

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE EXPERIENCES OF JUVENILE
FEMALE OFFENDERS: SCHOOL, COMMUNITY, AND HOME

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Abstract of a Dissertation by
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Problem: The number of delinquent female youth across the country is on the rise (U.S. Department of Justice, 2007). These young women present unique challenges for their schools, communities, and homes. A Midwest suburb created a diversion program, a Youth Justice Initiative, to address the entire family system of the youth who were committing crimes in their city. There was a dearth of research surrounding the experiences of the young women and the implications for educational programming, specific interventions, and community connections to the school setting.

Procedures: The primary purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of the female participants from 2006-2008 and to apply those findings to my school setting. Letters were sent to all 23 past participants to inform them of my study. Six young women agreed to be interviewed, two parent focus groups were held with nine parent participants, and six additional adult interviews were completed with people who were affiliated with the program in different ways. All tapes were transcribed by a business college student. Each of the 14 interviews was coded and separated into three different documents: girls, focus groups, and other adults. Next, the three subsets were combined into one document. After the second round of coding and member checking, six descriptive themes emerged.

Findings: The six findings indicated theft was the main offense of the females. Second, these young women committed delinquent acts, but experienced cognitive dissonance about their behavior. Next, negative peers, negative boyfriends, and fathers had powerful influence on the young women in the program. Fourth, trusting relationships and the presence of social capital were at the heart of the success rate of the restorative programming. Fifth, the circle process and the utilization of a monitor were the most impactful interventions for positive change. Last, shame was lessened and was re-integrative in nature.

Conclusions: The program is shown to be effective for these young women, and their families. The Youth Justice Initiative program prevents many young women from being adjudicated. This research study reinforced the necessity of the school to partner with the families, outside agencies, and the community to support young people.

Recommendations: There were many program recommendations and ways the school could replicate the effective parts of this program to better serve delinquent females. The referral process itself should be reevaluated. It would benefit the community to examine the services that are provided and to make sure they are utilized by those who are most in need.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

As the principal in an alternative high school, I am overwhelmed by the various emotional, academic, relational, and legal challenges that impede learning for the majority of my students. Through my administrative experiences it has become apparent that restorative justice practices in the school setting can be used to address the inappropriate behaviors that many of my students exhibit. School, community, and home can work together to support the troubled youth in my building, in order for them to be as successful as possible.

Those individuals, who have delinquent behaviors in both the school and community settings, present the most programmatic challenge for me. Resources are scarce and behavioral issues are increasing at a disturbing rate. For example, the Juvenile Violent Crime Index (2007) arrest rates for juveniles increased 12% between 2004 and 2006. At this rate, 1 in every 330 persons between the ages of 10-17 was arrested for a violent crime (Adams & Puzanchera, 2007). In 2007 juvenile females were charged with 357,093 offenses (U.S. Department of Justice, 2008). Juvenile females committed 29% of all juvenile offenses that resulted in a charge in 2007 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2008). Offenses that lead to incarceration for women, such as substance abuse and theft, are steadily increasing according to the U.S. Department of Justice (2008).

In my school setting, I have noticed an increase in the proportion of females who have experienced emotional trauma, academic failure, relational tension, and legal trouble. Delinquent females, in particular, present unique challenges and exhibit different behavior than delinquent males. There is an increasing amount of literature documenting

gender differences in delinquent behavior. When looking at the established risk factors for aggression in boys and girls there are similarities; however, it is also probable that there exist unique risk factors for female aggression as well as differences in the strengths of these predictors (Chesney-Lind & Sheldon, 1998; Funk, 1999; Giordano & Cernkovich, 1997). Female crime, for example, is generally not of a violent nature. Delinquent female youth ages 10-17 are manipulative and more verbally aggressive than their male counterparts. Young women tend to have more acts of relational, interpersonal, and social forms of aggression (Bjorkvist, Lagerspertz, & Kaukiainen, 1992; Crick, 1995) that damage relationships and compromise social connections.

Juvenile female offenders tend to have high rates of trauma experience such as witnessing violent crimes and being confronted with traumatic news (Dixon, Howie, & Starling, 2005). Ironically, chronic exposure to violence may result in a woman turning to violence for emotional security or to substance abuse to numb her feelings (Crimmins, Cleary, Brownstein, Spunt, & Warley, 2000). Consequently, families of these youth also need assistance. According to The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the inability for a family to manage its problems is the number one risk factor for delinquency (Schumacher & Kurz, 2000). Schumacher and Kurz point out that youth who are chronic offenders will generally have at least three of the following issues.

First, the families are disrupted. This means that the family problems create an unstable and overwhelming existence for the child that will often result in the interference of the child's development. Second, children may be raising themselves with very little support and guidance from the parental units or they may have a single parent who is struggling to provide the structure and accountability that youth need. The third

commonality is school failure. Often, the students who are chronic offenders have truancy issues, alcohol, or drug addictions and pre-delinquent behaviors that inhibit their success in the school setting (Schumacher & Kurz, 2000).

In response to increased incidents of juvenile offenses and violent behaviors, schools and communities across America are developing holistic programs that work with the entire family system to decrease the amount of crime that youth are committing. Adams and Puzanchera (2007) state that nationally, schools and communities are working in partnership to address our national juvenile delinquency epidemic. In response to this epidemic, community leaders within a Midwest suburban city created a diversion program to intervene in the lives of its troubled young people. This program brought the community, the families, and the school together to support the juvenile offender. This study began by examining the experiences that the juvenile female offenders who had participated in this diversionary community justice program during the past two years.

Because restorative justice practices are utilized in the school that I work in, I was interested to learn more about these young women and the interventions that seemed to work for them so as to apply those interventions to the school setting. Delinquent young women are on the rise in my school setting and I was interested to learn more about their experiences so I could adjust the programming in the school to not only serve their needs better, but also the needs of the entire family system.

Personal Interest in Juvenile Justice Initiatives

Coming to the school district in this community eight years ago to serve as an associate principal at the local high school, I became affiliated with the Youth Justice Initiative program. This was a logical connection for me, for I have a passion for working with at-risk and delinquent youth. I feel strongly that punitive consequences are ineffective and I am hopeful that restorative practices will become the way we work with the youth not only in the community, but in all of our schools.

When I first became connected with the program, I was asked to serve as a school representative in several of the youth justice circles. I was truly moved by the whole experience. The circles were emotional and moving as families began to truly listen to one another and seek positive solutions. I was amazed at the healing that took place throughout the process. I began to notice that the students who were in the program were changing the courses of their lives. It was at this time that I began to use restorative practices in the school setting as an associate principal. Behavior changes were long lasting as a result and I was encouraged to continue experimenting with this model.

Then, I became the principal of the school district's alternative high school. I worked with the Youth Justice Initiative director to create an entire school that would operate in a restorative manner. From 2005 until the present, the staff that works in the school has been applying restorative processes as a way of working with youth. In looking at our behavior data over the past three years however, I can see an increase in the number of females in the school who have a number of discipline infractions. Many of these young women have truancy issues, are defiant, associate with abusive young men, and often times are in trouble with the law. For this reason, this study focused on

the females in the Youth Justice Initiative exclusively. I wanted to learn more about this type of young women to program more appropriately for them in my school setting.

The Youth Justice Initiative program prevents many young women from being adjudicated. This research study explored the different components of the program and their impact on young women. This data are important for not only the youth justice program, but for my school district. By learning about their experiences and the impact that the programming had on their lives, I will transfer that knowledge to the school setting in which I work.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to learn about the experiences of the female participants of the Youth Justice Initiative program from 2006-2008 and to apply those findings to my school setting. There are many similarities among the girls that I work with in my alternative school and those that are in the community restorative justice program. Additionally, the program addresses the entire family system much like we do in the school setting. I wanted to determine what part of the program seemed to work well for the young women and what did not so as to apply my learning to better serve them and their families in the school setting.

A study such as this, had not been done up to this point. For this research study, it was best to focus on those who recently completed the program, as it is more likely that participants would remember and reflect on recent experiences. Additionally, it was desirable to examine the last two years, for the program had been relatively stable during this time, since there had not been many changes in the program over the past three years. I focused on the female participants, for I have an increasing number of delinquent

females in my alternative high school setting and am curious to learn more about how to create programming that will be effective for other young women with similar issues and behaviors. I was interested in learning about what factors seemed to contribute to a participant having a positive versus a negative experience with restorative justice.

Rationale and Significance of the Study

This case study design provided data that allowed me to gain knowledge about the experiences of the young women who participated in the Youth Justice Initiative program. The program has completed satisfaction surveys for several years, but there has been limited research done to fully explore what the experience was like for not only the young women, but also the adults who were involved in the process in some capacity. Although there is a plethora of information about restorative justice in general, there seemed to be a dearth in the literature about what affect this type of programming has had on youth, especially female delinquent youth. There are very few programs in the United States like the Youth Justice Initiative, so there have been limited studies about diversion programs for youthful offenders.

The satisfaction survey data for this particular program were compiled from 2002-2008 and was summarized in program evaluation documents for every fiscal year. Questions were asked about a variety of experiences, opinions about those experiences, and satisfaction with the process, outcomes, and facilitation of the conferencing (Wright, 2006). After reviewing these documents, the data showed that the program was overwhelmingly well received by the individuals who took part in it. However, it was not desegregated by gender. Additionally, the measurement of risk of each young person in the program was determined using criteria from the research documented in *The 8%*

Solution (Schumacher & Kurz, 2000). Over time the majority of the youth involved in the program were identified as being high risk. An area of further study appeared to be that of recidivism. Wright (2006) acknowledges that no longitudinal data have been collected about the offenders to determine if the program had lasting positive effects.

The reports mention that a critical component of the program is the family class so that the young person can develop better bonding with the family. This proved to be an important component for many of the parents and some of the young people that I interviewed, as well. In the satisfaction survey data (Wright, 2007) some youth also discussed the positive impact that the community service component had on them. Again, this was also something that was mentioned in the interviews that I conducted. In the final program evaluation document (Wright & Stover-Wright, 2008), there is mention of changing the evaluation tool to reflect some of the changes that the program had recently made. Future evaluation tools will focus on the increased level of social capital and the effect that it has on the young person. Cognitive restructuring and educating the participants about the three principles of the mind, consciousness, and thought (Mills & Spittle, 2001) have become key components of the program that need to be evaluated in some manner as well.

I am confident that I will be able to apply what I have learned to the programming that we do in my school building for our young women. There is an increasing amount of literature surrounding the application of restorative practices to the school setting, for districts are discovering that the punitive punishment model of the past is not overly effective with the youth of today. Thus, new and innovative approaches to address behavior issues are being explored. Similarly, components such as the circle process

(Boyes-Watson, 2005b) are not only being utilized to address negative behavior situations, they are also being applied in the classroom as an instructional tool. These data about the experiences of the young women will be shared with other district administrators, so they might be persuaded to explore using restorative practices in their schools. Based on the results of the study, I believe this will be an effective way of working with youth across our school district.

Program Background Information

Additional background knowledge of the program will provide context for this study. The numbers of participants in the program remained fairly steady from 2006-2008. The average number of individuals in the program has been 70. There were 23 young women in the program from 2006-2008 who are now currently over the age of eighteen. Additionally, there were many young people who lived in the community, but offended in a neighboring city. So, accurate statistics pertaining to the number of crimes committed by youth who lived in this particular community were not available. The police department and county were not able to produce reports that gave specific information. The city that this diversion program takes place in does not keep track of how many youth are referred to juvenile court, but the juvenile justice program coordinator does know how many cases she has had per year in her diversion program. It was, however, possible to obtain information about the amount of crime reported in the county in which the community is located.

According to a juvenile court officer supervisor for the county there were 2,530 juvenile complaints from July 1, 2006, to June 30 2007. There were 2, 388 complaints from July 1, 2007, to June 30, 2008. It is not possible to know if individuals were referred

multiple times or if those complaints led to the young person being referred to court. The system does not organize its data in this manner. Consequently, it is difficult to track what happens to these youth. This seemed to be another possible topic in which to conduct a research study and made me wonder about the importance placed on these youth by our county.

Youth crime continues to permeate throughout the community. There are many factors that contribute to this societal ill. Price and Kunz (2003) express that divorced families especially experience to higher rates of juvenile delinquency. In 2000, 31.8% of the homes in the Midwest suburban city in this study had a single mother who served as the head of the household and many of the youth (7%) had truancy issues at school. Many of the young women who were in the juvenile justice program had divorced parents and there was a lot of turmoil surrounding this event. With divorce statistics on the rise, the school systems and the community have noted an increase in a lack of supervision and accountability in the home. Young people are lacking the social capital that they once had.

Positive reintegration (Youth Justice Initiative, 2004) into the community is the goal of the program. According to the first grant report that the program wrote in 2000, the planning board for this particular county conducted a comprehensive strategy process to examine possible solutions to the growing numbers of youth that were committing crimes. As a result, the board decided that there was a need for a juvenile justice intervention that could successfully respond to youthful offenders, limit re-offending, and divert the young people from the formal system. The program was developed to address the gaps in the community's response to juvenile delinquency. Youth who lack social

integration are more predisposed to act in destructive ways and they need assistance in understanding what society's expectations are for them (Wright, 2006). This program set out to assist the young people in this community to learn from their mistakes and to move forward in a positive manner.

Subsequently, this diversionary youth justice program was developed to give support; in particular, to those families who struggled with some type of disrupted family situation that resulted in delinquent activity in the school or community setting. The intent was for the program to be collaborative in nature and to be based on the principles of restorative justice. Two key components required that young people would make restitution for the harm that has been done to the community and that the youth take responsibility for the harm they had done. The intent was for the community to have an active role in the process.

