2

Caleb wants his brother Dylan to come shopping with him for a new hat/cap. Dylan takes Caleb to the mall but ditches Caleb when he sees his older friends there. Caleb is upset and annoyed with Dylan's behaviour.

Scenario #3

Trevor has to share his bike with his cousin Shawn. Trevor uses his bike as his main transportation to school and uses it at the skateboard park for BMX. They have told each other what days they need the bike, but for some reason Shawn doesn't seem to follow the schedule. Trevor is frustrated with the situation and misses out on opportunities to practice his tricks.

Appendix K

Check List of Unfriendly Behaviours

Listed below are some unfriendly behaviours, check off the ones that apply to you.

- ☐ Acts too competitively
- ☐ Acts bossy
- ☐ Makes excuses or blames others when losing
- ☐ Stands too close or too far from other kids
- ☐ Criticizes others often
- ☐ Interrupts others
- ☐ Doesn't feel like or doesn't know how to join in with others
- ☐ Acts immaturely
- ☐ Gets upset and angrily often
- ☐ Switches rules midstream
- ☐ Uses a whiny or loud voice or uses "baby talk"

Appendix L

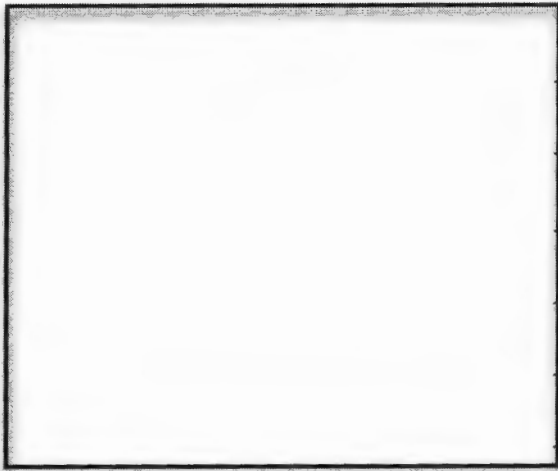
Prince George Youth Activities

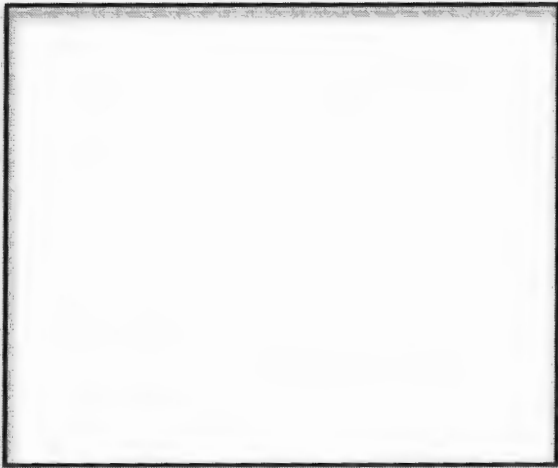
- Cadets (Army and air) (ages 12-18)
- In-school mentoring program (1 hour weekly for the entire school year, leisure based) (grades 1-7)
- Leadership clubs and school clubs in general
- School sports
- Drop-in centre – YAP (ages 13-30)
- Northern STAR program (ages 8-14)
- Skateboard park
- Hart ski hill offers, lessons in snowboarding, skiing, and night skiing for all ages
- Chill snow program ages 10-18 free (one time only enrolment)
- YMCA offers a variety of fun and skill based programs. Check out the website for current programs for youth and children

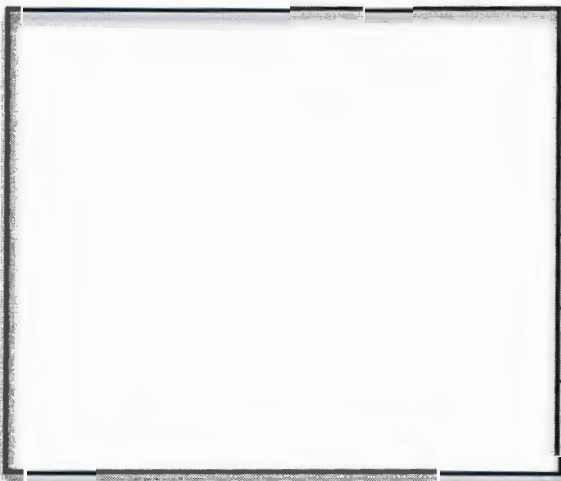
http://www.nbcy.org/health_and_fitness/child_and_youth/index.php

- All YMCA children and youth programs are eligible for Jumpstart funding (which means activities can be partially or fully paid for you). Funding is a first come first serve basis, based on need for children between the ages of 4-18. Also at the YMCA for ages 0-14 there is \$6 drop in fee to use all gym equipment (there is a climbing wall in the kids zone at an additional cost).

Appendix M







Appendix N

This certificate can be printed in landscape

Congratulations

On

Attending and completing what you set out to
do in

The BEAT

(Name of youth)

Date of completion: _____

Facilitators: _____

Appendix O

Review - Six Step Guide to Resolving Issues

1. Name the issue and get the facts
2. Describe its impact
3. Look at what you want to resolve and why
4. Open the floor to ideas
5. Negotiate your point of view
6. Find a outcome that is acceptable to both parties

STAR

STAR a tool to help resolve issues and negotiate. STAR stands for Stop, Think, Act, Responsible (for your actions) .

1. Stop what you are doing, saying, and thinking. Pause and reset to avoid being impulsive and reactive.
2. Think of what the issue you have with that person is, and what choices you have to discuss the concern with them on level playing field (being calm and rational).
3. Act on your best idea by using the six step guide to resolving issues.
4. Be Responsible for your actions, even if you made a mistake. This will help build your reputation as a good, fair negotiator.