The mission statement of the program was developed as a result of this work. According to the program director, the goal of YJI is to sustain restorative processes in the community to promote healing, increase accountability, and provide support. Youth Justice Initiative participants must want to change their behavior and have admitted to the charged offense. Parents or guardians must give their permission for their son or daughter to take part and the family must agree to participate as well. The person must also make an appointment for an assessment upon becoming a part of the program. The counselor may or may not refer the young person for more treatment. All participants have a drug/alcohol assessment and will submit random urine analysis tests. The benefit of completing the program successfully is that they will not be referred to juvenile court. The goal of the program is to identify the harms caused by the actions of the young

person and to put those harms right. If the program is successful, the young person will take responsibility and repair the damages. If the young person commits future offenses, participation in the program may be terminated.

The young person must have committed a crime in the community in order for them to be referred. Generally, the school resource officers, who are also juvenile detectives in the community, make the referrals. The amount of organization and extra paper work required negatively impacts the amount of referrals, according to the director of the program. If police officers do not feel that the young person is a good fit for the program, they may refer her immediately to juvenile court. This is another area of future study. The history that the officer has with the individual and how cooperative the individual is, are two important factors that are taken into consideration at the time of possible referral. Cicourel (1968) wrote a book entitled *The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice* that attempted to expose the underlying biases that police officials generally have and the effects that those have on the juvenile justice system. This will be discussed in greater length in Chapter 5.

Young people, who do not live in the community, but attend school in the district that the program serves or those who commit offenses in the community but live in another town may also participate in the program. Although some parents would like to be able to refer their children to this program, they have never been able to do so. However, parents or guardians decide whether or not they are willing to commit to the process when the police officer makes a referral. It is not just the student who is involved, but rather the entire family system. Therefore, by accepting the invitation to be in the program, the whole family makes a commitment of time and energy.

There are seven basic steps (Youth Justice Initiative, 2004) that must be followed in order for a student to be a participant in YJI. First, as already mentioned, cases of youth who admit wrongdoing are referred to YJI by the cities police department and are accepted on a case-by-case basis. Participation by the youthful offender is voluntary. When making the referral, the police officers take into account the young person's criminal history and whether or not the individual is cooperative and willing to participate in the program. Next, participants complete comprehensive assessments to determine issues underlying the crime. Third, participation is strictly voluntary. The YJI coordinator explains the process and invites involvement. A home visit is conducted that involves the program director interviewing the members of the family. The program director prepares the young person for the initial justice conference at this time.

Next, the initial justice conference takes place, in which a "circle" format is implemented. The program director calls these justice conferences, for they either take an approach that is more holistic or they focus on accountability. The type of conference really depends on the type of offense that the young person has committed. When a young person has had an offense that involves substance use/abuse, a more holistic approach is used. When a student commits an offense against other individuals, the conference is more focused on holding the youth accountable to those who were harmed. Individuals who represent the school and larger community are often part of this process. Fifth, the youth and the care-givers complete all recommendations from the assessments as well as those agreed to in the youth justice conference. Next, the youth and the care-givers participate together in a 14-hour family class. This is a course that focuses on positive family communication. The last part of the process involves monitors who

complete the accountability plan. Failure to complete the agreement results in the case being referred to juvenile court (Youth Justice Initiative, 2004).

Research Questions

The purpose of the research was to discover what the Youth Justice Initiative experience was like for the female youth that were in the program for the past two years and to apply those findings to my school setting. This was accomplished by interviewing not only the girls themselves, but also parents and other adults who were involved in the program.

The following sub questions guided the study and were helpful in gathering initial data from the three groups of people who were involved in the study: the girls who had been in the program, the parents of girls who had been in the program, and various adults who had a substantial role throughout the duration of the program. This information helped to get a perspective about what worked and what did not work well in the program for the various stakeholders. Procedural information was clarified, impact of the different components was explored, and suggestions for improvement were gathered.

The following sub questions were:

1. What was the impact of the various facets of the program on the female youth: initial home visit, personal visits by the coordinator to the youth prior to the justice conference, initial justice conference and follow up circles (Family Group Conferencing), YJI Family Class, restitution and accountability plan, and monitoring?
2. What factors contributed to their delinquency?

3. Does an increase in social capital allow a delinquent youth to change her behavior in order to then sustain her capacity to live as a responsible citizen?
4. In what ways did the young women experience re-integrative shame?
5. What implications is there that can be applied to the school setting?
6. What are suggestions for the program?

Additional questions were asked as themes began to emerge from the various interviews and I began taking more of a critical theorist perspective (Creswell, 2007). According to Fay (1987) this is a theoretical approach in which the researcher examines social institutions and the struggles of a particular segment of the population. In this case, I found myself identifying a segment of the population that I felt needed to be involved in the program, but was not. Those that are impoverished and have a delinquent uncooperative past with police officials were not the ones receiving services. I asked some difficult and challenging questions surrounding social class and program referrals. I began to wonder if the program was unconsciously geared towards a certain portion of the population of the city. I began to question whether or not those young people who needed the services the most were getting them. I discovered that the gate keepers (Creswell, 2003) of the program, the police officers, appear to not refer those young people who they had previous negative interactions with. Those who are difficult or non-compliant and lack family support do not get referred.

Additionally, I also found myself in an uncomfortable position at times, for the gate keepers are not only colleagues of mine, but they are friends. The political and

power issues that surfaced internally were challenging to process. This is a common response by researchers who conduct research in an area with which they are familiar and have connections. This is explained as “Backyard” research (Creswell, 2003). As I processed all of the information that I had gathered from the various stakeholders, I formulated additional questions and program recommendations to consider in Chapter 5.

Analytical and Interpretive Sub Questions:

1. What themes emerged from gathering data from all of the cases of the young women and what connections to the literature do they have?
2. What are the “unspoken” messages about our society that resulted from the study?
3. Given the feedback, what can be done to broaden these services to the portion of society that need them the most?

The answers to these questions are emancipatory in nature (Creswell, 2003, p.11) for it became very clear that the program is available and utilized by a specific segment of the population and is not available or working well for the rest of the community members.

Introduction Summary

The delinquent juvenile females in our society need effective programming. The Youth Justice Initiative program is focused on providing comprehensive services for not only the delinquent young women, but also for their family system. The program works in partnership with the school, community, and family. The primary purpose of this case study was to discover what the Youth Justice Initiative experience was like for the female youth that were in the program for the past two years and to apply those findings to my school setting. Additional information was needed to assist with the research study

design. In order to gain more perspective on female juvenile delinquents, the components of the Youth Justice Initiative program and the interventions that are effective for them more explicitly, a review of literature surrounding this topic was essential.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Restorative justice is a unique approach to working with those who commit crimes. It seeks to look deeper at the wrong-doing to get to the root of what caused the harm. Restorative practices are built on a much different foundation than our punitive justice system. This literature review serves to provide a general understanding of not only restorative justice itself, but also to enlighten the reader about the various components of the Youth Justice Initiative program, in particular. To begin with, it is important to have a good understanding of the philosophy of restorative justice and why it is a good approach for working with delinquent youth. Second, it would be important to examine the common characteristics of the young people that are generally involved in this programming. Next, it will be helpful to study the various components of the program and how re-integrative shame plays a pivotal role in the process. Additionally, I will describe some effective programs that are similar to the Youth Justice Initiative and lastly I will examine what others view as effective and critical components of this type of programming.

What Is Restorative Justice?

First, it is important to understand what restorative justice is and why it is a good way of working with delinquent youth. Restorative justice is a complex holistic way of working with a person. “Key values of restorative justice are healing rather than hurting, respectful dialogue, making amends, caring and participatory community, taking responsibility, remorse, apology, and forgiveness. It is also a process that involves bringing together all the stakeholders-victims, offenders, and their friends and loved ones,

representatives of the state and the community-to decide what should be done about a criminal offence” (Braithwaite, 2000, p.293).

The criminal justice system uses extrinsic motivation to coerce individuals into changing their behavior and the offender generally feels a great sense of stigmatizing shame throughout this process (Braithwaite, 2000). The offender is focused on her own self instead of what her actions did to another. Stigmatizing forms of shaming are abundant in our society. This type of shaming is disrespectful in nature and the individual is not forgiven. The offender is left to feel like a bad person that has done a bad deed and is left to feel stigmatized (Braithwaite, 2000). “A concern with shame is that it does not encourage offenders to focus on the consequences of the offense for the victim or on the consequences for that wider community of people who are close to the victim, the offender, or both” (Moore, 1993, p.13). Even worse, a person can have unresolved shame. This occurs when individuals feel they have been unfairly judged and the person does not think the event was as bad as what the other person is trying to make them feel it was (Harris, 2006, p.332). Unresolved shame can be very maladaptive. Harris (2006) goes on to tell us that the person may then become obsessed with the negative repetitive thoughts about the event and never resolve their negative feelings surrounding the situation.

Contrary, when the shaming is reintegrative (Braithwaite, 2000) the community communicates disapproval, but the communications are respectful and the offender is sent the message that they are a good person, who has done a bad deed. The offender is forgiven and reintegrated into society. This is the type of shaming that takes place in a

restorative justice approach and is utilized in the Youth Justice Initiative and my school setting.

Restorative practices are becoming more and more popular in communities across America. The basic reason for turning to a different way of working with offenders is that the old punitive offender-centered punishment model is no longer effective. Our system is bursting with offenders that repeat the cycle of incarceration over and over throughout their lifetime. We are building prisons, faster than we are building schools. In his book *Justice for Our Children*, Romig says, “The results were conclusively negative. Casework probation is not effective in the rehabilitation of delinquent youth” (Maloney, 2007, p.216). Social service systems have a deficit mentality. They identify needs and risks and provide services to correct the presumed deficits and dysfunctions (Bazemore, 2005, p.2). This helps to answer the question of why it is important to introduce restorative justice as an alternative to offender-centered punishment and treatment approaches. The partnership between the community and government may need to change in order to evoke powerful long-lasting sociological change. There needs to be, “a significant devolution of authority to respond to crime through balanced partnership between public systems and stakeholders within the community” (Boyes-Watson, 2005a, p.360).

Restorative justice, therefore, is more comprehensive in nature and strives to build a person’s capacity to make behavior change that will be permanent. The shame turns into guilt and is addressed in a re-integrative way. Conversely, a shortcoming of the punitive justice system is that it does not pay attention to outcomes. The punitive justice system is not concerned if an individual is left to feel ashamed and isolated. These

individuals are not given the supports they need in order to reintegrate effectively into society. Maloney (2007) shares that it is preposterous to think that a single probation officer could influence the behavior of over 100 people. Most offenders do not have the skills to cease their negative behaviors on their own. They need intensive supports in order for there to be permanent behavior change (Maloney).

A restorative approach utilizes the voice of the victim so the offender can process from the inside out. The process seeks to demonstrate to the offender, how what they did impacted the various stakeholders. “In a restorative system all parties involved are seen as stakeholders with legitimate needs; the victim requires reparation and restitution, the community needs guarantees of public safety, and the offender needs the opportunity to accept responsibility for the offense, repair the damage done, and be reintegrated into the community (Goren, 2001, p.139). Goren states that there are often three questions the offender must consider: what was the nature of the harm from the crime, what needs to be done to repair the harm, and who is responsible?

Common Characteristics of Delinquent Youth

To begin with, there are many similarities among youth who commit crimes. They are often victims of other offenders and have suffered child abuse, have been neglected or deprived or being raised in a disintegrating family and neighborhood (Bazemore, 2005, p.3). Many young people who have grown up in a violent household are sent the message that in order to survive they must engage in violent behaviors (Zehr, 2005). Often, these youth lack positive connections to anyone or anything. Many feel isolated and are not connected to their school, neighborhood, or the social and religious institutions in their communities (Brendtro & Larson, 2006). It is easy to feel a lot of empathy for these

individuals; for many times they have been victims of abuse their entire lives. Bazemore (2005) cautions, however, that it is important to not forget that these victims are indeed victimizers. Therefore, they may be viewed as social service clients, but they also have broken the law and need other services, as well, that can be met by government agencies.

When specifically looking at delinquent females, there are several commonalities. Young women who offend tend to be early developers. When girls mature earlier, they are more likely to be treated like adults and thus often find themselves in precarious situations. They may be asked to engage in drinking and smoking with older peers or they might be given more autonomy from their parents before they are developmentally ready for the responsibility (Eichorn 1975). Additionally, when girls look older they often find themselves in social contexts where they might have opportunities to participate in illegal acts with older individuals (Haynie, 2003, p. 356). Interestingly, parents often overlook age differences when they have a daughter that is more physically mature for her age and may allow her to date older males, etc...

Interestingly, one common characteristic of many youthful offenders is that they have remarkable resiliency. It is a wonder that some offenders have survived their own traumatic life events. It is fascinating how some children in an extremely dysfunctional home can thrive, while others seem to crumble. Resiliency is defined by Blinn-Pike (1999, p.2) as, "The process of, capacity for, or the outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances." She goes on to say that each child is unique and the level of resiliency exhibited can depend on the particular individual and the environment in which he or she lives (p. 40). Similarly, Werner observed that children who had been raised in poverty and considered "at risk" for engaging in negative

behaviors did better; when positive factors such as the self efficacy, problem solving skills, presence of a caring adult, or engagement in school were present in their lives. If these positive factors were present, they were less likely to be involved in negative health behaviors such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and anti social behavior (Rink & Trickler, 2005).

Resiliency is defined by Newman (2002) as a positive adaptation where difficulties-personal, familial, or environmental are so extreme that the society otherwise would expect a person's cognitive or functional abilities to be impaired. Similarly, Rose and Fatout (2003) affirm that resilient children use constructive, beneficial, and effective methods of coping with stress. These include thinking positively, believing in themselves, and addressing support from family and friends. So, resilient children realize that if they are to be healthy adults, they must have adults in their lives that can be mentors or provide a good example for them.

A compelling question continues to focus on how restorative practices can help youth with these issues. Basically, at-risk youth need the same sort of supports that all youth need. They need supports that build their competencies (Bazemore & Clinton, 1997). Many programs are based on a medical model with a view that there is something wrong with these individuals and a treatment is needed to fix them. The problem with this approach is that these at-risk youth are not given the skills they need to make positive changes in the future (Bazemore & Clinton, 1997). They do not know how, nor are they capable of "fixing" themselves.

Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith (1989) conducted a study and wrote a book about resiliency, called *Vulnerable but Invincible*. They did a longitudinal study of all births in

1954 in Kauai, Hawaii. They were trying to identify what factors led to early morbidity and mortality. After several years of study, they noticed that some children who had many risk factors were actually doing quite well. These young people had several factors in common. These later became known as “protective factors.” Similarly, Bonnie Benard (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of the research and found that there are three central factors that resilient children have that include caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities to contribute. Just like many of the young people that enter the Youth Justice Initiative program, Bazemore and Clinton (1997) noted in his research that many at-risk youth do not have the protective factors they need in order to be successful. One of the most important is that there is some adult or group of adults that legitimize them or make them feel good about themselves and gives them hope that they can be successful.

Even though there is a body of literature that is focused on treating the deficits of at-risk youth, it is more constructive to discover what protective factors or positive attributes assist with the development of a healthy young person. “A substantial body of research associated with adolescence health risk behavior has focused on age, race, ethnicity, family structure, socio-economic status, history of sexual abuse, low self esteem, alcohol use, peer relationships, depression, and parenting styles. But, there has been far less research on the protective factors that play a positive role in helping adolescents combat negative health behaviors” (Rink & Trickler, 2005). Protective factors are important for they may “buffer or protect adolescents from harm by decreasing the likelihood that an adolescent will engage in a high-risk health behavior” (Rink & Trickler, 2005, p. 41) which was a critical factor for the young women who benefited from the youth justice program.

Rink and Trickler (2005) suggests that those individuals who work with delinquent youth should strive to do the following in order to improve the programming that they plan, implement and evaluate: increase interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, promote youth participation, emphasize intergenerational relationships, establish norms and expectations, provide access to information and services and involvement in policy changes (pp. 44-45). This is a multifaceted approach to promoting adolescent health.

Why Use Restorative Practices with Delinquent Youth?

So, what is it about restorative justice practices that make them effective for at-risk youth? According to Fred McElrae (1998), restorative justice is effective for many reasons. First, it is inclusive and respectful. Often these youth and their family members need skill building in the area of positive communication and can benefit from modeling surrounding how to resolve conflict in a constructive way. It is a model of justice emphasizing respect for the people served, in which the offender's remorse, rather than shame, is the object. He goes on to say, "It is not dominated by professionals-the most creative outcomes come from victims and families working together; they will not claim something as their own if it is run by professionals." Additionally, he believes that the process is far more satisfying to victims, for traditionally they have been forgotten. There is an emphasis on the rights of the individual that has been harmed. Howard Zehr (2005, p.27) states, "victims need opportunities to express and validate their emotions: their anger, their fear, their pain." Because it is the way most healthy families work, people more readily understand it. Most families that function in a healthy manner are familiar with working with issues of fairness, punishment, reparation, and reconciliation. For

families that have been operating in a dysfunctional manner, it gives them skills that they can then utilize the rest of their lives.

McElrae (1994) also believes that this approach acknowledges the whole person and capitalizes on the positive attributes a person has. Most people respond well to a process that not only looks at their mistakes or shortcomings, but also takes into account their strengths. This is a comprehensive way of working with individuals that uses a lot of rational and cognitive processes. Feelings of anger, remorse, empathy, and forgiveness are all explored. Locking a person up in a treatment center or prison, does not reform them. Most delinquent youth have a lot of thinking errors and part of the restorative process involves helping the young person to think differently. It is important to encourage positive self-talk and for that young person to change the negative tapes (thoughts) that are playing in their mind. This process is empowering to young people and provides hope for a better life. "If a person's mind is functioning in a way that produces negative thoughts, it makes sense that this person will also experience negative feelings and self-destructive behavior. The opposite is also true. If someone's mind is generating positive, creative thoughts, that person will experience more positive feelings and positive behavior" (Mills & Spittle, 2001, p.115).

This approach also focuses on the strengths that the young person "brings to the table" and is thus considered a strength-based approach. Adolescents, who commit crime, generally have self esteem issues. Educator Sally Northway-Ogden (1999) states that people who act badly, feel badly. When individuals feel zero, they act zero. When we want to know how people feel about themselves, we should look at the individual's behavior. Behavior can give us a lot of information about how a person feels about

herself on the inside. Part of the restorative process involves building upon the strengths of the person to prevent the person from committing delinquent acts in the future.

Likewise, a key component of working with people in a restorative way is to encourage them to feel a sense of empowerment. It is important for the offenders and the victims to participate in the decisions that impact them. This restores a sense of power within both individuals.

McElrae (1998) suggests that it is difficult for the punitive justice system to objectively determine and administer just punishment for all. Teenagers are very concerned about being treated equitably. The restorative approach helps young people feel as if they are being listened to and are a part of the process. Ball writes (2003, p.50), “Restorative justice is a direct, fair and community-based, problem-solving approach to crime.” Working collaboratively with the family, victim and community help to insure that the consequences are just and fair. This is a more positive and hopeful way of working with youth, for collaborative problem solving helps to ensure that the whole community will benefit by the rehabilitation of the youth (Goren, 2001).

A restorative justice perspective presumes that the crime creates obligations and responsibilities (Bazemore, 1999). Obligations and responsibilities require action to repair the harm. Restorative justice practices may be an effective manner to work with delinquent youth, for working with young people for the past fifteen years, I have discovered that most need the support of caring adults to make good choices. Ball (2003) concurs, stating that young people will be more successful if there are positive role models involved in the process that help them to know what the best course of action is.

Lastly, youth tend to value relationships over authoritative rules. Howard Zehr writes (2005) that the distinct difference between participating in the formal justice system and a restorative process is that, “Restorative justice views crimes as committed against victims and communities, rather than government entities” (Ball, 2003, p.51). Howard Zehr (2005) is often referred to as “the grandfather of restorative justice.” He has worked with many different communities around the world to help them embrace this way of working with offenders.

To summarize, a restorative approach is more comprehensive in nature. It is holistic for the goals are: building on strengths, empowerment, emphasis on relationships, emphasis on positive progress (building capacity) and the belief that the professional is a partner in the process-a facilitator, not the one punishing (Ball, 2003). This is an effective process for delinquent youth, for the youth need assistance in all of these areas in order to thrive.

Justice Conferences

One of the key components of the Youth Justice Initiative program is the justice circle conference. Even though restorative justice has only been applied in the school setting in recent years, conferencing has been utilized throughout the world for decades in other facets of our society. In 1989 New Zealand began to use the family group conference to deal with certain care and protection matters, youth justice, and child welfare issues. This gave a lot of power to individuals and groups instead of all of the power resting with the state. Results indicated that reoffending was reduced with youth and there were safer outcome plans in care and protection cases (Moore, 2004).

The United States has followed suit and has been conducting family conferences in different arenas for many years. The goal is to negotiate a settlement acceptable to all parties that includes restoration to the victim and the community for the harm they have suffered, and the opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility and make amends. The emphasis is on reaching consensus and restoring harmony to the community (Goren, 2001). Hudson, Galaway, Morris, and Maxwell (1994) state that the family group conferences seek to treat all those involved with respect and integrity while coming to an agreement on how to fix the harm. This is the guidance that these youth need.

Circle Keeper

Justice conferences are facilitated by the circle keeper and generally continue throughout the entire process in a restorative justice program. Accountability is the purpose of some circles, but they might also serve the purpose of healing. The keeper of the circle makes the decision about which process will be most appropriate for the particular young person and she then holds the space for the circle. She helps people get ready for the circle, plan and arrange the space, prepares an opening and a closing, develops a set of questions, welcomes people and maintains the rituals and the tone during the circle (Boyes-Watson, 2005b). Although the circle keeper facilitates the circle, Boyes-Watson reminds us that, "...keepers neither control the process nor are responsible for its outcome" (p. 200). The offender, their support people, community members and if possible, the victim, are all present. The main questions that are asked by the circle keepers to the group are: "What has happened? How have people been affected? What do we now do to make things better?" (Moore, 2004, p. 82). So, the goals of the circle

process, then, are centered on the offender taking ownership and putting things right with the community and the victims.

Goals of the Circle Process

“The circle process has at least three core benefits for a strengths-based and community-oriented approach to the provision of child welfare services. First, the circle builds families’ capacity to identify their own strengths and improve their ability to communicate among themselves in constructive ways. Second, circles can extend the connections of families to a wider network of individuals in the community. These connections serve as a reservoir of social capital, the lifeblood of functional communities. Finally, the circle process create a greater sense of trust between clients and the system that provide much needed social services” (Boyes-Watson, 2005b, p. 201).

Circle Process Structure

Boyes-Watson (2005b) found the following:

The circle has four rituals: opening and closing in a good way, talking piece, guidelines, and keepers. The purpose of the opening is to mark the circle meeting as different from ordinary meetings. The ritual helps people transition into a different kind of space and helps maintain a certain attitude toward the space. The same is done at the end of the circle with a brief reading or expression of heartfelt wish. The purpose of circles is to see a better future. (p.197)

The circle keeper, or program director in this case, goes over the ground rules and has everyone sign the confidentiality statement. At the start of a circle there are guidelines about how participants will treat each other in the circle, what each person needs to feel safe in the circle and values may be discussed until the group reaches

consensus (Boyes-Watson, 2005b). Trust is an important factor in the circle, as well. The circle process itself helps to create a greater sense of trust between clients and the systems that provide much-needed social services (Boyes-Watson, 2005b, p. 201).

Next, the circle keeper opens the circle. “Conferencing provides a conversation with a formal structure, and that structure enables participants to address constructively an incident or issue that has caused significant conflict between them” (Moore, 2004, p. 71). It generally begins with the offender explaining what happened to bring everyone to the circle. The talking piece is then passed clockwise around the circle so that everyone else can comment about their role and what impact the actions of the young person has had on them personally. “One of the most transformative elements of the circle is the use of a talking piece. Only the person holding the talking piece may speak, and an individual is free to pass the talking piece without speaking. The talking piece moves around the circle in a clockwise direction and follows the path of the sun” (Boyes-Watson, 2005b, p. 198).

The talking piece brings out the quiet voices and it creates an opportunity for dialogue without one or two people dominating. People are not allowed to make offensive comments or have negative exchanges that so often can erupt when people are in conflict. Patience is learned throughout this process (Boyes-Watson, 2005b). The goal is to talk through the offense, share what impact it has had on all of the different stakeholders and then to make agreements that are decided upon by the circle community as to how the young person will “make it right” with all of those involved and themselves.

At the end of a circle or restorative justice conference, an agreement is reached. This is signed by all the circle members. The idea is that if this agreement is implemented, there will be no need for the matter to go to court. Carolyn Boyes-Watson supports this thought when she says, "Circles promote: trust and respect, equal communication, support, emotional healing, creativity and problem solving, unity and a sense of shared purpose" (2005b, p. 200). Some might have the misperception that a restorative justice manner of working with individuals does not hold the young person responsible for their actions, but this is far from the truth. "The emphasis is on accountability, on personally accepting responsibility for the offense (there is no tolerance for blaming the "system") and doing something to right the wrong" (Goren, 2001, p.144).

Harris states that the family group conference, "Argues that the importance of social disapproval has generally been underestimated by institutions of criminal justice as well as criminological theory" (2006, p. 328). It is evident that the family group conference is a valuable and effective manner to work with young offenders. Social disapproval, shame, and reintegration are all important ingredients that make the circle process so powerful.

Circle Concerns

There are, however, those who have concerns about the circle process. Tavuchis (1991) is somewhat critical of conferencing. He does not believe that an apology can be effective if given to many people at one time. He states that the ritual of interpersonal apology is the most effective. Second, he says that the mediation of a third party can undermine the process of apology and forgiveness. He also does not think that people

who were not in the original dispute should be a part of the process, for it can shift the attention to the moral integrity of the offender, instead of being focused on the offense itself. Other considerations might include the community values and beliefs.

Some cultures or communities might have very specific views about how to address crime. In their article “Restorative Policing, Conferencing and Community” Hines and Bazemore (2003) discuss how vital it is to develop the capacity of the community to think of addressing crime in a restorative manner. Once there is an understanding of what is valued within the community, powerful work with the youthful offenders can be accomplished.

Restitution and Accountability Plans

During the circle process, the group will ask the young person how she can give back to the community for her wrong-doing. Boyes-Watson reminds us that the power of the collective should not be underestimated when it comes time to make the agreements for repairing the harm that has been done. “Creative solutions arise through a broader understanding of the interconnectedness and interdependencies of life: that awareness itself, the basis for community, opens the possibility for solutions which takes into account the impact on communities and families” (Boyes-Watson, 2005a, p. 369).

Agreements are then made that may include financial restitution, community service and any other plans to “make it right” with not only the person they harmed, but the community as a whole. According to Maloney (2007), there are several characteristics of cutting edge restorative programs. They include: mentoring and intergenerational services, economic development, citizenship and civic participation, crime prevention projects, giving something back. In fact, Maloney states that, “a restorative mission

statement should incorporate the goals of community safety, accountability, and competency in every dispositional order” (p. 215). Young people can learn a great deal about what effect their behavior has had on others by engaging in activities where they give of their own energy and time. The most meaningful community service involves the young person giving back to the organization or individuals involved directly in the situation, for example.

The agreements that are made in the circles and the follow through of those agreements are critical to the young person’s success in the program. McGarrell and Kroovand Hipple (2007) writes that the reparation agreement increases the accountability of the offender for the harm created by the crime. The circle process helps to build a community of care for both the offender and the victim. When a plan is created and followed through with, the offender is able to seek forgiveness for the wrong they have done. “The act of forgiveness helps the victim avoid the debilitating effect of harboring resentment and anger” (Moore, 1993, p. 14). Zehr (2005) reminds us that crime is a violation of people and relationships. The process of making right the wrongs is at the heart of restorative justice. The goal of the process is not forgiveness, although this can be a positive outcome.

Turning to victims, some might assume that most seek revenge or retribution. But, this is simply not the case. McElrae (1994) states “Victims are rarely as eager for revenge or retribution as might be expected. Instead, they tend to display a surprising generosity of spirit, and rather than demands for punishment they frequently express needs for participation in the outcome of the process, re-empowerment following the disempowerment of victimization publicly recognized and validated.”

Additionally, Maloney (2007, p.214) poses the question, “Should the juvenile justice system hold as its primary goal the protection of our citizenry, or should the primary attention focus upon helping juvenile offenders become competent, law abiding individuals?” Maloney states (2007):

The best interest mission is a measure that results in delinquent youth becoming safer, more accountable, and more competent. Focusing their intervention strategies on risk management and treatment that reduces recidivism, that imposes accountability through community service and restitution, and that delivers skill training that boosts offender competence. (p. 214)

Maloney (2007) states that community service is a way for individuals to make amends. It could provide valuable benefits to society. “Community service operates at its best when the work is seen by the crime victim, the entire community, and the young offenders as honorable and worthwhile and when it improves citizen’s lives” (p. 217). Skill building and application are key components of most restorative programs that involve a community service component. In fact, community service is one of the most effective ways to build competency in young people. Bazemore and Maloney (1994, p.3) advocate for creative community service. Mentoring and intergenerational services, economic development (something visible to the community that is improving it), citizenship and civic participation (help to solve community problems), and helping the disadvantaged are all viable options for community service.

There are some basic principles that can be followed to make sure that the service projects are effective. The benefits of the service should be apparent to the young person, the workers are treated as essential resources needed to complete the job, the youth learns

transferable skills, has a clear beginning and end, and the focus is on helping the disadvantaged (Maloney, 2007, p. 218). The balanced approach to justice is best served when the community, victims, and youth receive balanced attention, and all gain tangible benefits from their interactions with the juvenile justice system. It is based on three performance objectives geared to each of the three “clients” of juvenile justice. First, community safety is essential because the public has a right to feel safe and secure and must be protected. The second is accountability which means the communities should have their losses restored by the offenders making reparation. And lastly, that there should be competency development. The young person should make measurable improvements in their ability to function as a productive, responsible citizen (Maloney, 2007).

Some individuals, who are not knowledgeable about restorative justice, may have the opinion that this way of working with people is less “tough” than the punitive justice system. But, indeed, individuals in this framework are held accountable at a much higher level. They not only acknowledge the wrong they have done, but are part of the problem solving process with those they have harmed. Community service, therefore, is a key component of the accountability process in the Youth Justice Initiative program that was the subject of this particular study, for the philosophy is that the young person has really committed a crime against the community, not just an individual. “Accountability is at the very heart of the community service philosophy” (Maloney, 2007, p. 216).

This way of working with youth not only holds the youth accountable for what they have done, it is truly more of an educational model. The goal of the service is for the young person to learn from the mistakes they made and to then make it right with those

they have harmed. The young person is asked to reflect and make connections between the act they committed and the consequences they are receiving. It is for that reason, that many feel passionate about using community service as a way of addressing behavior issues in the school setting. When you can connect how their negative actions impact others and when they can take action to make it right with those they have harmed, powerful learning can take place. Youth can learn a lot through valuable community service.

Family Class

The Youth Justice Initiative program knew from its inception that working with the entire family system would be important to the success of the young person. Many of the families that enter juvenile justice programs have had a long history of dysfunctional communication/behavior. There have been many studies done about the effects of negative parenting behaviors on children. According to Dodge, Bates, and Pettit (1990), this behavior can even make an impact when the child is very young, “early experiences influence behavioral and social adjustment through cognitive processes and social information-processing.” If children see negative behaviors modeled, they get a skewed view of not only relationships, but of the world. Because of this, many diversion programs include a family class component.

According to Patterson (1986), there are three patterns of behavior that families exhibited that can contribute to antisocial children and delinquent behavior. Lax, erratic, and harsh discipline tactics all tend to create negative behavioral situations. Lax discipline, with low levels of control, can result in a failure to develop internalized constraints on behavior. Next, some parents do not know where their children are and

what they are doing. They do not set reasonable guidelines and follow through with them. Young people get mixed messages about what is ok and not ok and thus there is no consistency. If the punishment is too harsh, the young person learns that they must behave only if they are coerced. They never learn to self-regulate and develop that internal locus of control. A family class tries to break the negative habits that have formed in families. A lot of their issues revolve around setting appropriate and healthy limits and engage in positive communication.

Monitoring

Another important component of the Youth Justice Initiative program is the use of a monitor or mentor. It used to be that people would live in an area where they had extended family. A child would not only have the support and guidance of their parents, but they would also have the support and guidance of their extended family. Now, many children are raised in single parent households and there are no extended family members to help rear the children. Many youthful offenders have been victimized themselves by their family members who in the past and have a long history of trauma. So, now more than ever, young people need supportive, positive adults in their lives. Lowenthal (1999) mentions that, "Mentors can provide children with a sense of safety, dedication, and nurturance to children who are recovering from earlier traumatic experiences."

Likewise, communities as a whole used to assist with providing role modeling and assistance in raising children, but today many people do not even know their neighbors. People go to their jobs, pull into their garages, go into their homes and do the same thing over again each day. Boyes-Watson (2005b) points out that as communities break down, crime goes up. She advocates for a system that empowers the community to

care for and lift up delinquent youth. She persuasively states that if a community is to prosper and be safe, the whole community must take an active role. When the society is responsible for and assists with the development of its youth, the social capital is high. But, what we are experiencing in our country is the deterioration of social capital. Putnam (2001) states, “The weakening of extended families and the bonds of friendship and neighborhoods has resulted in the loss of a wider circle of individuals involved in providing relational supports for children and youth. One term social scientists use to describe these informal bonds is social capital. Social capital refers to the networks of social connection beyond the immediate family.”

To help the young person have a positive adult connection, the Youth Justice Initiative program involves assigning a case monitor (mentor) to each young person. This person provides accountability and guidance. This person helps to facilitate the cooperation of all of the adults in the youth’s life to help build social capital. In two thought provoking articles both Bazemore and O’Brien and (2004) Bazemore and Schiff (2001) emphasize this point when they say, “Restorative justice reform seeks to reinvigorate the informal social control capacity of communities by engaging direct stakeholders in the justice process.”

The monitor’s work is especially important for those youth that are impoverished and have very few positive adults in their lives. “The greater the deficit within the communities, the more there is a need for public systems whose intervention is increasingly ineffective without support from communities” (Boyes-Watson, 2005a, p. 360). “The goal of restorative justice today cannot simply be to “restore” the power of

community but to transform communities so that the sense of connection is inclusive of all members” (Boyes-Watson, 2005a, p. 360).

The case monitor randomly calls and meets with the young person to give them the support that they need to keep on track so they can fulfill the agreements they made in their justice conferences. This person helps to build competency in the young person. “The basic habits of reporting to work on time, cooperating with co-workers, following instructions, accepting constructive criticism, and finishing tasks can be carried over into life in the community” (Maloney, 2007, p. 217). According to Polk and Kobrin (1972), it is important to focus on legitimizing the identity of the young person. Kids need positions of responsibility so they can feel competent. Belonging and contributing are vital and if youth feel isolated and do not have commitments that they must follow through with they will not feel competent.

The case monitor also helps to coordinate all of the different aspects of the program for the youth. This is the person that works with the family system, monitors the progress of the young person in school, connects with the treatment facility (if this is necessary), and meets with the program director. It is important that the young person have a steady person that they can depend to help guide them through the process. “In an organizational relationship there is no sense of enduring commitment for a person; each time there is a referral to yet another professional or agency, there is an abdication of responsibility for that person” (Boyes-Watson, 2005a, p. 364).

The Role of Shame

One well-known benefit of the restorative justice process relates to the concept of shame. In the circle process the offender is given the opportunity to “make it right” with

those they have harmed. This restorative way of working with individuals tends to lessen the stigmatization that occurs to the offender. There have been many studies done that focus on the feeling of shame. In the punitive justice system, offenders are made to feel ashamed of what they have done, instead of feeling reintegrated and forgiven for what they have done. Braithwaite has coined this Re-integrative Shaming Theory (1989). He believes that the family group conference holds the offender accountable and increases the likelihood that the offender will understand the harm their behavior produced, yet does so within a social support system that maximizes the likelihood of reintegration of the offender within a pro-social community” (McGarrell et al., 2007, p. 223). This thinking differentiates the person from the behavior.

Braithwaite (1989) defines re-integrative shaming as disapproval that is respectful of the person, is terminated by forgiveness, does not label the person as evil, nor allows condemnation to result in a master status trait. The theory predicts that re-integrative shaming will result in less offending. Conversely, stigmatizing shame is not respectful of the person, is not terminated by forgiveness, labels the person as evil, and allows them to attain a master status trait. This is reminiscent of how the punitive judicial system operates.

Restorative justice practices focus on re-integrative shaming. “Re-integrative shaming is an effective deterrent, particularly when it comes from those who the individual is close to, because it poses a threat to relationships that are valued. The second mechanism, which Braithwaite suggests is more important, is that re-integrative shaming communicates that certain behaviors are wrong and thus builds internalized controls” (Harris, 2006, p. 330). Many at-risk youth lack the internal self-discipline to

make positive behavioral changes. This process helps the young person develop those skills.

In a well-facilitated circle, there is a feeling of trust that is built and capitalized on that helps to diminish the feeling of shame. Many of the circle participants are family members or friends of the offender. The gathering of supportive individuals for the purpose of addressing the harm done, forgiving, and making a plan for how to repair the harm better emphasizes the feeling of interdependency. The process helps to identify shame as the emotion that regulates the interdependency. Forgiveness from those closest to the person, is vital for the growth of their self- awareness and movement forward (Moore, 1993).

Similarly, Harris (2006) points out that re-integrative shaming is a vitally important part of the process. It is the social communication of disapproval that is critical in reducing offending. Knowing that the people who are doing the confronting truly care helps the individual to not feel ashamed (p.328). “Widening the circle of participation creates the possibility for genuine partnership between the organization and the community and for shared leadership to emerge between the powerful systems actors and typically disempowered sectors of the community” (Boyes-Watson, 2005a, p. 368).

It is important to remember, however, that some restorative justice programs, including the one that I studied, do not take cases involving violent crimes. This may also be a factor when considering the concept of shame, for there are varying degrees of shame that often depend on the severity of the crime. Braithwaite states that some crimes are more shameful than others. This depends on the social norms of the society, what is valued, etc (Braithwaite, 2000). For example, most of us were taught as very young

people that a person should feel a lot of shame if she were to commit murder. This early exposure to the idea of the shamefulness of murder makes most individuals decide not to engage in such a crime (Braithwaite, 2000). If young people feel shame for what they have done, but it is not addressed in a re-integrative way, the young person struggles to move forward and grow. “When respectable society shames me and rejects me, then I have a status problem. So, I look around and criminal subcultures can fill that need” (Braithwaite, 2000, p. 287). This behavior can be seen in the school setting. If a person is delinquent and full of shame, the only other individuals that are accepting of that individual are ones that are also delinquent and full of shame. These subcultures who are also full of shameful feelings will be the most likely to embrace others who are in the same situation.

Similarly, the punitive judicial system contributes to a culture of shame, which does not lead to the rehabilitation of offenders. Because the judicial system is not re-integrative, the offender does feel a sense of shame and thus more self-loathing occurs. Ahmed (2001) points out that if the shame is not properly addressed, it will make negative behaviors worse. For if those feelings are not processed and the offender is not given the opportunity to make things right and ultimately be forgiven, that individual internalizes their negative feelings. This leads the person to have no behavior change. When a person feels stigmatized and shamed, they will have the mentality that they might as well just keep doing what they have been doing. It promotes a learned helplessness mentality. If the individual cannot see that there is another way and that way would make them feel better, behavior change will likely not take place.

Lawrence Sherman (Sherman, Braithwaite, & Strang, 1994) insists that respectful policing, which involves procedural fairness, politeness and giving the offender the benefit of a presumption that they are a good person, who may have done a bad act, builds commitment to the law. Negative shaming occurs when the individual feels stigmatized. This happens when there is no distinction between the person and the act and the person is cast out of society. This more likely happens in our judicial system (Moore, 1993).

Ahmed (2001) discusses how it is important to acknowledge the shame that the person feels by helping him/her to discharge the shame through accepting responsibility and trying to put things right. If a person is not given this opportunity, shame displacement occurs, which is the transfer of shame onto another. This often results in the offender not taking responsibility for what they have done. The offender then blames others for their actions and there is then an increase in the level of shame and anger that the person feels over what they had done.

Punitive punishment tends to encourage individuals to be defensive and place blame onto others. When young people are invited to acknowledge their wrong doing and asked how they can make it right with the person they have harmed, they go more into a thinking state instead of an emotional state. "Restorative justice needs to help them be more like non-bully/non-victims who acknowledge shame when they do something wrong, who resist externalizing or internalizing their shame, and who thereby manage to discharge shame" (Braithwaite, 2006, p.11).

The community in which a restorative justice program exists may have a lot to do with its success as well. John Braithwaite, in his book, *Crime, Shame, and Reintegration*

(1989), addresses the effects of the characteristics of strong communities and families. Their effort to raise children who know and follow community norms and who learn to do the right thing is vitally important. He tells us that we are sent many informal and formal messages about what is right and wrong throughout our younger years. These messages are sent not only by our families, but the rest of our community. We learn what behaviors are not appropriate and as our inner conscience begins to emerge during development, these ceremonies become even more effective at shaming a person and curbing hurtful behavior, since the conscience causes the child to feel badly.

Braithwaite (2000) points out that family that confront wrongdoing while sustaining relationships of love and respect for their children are the families most likely to raise law-abiding citizens. Healthy families and communities use re-integrative shaming ceremonies of apology and forgiveness to demonstrate the worth of the individual while simultaneously condemning the wrongful action. This is essential for the success of families and communities. As previously alluded to, Patterson (1982) and Baumrind (1971) point out that extreme parenting styles can be detrimental. Laissez-faire families that fail to confront misbehavior and stigmatizing families that reject and degrade their children, both experiences a lot of misbehavior. Without forgiveness, stigmatization rather than reintegration will be the result. Stigmatization causes a sense of rejection and separation from the family or community.

When the person is able to work through the offense and make amends, they then begin to feel reintegrated into society. They have then “earned redemption” by those whom they were in conflict with. This ultimately will positively impact the likelihood of the person re-offending. When people are meant to feel negative shame, they are more

likely to reoffend (McGarrell et al., 2007). The offender is treated as a good person who has done a bad deed. Stigmatization is disrespectful shaming: the offender is treated as a bad person and it is unforgiving and is left to feel stigmatized. In re-integrative shaming, the person is forgiven (Braithwaite, 2000).

There are actually not many countries that utilize re-integrative shaming as a part of the restorative process when working with offenders. Japan, in fact, is the only developed society that has a heavy reliance on re-integrative shaming and it has a very low crime rate. It is the only nation that has had a substantial decrease in crime. They imprison fewer people and use restorative justice in the schools too (Braithwaite, 2000).

Measuring Program Effectiveness

When looking at effectiveness, many look to re-offending data. Braithwaite (2002) provides a thorough review of studies examining the impact of restorative justice practices on re-offending. Many of the studies had consistent findings that conferences reduced re-offending (McGarrell et al., 2007). Hayes and Daly (2003) found that a procedural fairness and the level of remorse exhibited by the offender, tended to influence the rate of recidivism the most. Rodriguez (2005) discovered that several factors influence recidivism. He found that older offenders and those who committed a property offense as the initial offense tend to recidivate less.

Re-offending data are not the only information that is important to examine when looking at effectiveness. The family group conference tends to generate feelings of satisfaction, inclusion, respect, and procedural fairness (McGarrell et al., 2007). For these reasons, the utilization of the family group conference is likely to reduce recidivism, but that is not the only indicator of success. Additionally, if the offender believes that the

process was fair and feels remorseful, there is even a greater chance that the individual will not re-offend (McGarrell et al., 2007, p.226). The process really tries to empower the offender and the community so they can all work together to decrease the amount of violence and crime within the community in the future. “Community empowerment and participation along with a focus on the victim are key elements that set restorative justice practices apart from adversarial courts” (McGarrell et al., p. 222). The community, as a whole, works together as a team to establish the reparation agreement.

Not surprisingly, traditional court processes are much different. That process is believed to be more stigmatizing because they focus upon deciding and recording guilt as well as the punishment of individuals (Harris, 2006). Sherman, Braithwaite, and Strang (1994) researched a program in Australia. They compared the effectiveness of traditional court proceedings and conferences for drunken driving offenses. The conferences consisted of a meeting that usually included the offender, a group of supporters who cared for the offender, a community representative and a trained police officer who facilitated the process. Results were all more positive for the conference format.

Other Effective Programs

There are many flourishing juvenile justice programs across The United States that has similar characteristics of the Youth Justice Initiative program. Much research has been done to compare the effectiveness of punitive versus restorative practices on delinquent behavior not only in The United States, but internationally. The entire world seems to have come to the conclusion that punitive punishment is not a cure all for crime. For example, in Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia, a new community policing program became hugely controversial when it began to significantly modify the family

group conferencing model. They decided to utilize police officers to conduct family conferences where offenders, victims and the community came together to address the harms that had been done. This program produced data that demonstrated its effectiveness. This became known as the “Wagga model” (McCold, 1998).

Another program had its roots in the “Wagga model” and experienced great success for many years, as a result. The Bethlehem Project in Pennsylvania, not only used the Wagga model for group conferencing; it also resembled the Youth Justice Initiative program the most. Unlike this program, however, police were always directly involved in the process, as they were the facilitators. According to Howard Zehr (2005), this study looked at the effects of the practice on police, offenders, victims, and the community and compared the results with equivalent data on formal adjudication and other restorative justice approaches (McCold, 2003). They looked at first time offenders, but none of the participants had committed serious crimes. The offenders were also able to choose if they wanted to be in the program and the police administered a pilot program of conferencing in and around the town. There was a lot of community support for it by professionals who had an interest in youth justice and social welfare (Moore, 2004).

The process changed over the years, however, to make more of a positive impact on the youth that it served. They used Braithwaite’s book *Crime, Shame and Reintegration* (1989) to provide a theoretical counterpart to the process of family group conferencing. They worked with youth between the ages of 10 and 17. The young person would have had to admit their part in a nonindictable offense (Moore, 2004, p. 74).

The Bethlehem Project asked the following questions:

1. Can typical American police officers conduct conferences consistent with due process and restorative justice principles?
2. Does conferencing transform police attitudes, organizational culture and role perceptions?
3. Will victims, offenders, and the community accept a police-based restorative justice response?
4. How does police conferencing compare with the formal justice system?
5. How does police conferencing compare with victim-offender mediation?

This program did not focus on the offender. It focused, instead on the harm caused by a particular offense. It was community based, not victim or offender based. It was truly diversionary. Within 14 days after the offense occurs, the police decided if the case should be referred to the program. It was grounded in contemporary social theory, which means it used the re-integrative shaming work of Braithwaite (1989). The process was neither punitive nor rehabilitative. It was educative, and the participants flourished. External disapproval was strengthened and internal conscience was strengthened (Moore, 1993). Restorative practices resonate for many educators, for the process can be very educative.

Moore (1993) describes the difference between theory and practice. He relates Braithwaite's work to the practice that was implemented in Wagga Wagga. According to Moore (1993) conferencing improves the quality and quantity of relationships within each participating community (Moore, 1993). There are some areas to examine, however. McCold (1998) suggests that it is important, when looking at the Bethlehem results, to ponder the following about police officers facilitating restorative programs:

1. Were the police officers adequately trained to facilitate effective conferences in order for all parties to feel safe and be able to participate freely in a genuine dialogue?
2. Were the conference facilitators insensitive to victims' needs and coercive in making them participate in the conference?
3. Young offenders may be intimidated by adults in uniform.
4. Police may be incapable of being neutral facilitators.
5. The scripted conferencing process might be too rigid and insensitive to cultural needs and preferences.
6. Will the amount of conferences become too large?

Another successful research study, the Indianapolis Experiment (McGarrell et al., 2007) was qualitative in nature. Young people were either randomly assigned to a family group conference or one of a number of court-ordered diversion programs. The study included 800 youths who were tracked for 24 months following their initial arrest. The individuals who were involved in this program committed a variety of offenses. They ranged from serious violent crimes to minor property offenses (McGarrell et al., 2007). The Youth Justice Initiative is different in this respect, for all of the cases that they take are non serious violent crimes. This program was successful, for those who participated in the conferences reoffended less than those who were in the control group.

An additional effective program, Re-Integrative Shaming Experiments (RISE), in Australia randomly assigned offenders to a Wagga model type conference or to court. They found that the violent youth offenders who were sent to do the conference approach were significantly less likely to re-offend during the follow-up period compared to those who were sent to court (McGarrell et al., 2007). Therefore, this approach was also

effective with juveniles who committed violent crimes. The victims of the crimes who went to conferencing got more material reparation, but were less likely to ask for money in the case outcome. They were significantly less distressed and angry and had more sympathy and trust than the control group whose offenders were in the court system. Four times as many victims of violent crimes received apologies and conference victims were more likely to get information about how the case was processed and the outcomes (Moore, 2004).

“The more people have to lose from involvement in crime, the more likely they are to desist from criminal activity. It places emphasis on a sense of personal control and the presence of social support. If individuals feel they have some sense of dignity, a sense of hope for the future, and significant positive relationships, then they have a great deal to lose from behavior that damages those relationships” (Moore, 2004, p.76). Moore noted, when researching family group conferences, that there seemed to be a profound emotional turning point in the latter half of most well-convened conferences. This is called a collective vulnerability (Moore, 2004). At some point, the group comes together and moves forward toward peace as they entertain the idea of what those agreements would need to be. Successful conference models exhibit this behavior.

Similarly, in the Maori communities in New Zealand, they have an effective community way of working with juveniles who commit crimes. They see crime as a breakdown of social bonds and the community as a whole takes responsibility for the conditions that led to the person committing the crime. They also come to the point of having collective vulnerability. They do not have a punitive system to deal with crime, but rather they reach consensus on how to strengthen the community by creating a plan to

repair the harm that was done to the victim, the victim's family and the community (Goren, 2001).

Objections to Restorative Justice

Clearly, it would be remiss if I did not mention that there are many criticisms of restorative practices as well. It is important to note that not all individuals have the same mental model about what restorative justice looks like. Antony Duff (2002) has a slightly different spin on restoration. He states that retribution is a form of restoration. He advocates for "restoration through retribution." He believes that once victims see their offenders suffer, they will feel better. He feels that offenders should suffer retribution for their crimes; but the essential purpose of the punishment should be to achieve restoration. Declan Roche (2003) in his book *Accountability in Restorative Justice* is critical of Howard Zehr's book *Changing Lenses*, for he believes that Zehr oversimplified and distorted the real meaning of retributive justice, the modern justice system, and the real meaning of restorative justice. There are many prominent writers in the sociology and criminal justice field that do not support restorative justice. There are obviously different perceptions about the best way to work with those who commit offenses in our society.

Carrie Menkel-Meadow (2007) summarizes 15 different criticisms of restorative practices in her article *Restorative Justice: What is it and does it Work?* As I read back through the list, after conducting my research, I was surprised at how many similarities there were between what my own questions and criticisms about restorative practices and those that she compiled. She brings up the concept of coercion. She poses the question of whether or not offenders feel coerced to confess, apologize, or to waive their rights. In my research study, it was very clear that all the young women were strongly encouraged

to engage in this process and it seemed that many were practically coerced by their family members. They were persuaded by the police officer that this would be a better route, as well, so as to avoid a criminal record. She also asks whether those who are remorseless or who have committed offenses multiple times are excluded from participation. The referring police officer I spoke to indicated that those individuals who have been in trouble multiple times, are not remorseful and non-cooperative are not generally referred.

Katz (1988) believes that restorative justice professes to be a spiritual, utopian project with a faith in human ability to be transformed. Interestingly, one father I interviewed was concerned with the religious overtones in the program and felt as if he were a part of a 12 step program of some sort.

Young (1990) also poses a thought-provoking question, for he wonders if the restorative process focuses on the privilege of some (the articulate and the verbal) and disadvantages of others (the less verbal; the racially, gendered, or class-based disadvantaged.) This was also noted in my study. I, too, wondered what the success rate was for less verbally gifted, racially diverse, and poverty inflicted youth. These are additional topics for further study that are addressed in Chapter 5.

Literature Review Summary

A review of the literature surrounding juvenile justice programs helps to clarify the purpose of this case study. This literature review began with an explanation of the philosophy of restorative justice and why it is an effective approach for working with delinquent youth. Second, the common characteristics of the young people that are generally involved in this programming were examined. Many at risk youth have

protective factors that assist with their capacity to be resilient in the face of adversity. Third, this literature analysis provided an overview of the various components that juvenile justice programs contain: justice conferences, agreements for repairing harm, family class, and monitoring.

Shame has a tremendous impact on those who offend. The ability of the group to acknowledge and forgive the young person for the crime committed is a crucial part of the process. Finally, effective programs across the world were discussed and the success of restorative justice programming was conveyed. There are many who feel that restorative justice practices are not appropriate or effective; however, that has not been my experience and will not be the focus of this research study. This qualitative case study will therefore explore the Grand Tour question (Creswell, 2007), “What was the Youth Justice Initiative experience like for the female youth that were in the program for the past two years?”

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Rationale

During my tenure as a school administrator, I have noticed that punitive discipline consequences have not been overly effective with the majority of the students that I have worked with, for negative behaviors continue. However, once I began to utilize restorative techniques I noticed markedly better results. As the principal of an alternative high school, I have noted that there are more and more young women who seem to be headed down a dangerous, self-destructive path. I have struggled with how to best program for these individuals in the school setting. In the end, this study allowed me to not only know what interventions are effective for the young women, but for their families too. My school has comprehensive programming that works with the entire family system and it was interesting to learn more about what facets of the Youth Justice Initiative program might work well for my entire clientele, but particularly the delinquent females.

Access was gained by obtaining the contact information (M. Drees, personal communication, February 20, 2009) that I needed in order to conduct the research. I thought that it would be most beneficial for me to explore the experiences of similar young women in the community restorative program to determine what type of programming was effective for them, so I might know better what type of programming might assist the delinquent young women in my school setting to a greater extent. Originally, I was interested in researching experiences of females participating in a community juvenile justice program to explore the complexity of their views,

perceptions, and reflections. As I conducted the adult interviews, however, I began to be interested in how the program not only worked with the young women, but also the effect that the program had on the parents and the other adults that were affiliated with the program such as monitors, educators, and the director herself. The study also took an additional turn as I interviewed police officials and those individuals who work for the program. I began to ask some challenging questions about the referral process itself and the population of the community that is benefitting from the services.

At this time, it may be helpful to revisit the initial research questions:

A. Central question: “What was the Youth Justice Initiative experience like for the female youth that were in the program for the past two years?”

B. Procedural, explanatory sub questions:

1. What was the impact of the various facets of the program on the female youth: initial home visit, personal visits by the coordinator to the youth prior to the justice conference, initial justice conference and follow up circles (Family Group Conferencing), YJI Family Class, restitution and accountability plan, and monitoring?
2. What factors contribute to their delinquency?
3. Does an increase in social capital allow a delinquent youth to change her behavior in order to then sustain her capacity to live as a responsible citizen?
4. In what ways did the young women experience re-integrative shame?
5. What implications is there that can be applied to the school setting?
6. What are suggestions for the program?

C. Analytical and interpretive subquestions:

1. What themes emerged from gathering data from all of the cases and what connections to the literature do they have?
2. What are the “unspoken” messages about our society that resulted from the study?
3. Given the feedback, what can be done to broaden these services to the portion of society that needs them the most?

Case Study

The type of case study I conducted was called the “collective case study” (Creswell, 2003). A qualitative collective case study design was chosen because I was interested in interpreting the experiences that several young women had with one particular program. A case study is used to gain an in-depth understanding of a situation and the meaning for those involved (Merriam, 1998). It was interesting to learn more about what insights the past female participants had and what they discovered about themselves (Merriam, 1998). I studied the experiences that several young women had in one specific program. Merriam (1998) refers to this as “particularistic,” as there was a focus on a particular program.

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) define the case study as the observation of a specific situation, program, strategy, or group, which involves the detailed examination of one setting, single subject, depository of documents, or particular event. Similarly, Merriam points out that the case study is a detailed examination of one setting, or a single subject, a single depository of documents, or a particular event (1988, p. 59). My intent was to

research one particular event, participation in a restorative justice program, from multiple perspectives and I believe this was accomplished.

Participants

Selection Method

Merriam states that generally a qualitative research sample is nonrandom, purposeful, and small (1998). My collective case study included female individuals who were in the Youth Justice Initiative program from 2006 to 2008. The field was narrowed even further to those individuals who are currently over 18. This way, I did not have to seek parental permission to work with the individuals. The program director looked at her documentation and gathered participation data for the past two years. The total number of individuals in the program during the two years was 141 individuals. She then narrowed the group of female participants to those who were currently over the age of 18, per my request. This resulted in 23 names of young women. Next, her secretary compiled a document that listed the name and last available contact information for each of the young women. The addresses were all those of their parents. Parental telephone contact information was on the list and occasionally a cellular phone number for the young person herself was listed.

After that, the program coordinator's secretary sent a letter (Appendix I) to all young women who were in the program from 2006-2008 who are currently over the age of eighteen, to inform them of my study. They were asked to contact her if they did not want me to speak to them about the study within a two-week time period. Two individuals responded and asked that they not be involved. This narrowed the pool of young women to 21.

Contacting the Young Women

Next, the program director sent me a list of all of the names of the young women and their parental contact information, as that was the last known information that the program had on file. I called each of the young women to ask if they would be willing to participate in the research study. This process proved to be quite challenging. I had to leave many messages on answering machines when I conducted my first round of calling the last week of May 2009. Several parents answered the initial phone call, however. Many of the young women had gone away to college, had moved out of their parent's homes, gotten married, moved out of state, or the phone number was disconnected or inaccurate. I was able to gather some additional contact information from the school district data management system to assist with old numbers that had been disconnected. Some parents still had children in the school district, so I was able to get current information for them.

Once I reached the young women, I used a conversation script (Appendix C). I did not read the script word for word, but used it as a guide. I also conveyed the information documented in the consent form (Appendix D) and had each sign the form when I met with them. I kept a spreadsheet (Appendix E) of all of the young women, their parents names, and their last known phone number. I then recorded whether or not they accepted the invitation to interview and if I was unable to reach them, I recorded the date I left a message. However, I was very surprised that a few parents were hostile and would not give me the contact information for their daughter, while others were very friendly and helpful. I found this to be a very interesting aspect of the study. I left many messages and I called individuals at various times of day in order to reach them.

Dutifully, I called each young woman in the program until I was able to reach her, or had attempted contact a maximum of five times. I left several messages for some individuals and did not want them to become angry with me for leaving so many messages. I would even ask them in my message to call me back to let me know if they were or were not interested in participating, so that if they were not, I would be able to stop calling them. This did not have any effect. I was surprised at the amount of young women who would not return my call.

Originally, nine young women agreed to meet with me. Several asked me to call them back in a week or two once they had their job schedules for the summer. I had to keep a data base of who I had called and what follow up action needed to be taken with each individual. Three of the original young women that agreed to meet with me had been students in my school and knew me, although one of those young women did not actually take part in the study. Six young women participated in the study, two scheduled interviews and did not attend their interview sessions, and one did not call me back to set up an interview time.

Initial Contact of Parents

As I was trying to reach the young women, I talked to several mothers and fathers about my study to see if they would be interested in taking part in the parent focus groups. Again, I had to leave many parents a message and many did not return a call to me. Many parents, however, were open to sharing their experiences. I found that the mothers were more interested in speaking to me than the fathers over all. Based on the feedback I received from the mothers, many of the fathers did not enjoy the process and were not willing to devote any time to discussing their experiences with me.

Similarly to the number of young women who were interested in being a part of the study, nine different families and fourteen individuals said that they would participate in the focus groups. Eventually, I had five different families represented in the focus groups, but nine individuals. Some were the mother and father groupings for the same girl. Three parents did not attend that said they would and one couple called and cancelled at the last minute. Several women were going to participate, but their husbands would not, so they did not. Overall, the fathers were not as favorable about the program as the mothers were. Additionally, it was interesting that three of the mothers who agreed to participate, knew me previously and several had educators in their families and were supportive of educational research. I learned that a major component of the research process is reaching your research subjects, persuading them to be a part of the study, organizing an interview schedule, re-scheduling, and actually completing the research and, in this case completing the interviews. This entire process took me two months which was much longer than I had anticipated, for I devoted a lot of hours to this process every day. I did not anticipate that it would be so challenging just to complete the interviews.

Many of the parents who committed to being part of the process, in turn talked to their daughters to see if they could persuade them to take part. A challenging component of the research process proved to be getting the young women to participate. I believe that many of them still felt ashamed of what they had done and thus, did not want to discuss it. Similar feedback was received from several of the parents on the phone and in the focus groups. Several of the young women that participated, had educators in their

families and believed that educational research was admirable, knew me and wanted to help me and for some their parent had persuaded them that it was the right thing to do.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol

Each participant was provided with the informed consent letter upon their arrival to the interview. I asked each person to read the letter and sign and date it at the bottom if they were in agreement to participate (Appendix D). The form notified them of their right to informed consent, discussed confidentiality, and outlined the potential risk and benefits. This consent form was approved by the Drake University Institutional Review Board in order to protect the rights of the subjects. If they had any concerns about the study, they were told that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Additionally, I had previously completed the *Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams* course, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on April 22, 2007.

All interviews were audio taped on a cassette tape and the majority was also taped with a digital recorder. They were all professionally transcribed by a business college student and electronic transcriptions were sent to me. The identities of the individuals were kept confidential, as their pseudonyms were given to the transcriptionist. These were sent to all of the participants to verify for accuracy. The tapes and digital copies are in a secure location in my home until such time that they are no longer needed to validate the research and at that time the tapes and audio files will be destroyed.

Site Selection

As a matter of convenience, the individual interviews and focus groups were held at my school in a private location during the day and at night during the summer when there were few people in the building.

Instrumentation

Before I began this process, I read extensively about restorative practices. I also had first hand experience with this program as I am on their advisory board, have participated in justice circles, and use restorative practices in my school setting. I chose to use interviewing as my mode for collecting the data. I felt that I would be able to gather the most profound data in this manner and qualitative data such as this had not been collected previously. Again, I wanted to examine the experiences that these young women had in a Midwest diversion program by triangulating (Creswell, 2003) my research data. Information was obtained in three different ways: individual one-on-one interviews of the female offenders, focus groups that consisted of the members of the girl's family, and one-on-one interviews with another adult member of the restorative process that the young lady was involved in. Each interview and focus group was held at my school in a private location. I had originally intended to complete the interviews at the local public library, but I quickly realized that it would be much more convenient to conduct the interviews in a location that would require less planning. Many of my individuals cancelled and re-scheduled their interview times on multiple occasions (Appendices F, G, H).

Interview Structure

The interviews took place June 9 to July 20, 2009. Extensive field notes were taken during these sessions and the participants were asked for their permission to be audio taped at the onset. The interview protocols were semi structured, for I discovered that there were many times that individuals produced answers to my set questions that I then needed to ask follow up questions about in order to understand their answer more completely. As I began to reach the saturation point (Creswell, 2007) midway through the interviews, I began to ask the individuals more questions that related to the themes that I had gathered at that point in my research. I also decided to interview a couple of additional adults that were involved in the program so I could more fully understand the referral process. This was an example of the snowballing technique. At times, I would interview someone who was involved directly in the program, but I would discover that I would need additional information from another individual so that I would have a clearer picture of the situation surrounding that particular young person. As the interviews were completed, I had several questions surrounding who this program served and the underlying reasons for that.

Two of the earlier interviews that I did with the young women, did not tape. I discovered that the batteries were wearing down and the sound faded in and out and they were not able to be transcribed. After discovering this, I began to tape all interviews with two tape recorders to ensure that the interviews would be recorded. One was a digital recorder and the other was a tape recorder. I took very good field notes and decided to only ask one of these young women if I could interview her a second time. The other young woman's interview did not produce compelling data, for her experience was short

lived and she had stolen something that was small and the program director did not see her as a high risk case. Using my field notes allowed me to capture the essence of her interview and I was then able to code her data. But, the other young woman's interview had produced rich data and I felt my research would benefit from a transcribed interview. After the interviews were taped, I gave them to a college student to transcribe. Once I had the interviews transcribed, I completed member checks.

Member Checks

After each interview or focus group was transcribed, a member check (Creswell, 2003) was completed. I did not have email addresses for all of the individuals, so I sent them a text message to learn what their email address was. I then emailed the transcription of each of their interviews to them. I asked them to send an email back to me with changes or a confirmation message that the transcript was accurate. Three individuals sent changes to the researcher via email and the rest responded that the interview/focus group transcripts were accurate or did not respond.

The human experiences of those that were in the program and my own experiences were critical. "The primary instrument in qualitative research is human, all observations and analyses are filtered through the human being's worldview, values, and perspectives" (Merriam, 1998, p.22). Interviewing is a strength of mine, as I have school counseling experience. This is the main reason I chose to conduct so many individual interviews. This method enabled me to collect rich data and I thoroughly enjoyed speaking to each of the participants. The different perspectives about the experience were interesting to listen to. Each transcript was 40-50 pages in length and it was very

challenging to organize all of the data that was gleaned from the transcriptions. There were over 500 pages of text to analyze and verify.

Young Women Individual Interviews

Once the young women agreed to participate, I scheduled a one-on-one interview in order to explore more deeply the stories of their experiences with the program. Semi-structured questions were asked of all the participants. Semi structured questions (Kvale, 1996) allow for full disclosure of the experiences. All chose a pseudonym and all were given a \$10.00 gift card for participating. After beginning the interviews I discovered that I had too many questions. I should have narrowed the questions down so as to go more deeply. I found that there were only a few pivotal questions surrounding their experiences that they really felt passionately about answering.

When the interviews began, I sensed a hesitation to tell me the details about what they had done to become involved in the program. I felt as if most of them were not honest with me about the extent of their delinquent activities before entering the program and for a couple, their delinquent activities since. Based on their nonverbal behaviors and their tone of voice, I sensed that they all wanted to be viewed as good girls that had made bad mistakes. I do not think any of them wanted to be viewed as juvenile delinquents. The participants were asked to reflect what meaning they gleaned from their experiences with the YJI program. The goal of the research, therefore, was to rely on the participant views of the situation.

Parent Focus Group Interviews

Next, I attempted to use purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2003) when I organized the family focus groups. I intended to have a focus group for each of the young women

that would consist of their family members. Soon I discovered that for the most part, the two parents are the only family members that participated in the process. So, then I decided that I would have focus groups that consisted of the parents of those girls who accepted my invitation to be interviewed. Again, I had to adapt my plan, for the same young women and parents did not want to participate in the study. Next, I discovered that I would not be able to interview all of the parents of the girls that I was interviewing. I was able to interview three out of the six parents' of the young women. The parent focus groups were a mixture of parents: some of their daughters I had interviewed and some I had not. It was very interesting to learn about the experiences of the young women, through the eyes of their family members and compare that to what their daughters told me.

They were asked questions that related to the research questions. It was fascinating to see what the experiences were like for the young offender, from the family member's perspective. I attempted to have each parent fill out a contact sheet so I could conduct a member check of the transcribed interview to check for the accuracy of their comments. The focus group interviews both took much longer than anticipated. Each was approximately 90 minutes in length.

At the beginning of the first focus group, one parent was fifteen minutes late and two parents did not attend that said they would. There were six adults present. I had sent all parents a text message reminder earlier in the day. Permission was asked to audiotape them and I explained that the tape would be transcribed by a student at a local business college. I let them know that after the interviews were transcribed I would go through the transcripts and look for thematic emerging categories.

During the course of the focus group, there was one parent who was very vocal and I had to be aware of her ability to dominate the conversation. I took field notes the best I could yet attempted to maintain eye contact throughout the interview process. I discovered that the focus group information was best when I just let the parents talk about their experiences. I think I asked too many specific questions and should have just had four-five general questions for them to answer. The amount of questions seemed to stifle their free flowing responses to some degree.

Once the parents felt comfortable, I noticed that it was difficult for the parents to stay focused on what the experience was like for their child and not for their own self. I noted many consistencies among what they told me and what I had learned from the young women.

The second parent focus group consisted of three parents, for three of them did not attend that said they would. I sent all of these group members text message reminders the day of the focus group, as well. Again, three individuals did not attend that said they would. This was a very frustrating part of the process. Although I obtained good information in the two different focus groups, it would have been even more valuable to have more. Disappointment and shock came over me as I realized how irresponsible the parents were. Several did not call to say they could not make it or call after the fact to apologize. This focus group went much more smoothly than the first and rich data was gathered. I knew two of the three parents previously and rapport was built very easily with the third parent. I felt there was frank and open discussion during this focus group.

Additional Adult Interviews

Last, during the one-on-one interviews of the young women who were in the program and during the family focus groups, I listened to see who might be an important additional adult to interview or asked them who they thought might be appropriate. This technique is called snowballing (Merriam, 1998). This involves asking each participant or group of participants to refer you to another participant. A researcher can often find rich information from another individual that is referred by the subject. I interviewed six additional people for 60-90 minutes each. I interviewed a police officer, the program director, two case monitors and a security manager at a local retail establishment that several of the young women had stolen from. They were all anxious to participate and all of these individuals seemed to be open, honest and passionate about the program. All of them were very favorable and I also thought they had a good sense of what the experience was like for the young women. There were a lot of correlations between what the young women said and what they had observed.

Position Power

Throughout all of the interviews I had to be sensitive to a possible power imbalance (Creswell, 2007). I had been the principal for two of the young women and was involved in one of their restorative justice circles. From my perspective, I had a good relationship with both of these young women and I think they agreed to be in the study because they liked me and wanted to assist me in my endeavors. The school that I lead operates in a restorative manner where the students and the adults are viewed as equals. We have a respectful culture where there is open dialogue and everyone is treated with

dignity and respect. I do not believe that the young women would see me as a threat nor would they see me as intimidating.

The young women who did not know me might have been more intimidated just knowing that I was a high school principal. I got a sense that they did not want to tell me the extent of their delinquent behavior because of my position, even though all of these girls were out of high school and there could be no repercussions of any sort. It was important that the individuals knew that the information that they shared with me was confidential and would not be shared with any other members of the community.

Design

The research design, data collection, and data analysis for this case study were based on an emergent qualitative approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). A case study according to Merriam is used to, “gain an in depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved” (1998, p.19). I explored a bounded system (Merriam, 1998) for I was interested in learning more about the impact of a certain program. I was interested in the emic view (Creswell, 2007) which means view of the participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). An in-depth data collection involved triangulating (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) sources of the data to obtain a well rounded view of how the different components of the program impacted those young females in the program from their own perspectives and from the perspectives of the adults that were involved.

Increasing Internal Validity

Merriam (1998, pp. 204-205) provides further suggestions. The researcher can utilize six different strategies to increase internal validity. First, it is important to triangulate your data. This includes using multiple sources of data. I used one-on-one

interviews with the young person that was in the program, two family focus groups, and one-on-one interviews with additional adult program participants to gather diverse data. The data is limited, for only six out of twenty three young women agreed to speak to me. I worked diligently to engage more individuals in the study, but was not successful.

Second, she suggests conducting member checks. After the interviews were transcribed, transcripts were sent to each of the individuals to check for accuracy. Third, long-term observation can assist with enhancing internal validity. I spent a great deal of time gathering data from various individuals who had participated in the program, but it would have been interesting to conduct ongoing research about this group of young women. It would be interesting to learn what the long term effects of the program are, for the program has no such data at this time. Fourth, I consulted with peers surrounding the research study and the findings. The director of the program, the monitors for the program, and my doctoral committee all served as individuals who were able to give me feedback throughout my research process. In particular, I formally met with my committee chair person on several occasions to discuss my research project.

The fifth strategy was to engage in a participatory or collaborative mode of research. The participants were not involved in all phases of my research, but they were involved through the individual interviews and focus groups. I also asked for their input about other people to interview (snowballing) to gain more of a perspective on the experience that the young woman had. Lastly, it was important to identify researcher bias. Because I myself have had positive experiences with the program, I assumed that most of the past participants had positive experiences too. I did know, however, of individuals who had not completed the program and individuals who I perceived to have

had negative experiences in the program. My preconceived notions were very accurate. Most individuals who were involved in the program had a good experience overall and were grateful for its existence. As an educator, I do have a general bias for I believe restorative practices are educational in nature and do create positive behavior change. It was interesting to learn that the individuals who participated in the program had a similar attitude.

Merriam (1998, p. 205) discusses reliability, which means the extent to which research findings can be replicated. Reliability is not a concern for most qualitative researchers, for it is based on the assumption that there is one common reality and if it is studied over and over, the same results will occur (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). So, instead of examining the “reliability” of a study, I am reminded of Lincoln and Guba (1985) who suggested looking at the “dependability” of a research study. Instead of trying to prove that outsiders would get the same results if they replicated the study, they asked the question, “Given the data collected, do the results make sense? Are they consistent and dependable?” (Merriam, 1998, p. 206). By triangulating the data I strengthened the dependability of the research findings.

Merriam (1998) points out three distinct steps that the researcher can take to determine external validation. Using thick description (Creswell, 2007) is helpful so people can see if their situation is similar so they can transfer the findings. I used thick description when I conveyed the information gleaned from the one-on-one interviews and the focus groups. Second, the researcher can identify the typicality of the study. Are the subjects and the results typical for that particular situation? I looked for themes to emerge as I collected the data to determine what the typical experience was like for the women

that I studied. And third, it helps to have multisite designs. The researcher should use several sites and cases to see if the results are similar. I used a purposeful sample, to assist with this. I was interested in looking at individuals who had diverse experiences to see what the over all impact was on each.

Perspectives of the Process

I used maximum variation sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This was first identified in their book on grounded theory. They advocated for selecting a diverse sample to study. Originally, I wanted to learn about the experiences of the diverse young women, but I also learned what the experience was like for the adults that were involved. Glaser and Strauss (1967) believed that it was best to study the variance in experiences in order to get significant results, and I tend to agree with them based on the results of my research study. The young women, who were interviewed individually, reflected varied experiences. The perspective of the parents in the focus groups was somewhat diverse, but there were a lot of common threads too. I found that rapport was built rather quickly, as I had talked to several of the parents many times on the phone before the focus group and two parents I knew already because their child attended my school. I believe this helped me to obtain my information.

I listened intently to hear what they were really saying (Merriam, 1998) and used responsive interviewing. As a past counselor, I know that it is important to “listen for the river,” or the covert underlying meaning. I also discovered that watching the nonverbal communication of the individuals was equally important. At times, what I was hearing and what I was seeing, were different. I observed the nonverbal communication throughout all of the interviews and did notice that at various times, certain adults seemed

to be uneasy about the questions that I was asking. I had to be very direct with the police officer when asking him about the individuals he refers and the criteria that he uses, for example, and he appeared to be rather uneasy. The program director asked me to turn off my recorder on two different occasions to tell me something that was more confidential in nature that she did not want recorded. I obliged, but used this information when formulating my recommendations for future study. I was ethical throughout the process and have done my best to represent what the individuals told me. A “member check” (Creswell, 2003) ensured that the transcriptions were accurate. Those who participated may read my research findings, upon their request. I generated a depth of understanding, instead of accumulating mounds of information. Last, I remained flexible throughout the interview process and at times veered off into a different area of questioning, if warranted (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.30).

Procedures

A “purposive sampling” (Chein, 1981) was conducted. I discovered what the experience of being in the YJI program was like for the young women who participated and for the other adults that took part in their process. Chein (1981) advises that there should be selection criteria for who to invite for the in depth one-on-one interviews and for the focus groups. I worked with the gatekeeper, the program director, to get the information that I needed. The program director and I contacted the city attorney to make sure that we were following not only my protocol, but also the cities.

The program director sent a letter (Appendix B) to the 23 females that were in the program from 2006-2008 who are now over the age of eighteen. If they did not contact her, she gave me their contact information. I then contacted all of the female youth who

are currently over the age of 18 who participated in the program from 2006 to 2008 by phone. The police department only had their parental contact information, so that is who I contacted. I prepared a script that I used as a guideline when I was able to reach the parents or guardians and/or the young women who were in the program (Appendix C). I asked for the contact information for their daughter who was in the program if they were no longer living at the address that the police department had on file. A few parents were hesitant to give me the information for their daughter and told me that they would give her the information, but then I never heard back from them. Two parents told me that their daughters would not be interested in participating in the study without even asking them.

Next, each of the young women was called. I told each one what was in my letter of consent (Appendix D). Each person was then asked to participate in the study. If they agreed, I scheduled a time for their individual interview that was conducted at my school. I kept a master schedule of all of the interview times. Several of the girls had to change their times and I was very flexible. Several were home from college and were busy with work or summer classes. I interviewed some young women at night and some during the day. I had each young woman read and sign the informed consent letter when they came for their interviews and asked each if it was ok if I audio taped them.

I then proceeded with the interviews. They were semi structured in nature. Near the end, I began to reach the saturation point (Creswell, 2007), for I began to hear the same themes running throughout the interviews. I began to ask questions surrounding themes that I had heard in previous interviews. These in depth interviews lasted 90 minutes each on the average and each participant was able to choose their own

pseudonym for the study and each seemed to enjoy the interview process. I found all of the individuals to be candid. All of them had definite opinions about the benefits and shortcomings of the program.

Concurrently, I contacted the families of the young women to ask them if they would be interested in participating in a parent focus group. I talked to some of the parents when I called to speak to their daughter. I explained my study and asked if they would be willing to help me. I learned how to phrase my invitation in such a way so that the adults were more likely to assist. I had two different times available for parent focus groups. I set the focus groups up for two weeks after the initial phone call, so as to give the families time to make adjustments to their schedules, etc. I kept a schedule for the two different nights to make sure I had the same amount of people scheduled for each session. There were several individuals who cancelled or did not attend as they were supposed to. During the first focus group, one person just had surgery and was 15 minutes late to the focus group interview, which was somewhat disruptive. I had each parent read the informed consent form and then I asked them if I could audio tape the session. Both groups agreed. Each chose a pseudonym and was given a gift card. The police officer declined his gift card, as he was on duty at the time. Each focus group lasted approximately 90 minutes.

When I interviewed the young women who were in the program individually and the family focus groups, I listened for other adults that seemed to be significant in their processes. These were all people who have a was a part of the young woman's juvenile justice experience in some way. I then contacted the adult individual and arranged a one-

on-one interview at the high school where I am the principal. I conducted the program director's interview at the police station at night.

After the tapes were transcribed, I did a member check (Creswell, 2003) with each of those interviewed to make sure that I accurately recorded what they intended to say and sent them electronically or by mail. I kept a record of all of the individuals to make sure that all confirmed that what was written was accurate. All audio cassette tapes were stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home after they were transcribed and all of the digital files were stored on my home computer in a file that only I have access to, for my computer is password protected. Copies of the electronic files were transferred to a thumb drive and were also stored in my locked filing cabinet.

Data Analysis

Patton (1990) suggests the researcher pull together and organize the voluminous case data into a comprehensive primary resource package. The case record includes all the major information that will be used in doing the case analysis and case study. Information is edited, redundancies are sorted out, parts are fitted together, and the case record is organized for ready access either chronologically and/or topical. I had to decide how I would begin to group the enormous amount of information that I gathered from the three different data sources: the girls, focus groups, and other adults.

Coding

After I had all of the transcriptions back, I created a document for each group (girls, focus groups, and other adults) and attempted to organize the key concepts from each data set. This was challenging for the stories that the individuals told me were difficult to capture in list form. So, the first iteration contained three separate lists of

themes for the three different groups. The list that was generated from the interviews of the girls included 42 different categories with multiple items under each one. The focus groups produced 17 different categories with multiple items beneath each. Lastly, the other adult data produced 21 different groupings, each with data points underneath them. These have been included in (Appendix J).

Next, I realized that I needed to combine those three documents into one so I could begin to see what the similarities and differences were. I used categorical aggregation (Creswell, 2007) as a strategy for organizing my mounds of data. As I went through this process, it was relatively easy to see what the emerging themes for the combined three groups were. The second iteration (Appendix K) helped me to identify the themes that ran throughout the three different groupings. I organized the data by categories and I used code letters to identify the individuals who produced the data points. Those letter codes are listed in Appendix I. This proved to be helpful and I was able to organize and sort my data fairly smoothly. This allowed me to feel confident about the credibility and dependability of the results of my study. I had hunches about what the themes were as I conducted the interviews and coding and organizing the data in this manner, solidified those initial impressions. I also took extensive field notes that I was able to incorporate into my narrative explanations of the emergent themes in Chapter 4. I used thick description (Merriam, 1998) when relaying these data.

During the third iteration (Appendix L), I analyzed that data that I had collected and decided upon the emergent themes. I then went through each transcript and selected quotations that reinforced each theme. Lastly, I relied on the research to support each of my conclusions. There were many parallels between the research that I conducted and the

body of literature surrounding restorative justice. Lastly, I was able to draw conclusions that were based on my research that gave me concepts to contemplate when looking at how restorative practices are used in my school setting and how to better program for delinquent females.

Limitations of the Study

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.295) state that reality is, “a multiple set of mental constructions made by humans: their constructions are on their minds, and they are in the main, accessible to the humans who make them.” Thus, whatever the reality is for the subject of the study, is valid for it is the individual’s own reality. Many believe that reliability, validity and generalizability are all considered limitations of qualitative research. There are, however, steps a researcher can take to increase these elements. Lincoln and Guba (1985) call these trustworthiness criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To increase the credibility of my study I triangulated my data by obtaining information from three different sources. I also conducted member checks by sending interviews that had been transcribed to the participants. The data could have been even more credible, if I would have been able to interview a larger sample size. I believe my data would be more credible if I were to have had the opportunity to interview all 23 young women, instead of the six that agreed.

A specific program was chosen and a specific group of young woman to be a part of the study. This is called purposive sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Again, the study could have been even stronger if more young women and families would have been willing to participate. I am left wondering what the other 17 young women would have told me and the other adults that were involved, but did not engage in the research

process. I demonstrated the use of “thick description” (Creswell, 2007) in Chapter 4 to fully describe specific details of the experiences of these women. In my field notes I noted non-verbal expressions and was very aware of tone and other vocal inflection in order to convey a true picture of what the individual was saying. Van Maanen (1988) reminds us that as researchers we must tell the “tales of the field.” I have attempted to translate what I have gleaned from the many interviews and have then presented those findings in the narrative in Chapter 4.

The findings were “dependable” (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002) since I have created an audit trail. I coded and re-coded my data (Appendix G and H), triangulated my data, and allowed peers to review my work and provide suggestions. My dissertation committee and critical friends read my work and gave me a tremendous amount of feedback.

Last, the conclusions were “confirmable” (Anfara et al., 2002), for again, the data were triangulated and I analyzed data reflexively. I was keenly aware of my own stereotypes and pre-conceived notions while conducting my research and ultimately came to draw some thought provoking questions for consideration at the end of the study. Therefore, I believe that I have taken the necessary steps to ensure that these data were indeed trustworthy.

Methodology Summary

In summary, this collective case study qualitative research design examined the affect that the Youth Justice Initiative had on female participants from 2006-2008 who are now over the age of 18. I attempted to contact each young woman who met that criteria and asked them to participate in the research study. Those young women who

gave consent were interviewed individually about their experiences. Next, each of the young women's families was asked to participate in a focus group. The two focus groups discussed the impact of the program on the young woman and what the experience was like for each of them. The young women and the family members were asked to provide the name of an additional person whom they felt should also be interviewed about being a part of the restorative process and these individuals were interviewed. The goal of the research study was to determine what the experience of being in the Youth Justice Initiative program was like for the young women and to apply those findings to my school setting.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are based on the interviews obtained by the one-on-one interviews of the young women, the two parent focus group interviews, and the individual one-on-one interviews of the other adults that have been involved in the YJI program for many years. The results of the study were based on questions that explored the various components of the program and the impact that was made on the young women who were in the program for the past two years. A literature review surrounding restorative justice programs and practices was done prior to the interviews to ground the researcher and to determine what questions would need to be asked in order to get the full impact of the program captured. Additional articles were read after the research concluded and themes emerged through the coding process. Interestingly, there were many correlations between the research about female juvenile offenders and the research that I conducted (Mullis, Cornille, Mullis, & Huber, 2004).

As I neared the completion of my interview research, I reached what (Creswell, 2007) calls the “saturation point.” I began to hear the same themes running throughout the interviews. I noted that the key findings all bled into one another. The research data clearly are interconnected and supportive of what I had read in the literature about what the characteristics, patterns, and behaviors are of female juvenile offenders, although these young women were not the extreme examples that are portrayed in the literature. There were a few surprises along the way, as well, that brought up new potential areas of study. The following six findings resulted from the fourteen interviews that were

completed. There were many noteworthy similarities to what was found in the literature review and the research study, which I will cite in the table below.

Table 1

Findings	Data Sources (21 participants)	Supportive Literature
1. Theft was the main offense of the young women.	Girls: 3 Focus Group #1: 1 Focus Group #2: 1 Other Adults: 4 Total: 9 participants	Brendtro & Larson, 2006 Katz, 1988 Loeber & Farrington, 2001 U.S. Department of Justice, 2008
2. These are good girls who have done bad things. These young women had cognitive dissonance surrounding this issue.	Girls: 5 Focus Group #1: 5 Focus Group #2: 2 Total: 12 participants	Braithwaite, 1989 McGarrell et al., 2007 Sherman, 1993 Tannenbaum, 1938
3. Negative peers, negative boyfriends, and fathers had a lot of influence on the young women who were in the program.	Girls: 5 Focus Group #2: 3 Other Adults: 5 Total: 13 participants	Benard, 2003 Mills & Spittle, 2001 Rodman, 2007

<p>4. Trusting relationships and the presence of social capital is at the heart of the success rate of restorative programming.</p>	<p>Girls: 4 Focus Group #1: 2 Focus Group# 2: 2 Other adults: 6 Total: 14 participants</p>	<p>Benard, 1996 Braithwaite, 1989 Feuerstein, 1980 Maloney, 2007 McElrae, 1994 Moore, 2004 Schumacher & Kurz, 2000</p>
<p>5. The circle process and the monitor piece were the most impactful and helped to make the most change.</p>	<p><u>Circle:</u> Girls: 4 Focus Group # 2: 3 Other Adults: 2 Total: 9 participants <u>Monitor:</u> Girls: 4 Focus Group# 2: 3 Other Adults: 4 Total: 9 participants</p>	<p>Boyes-Watson, 2005b Braithwaite, 2000 Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997 Tavuchis, 1991</p>
<p>6. Shame is lessened through the restorative process and is re-integrative in nature.</p>	<p>Girls: 4 Focus Group #1: 3 Focus Group #2: 1 Other Adults: 2 Total: 10 participants</p>	<p>Ball, 2003 Braithwaite, 2000 Harris, 2006 Sherman et al., 1994 Zehr, 2005</p>

These findings will now be explored in greater detail by connecting the themes that emerged, the quotes from the individuals that were interviewed, and the literature. Pseudonyms will be used for all participants in the following narrative. The six young women will be referred to as: Ashley, Andrea, Diesel, Grace, Lauren, and Jenny. The parents will be referred to as Nick, Bob, Mike, Jessica, Jane, Annie, Sophie, Bella, and Dick. The other adults will be referred to as Teri, Roger, Karen, Samantha, Brady, and Fred.

1. Theft was the main offense of the young women.

As I began my research, I did not know what offenses any of the young women had committed. I had suspected that alcohol and drug usage would be the most widespread offense, for that is what we see in the school setting and I had been involved in many circles over the years surrounding those offenses. Surprisingly, the main offense that brings young women to the youth justice initiative program is theft. I discovered that all of the girls agreed to be in the program so they would not have a juvenile record. They were all concerned about how a record would affect their future goals of going to college or obtaining a good job. For example, Ashley commented, “I guess because I’m pretty much a workaholic, as a 19 year old can be, so I know it would really limit what types of jobs you can have and doing background checks, they would think you’re a bad person.” I was surprised to discover that the young women were very concerned about their futures. They all realized that having a criminal record would negatively impact their futures. My experience with more highly at-risk individuals is that they are not as concerned about their futures. This was a difference that I noted with these young women.

The second most prevalent crime, however, was alcohol and drug usage related incidents. When examining national statistics of juvenile female offenses and those adult women who have been incarcerated, the statistics are staggeringly similar (U.S. Department of Justice, 2008). Crimes relating to theft are number one and substance abuse related crimes are a close second. As I began to interview the young woman about their offences, I was surprised to discover that many of them were upper class to middle class individuals. This was not what I had expected. My own mental models about why people steal were turned upside down. In my own mind, I had thought that most people steal out of necessity: to feed their families or have items that they normally would not be able to afford. I had never really thought about middle and upper class individuals stealing before these interviews took place. I did not know that this was something that middle to upper class people do.

I began to ask myself about what their motivation was to steal. I consulted the program director and she informed me that she has found that these young women are generally greedy and often times commit theft when in groups. “Now, boys and girls that have already stolen in the past will talk about the rush. But the first time theft- that isn't why they're doing it. They're doing it just because you can, you can get something good for nothing. And they get caught up in each other's group thought. You'll see that most of our kids are doing their offenses together and that's different than adults.”

It is as if these girls lead double lives. They are middle class suburban young women whose exterior would not lead a person to think that they would commit criminal acts. They do not fit the stereotype of what most would think of when the word “delinquent” is said. Middle class, attractive, intelligent young women do not commit

such offences. These were not the stereotypical images of “girls gone bad.” Like me, the girls and the parents have a hard time understanding why they have gone down this path. On one hand, they have plenty of resources and have been raised to know the difference between right and wrong, and on the other hand they were committing serious crimes. This produced cognitive dissonance in the girls, parents, and me. Aronson’s research (1969) confirms that when a female, wealthy, or educated person commits a crime, dissonance is felt because it is not what the person would normally expect.

As I looked at the risk factor list (Loeber & Farrington, 2001) I noticed that even though these young women were not of a lower social class, they did possess several of the risk factors when they entered the program. I, like many people, had the stereotype that people, who have monetary advantages, do not conduct this type of crime. I decided that I needed to learn more about shoplifting and the motivation behind it. I turned to author Jack Katz to get his perspective about what his research has shown about the motivation to steal by middle class girls. His book *Seductions of Crime* (1988) discusses female shoplifters. He says that shoplifters fall into two different categories. Those individuals that are called “boosters” who are professional shoplifters; they are people who steal for the money and are frequent thieves. And the other he refers to as “snitches.” These are the amateur or occasional shoplifters. He believes that most of the “snitches” steal on a dare or for the excitement. This was interesting, for almost all of the young women and the parents of those young women, said that they stole as a result of being with someone who was stealing or for the thrill.

The program director described an analogy that she uses with the young women to help them to understand the situation more clearly. She uses the analogy of a cloak.

She tells them that it is as if they were wearing a cloak that concealed their identity when they committed their offense because they were being sneaky and not wanting anyone to know what they were doing. After the incident, they felt a great sense of shame. The program helped them to take that cloak off and to be their authentic selves again by addressing the shame that they felt surrounding the incident. The “cloak” was not representative of their authentic selves.

According to the loss prevention person of a large department store, young girls steal 50% when they are by themselves and 50% when they are with a group of friends. There was a trend in these data of the girls stealing when they were with a friend and that conclusion was confirmed by the program director. Often times, both young women who were stealing together and who were caught at the same time, will both go through the program.

Andrea however was a young woman who would almost always shoplift when she was by herself. With a nonchalant tone, she stated that she is a really impulsive person and if she saw something she would want, she would just steal it. She had been shoplifting for several months before she was finally caught. “Yeah, I mean I knew that I possibly could, but it just -- I just never really thought it could really -- you know, everyone thinks it can't happen to them. They think they're so good at doing it that they won't get caught.”

This was also a trend. These young women had stolen many times before they had been caught. Most retailers at the mall do not prosecute for it is an inconvenience and costs the business time and money. Many will confront the young women and if they give the items back, they let them leave the store and neither police nor parents are contacted.

Fred, the loss prevention community member stated, "I think that they don't want to prosecute because it's possible that it could go to court and they don't want to –it costs money and it is a hassle." Because of this, Andrea, like so many teenagers, believed that she would either not get caught or if she did the store would just tell her not to do it again. She also thought she had gotten too good at it to get caught since she had stolen items so many times in the past.

Karen, one of the monitors, believes that the young women steal because they are trying to fill some sort of void in their lives and also for the thrill. She often sees peer pressure play a part, as well. "It has to do with trying to fill a void and thinking that okay, I have the means but it's just easier...I think there is some thrill to it because they get that buzz, you know, the thrill. There is a thrill that goes with it. I'm sure there's some peer pressure there too to fit in."

She said that sometimes they get in a place in their family dynamics where there is a tense situation and they steal as a way of releasing some of the energy. She believes it is a subconscious act for most young girls. This was interesting to me, for Andrea's situation fell right in line with this. She would get frustrated about her parent's situation and would go to the mall and relieve her anxiety by stealing. Andrea commented, "It was a lot of just times when like my dad and I would fight, or he wouldn't let me get something that I really wanted or something like that. When I wanted it, I had to have it. I have really bad ADHD too, and I'm very like, what's the word, like impulsive, so it was just like -- and I was really impulsive then. I just would if I wanted something, I'd just go get it."

Samantha, a monitor, also believes that many of the young women who steal who are well off are used to getting what they want, whenever they want it. So, if they are told that they cannot have something or if something is too expensive for their parents to buy for them, they just take it. They get their needs met on their parent's terms or their own.

Ashley was with a friend when she was caught shoplifting. She blamed the peer pressure for her act of delinquency when she said, "I did it on my own, but if I wouldn't have been with her, I wouldn't have done it. I think I just did it because she was doing it and like oh, you get this, I want this." She felt that the peer influenced her judgment, although, she also stated that she had stolen less expensive items in the past. It almost seemed as if Ashley had wished that she had gotten caught a long time ago when she first began stealing. When asked about whether or not she thought the penalty for stealing expensive versus inexpensive items should be any different, she stated that the penalty for taking an inexpensive item should be harsh so hopefully that person would be deterred from shoplifting any more in the future.

The parents of these girls all had difficulty believing that their child had done something so amoral. All of these girls had been good students and had been "good girls" their whole lives. All of the parents expressed that they were shocked to discover what their daughters had done, although all of them could see warning signs of delinquency looking back. Bob, a father said, "But I just never even dreamed my daughter would do something like that. We provide real well for her, we have a very nice home, and I try to instill really good values with her throughout her life growing up, and she was really a good kid in the grade school level. She was really against lying, stealing and cheating.

That's why my brain just failed to want to believe this and finally it all sinks in. It is difficult. It's a difficult process."

Nick, another father, had a similar reaction to Bob's. His lips were pursed and a look of disappointment came over his face when he said, "I was like, where did she learn this behavior? We had never given her the impression that it was okay to steal things, and we never would have suspected that." He spoke with incredulity, "She insisted that this was the first time and the last time. I hope it's been the last time."

Research will often convey that youth who steal lack positive connections to anyone or anything. Many feel isolated and are not connected to their school, neighborhood, or the social and religious institutions in their community (Brendtro & Larson, 2006). Many of the girls had been involved in school activities but only two of the six had remained involved. Several of them had divorced parents or felt that their parents did not truly listen to them or take the time to really understand their world view. It seemed that several parents were too busy with their own lives or their own issues, to really delve into the worlds of their young people. It was interesting that the parents all thought they were connected with their girls, but the girls felt otherwise.

It seemed that the mothers of the girls were less devastated by the event. One parent attributed the offense to her daughter's impulsive nature and another to her daughters' fascination with name brands. Interestingly, it seems that some of the mothers felt rather conflicted about the situation. On one hand, they tried to trivialize the offense and on the other hand they felt their daughter needed to be taught a lesson. One mother stated, "You know, it was an \$8.00 item, and she could have just given them \$8.00 and been done with it. But, you know, on the other hand, I think if she hadn't gotten caught

with the headband, I don't know where it would have led to. So, I'm glad that it stopped there. But, you know, we---this was a huge ordeal over an \$8.00 headband, so on one hand I think, you know, come on, you know?"

The fathers took a harsher stance. Nick said, "We were glad that our daughter got caught and I think on some level she was also glad she got caught. I mean if this has taught her anything, she's not good at screwing up. Some people can screw up and get away with it. By default, she just better do the right things, because when she doesn't, she gets caught."

Even though all of the girls were embarrassed and frightened when they were approached by the store security, all of them were more concerned about how their parents would react. They were really concerned with disappointing their parents, which will be addressed in great length in future finding synopsis. Ashley was full of shame and fear as she said, "I really wasn't concerned with the law aspect of it honestly, I was concerned with my parents, because my parents are like—they, you know, wouldn't expect that from me. I'm not-I wasn't really- I mean, I went through bad stages, but overall, I wasn't that bad as a kid, and they raised me to know better."

2. These are good girls who have done bad things. These young women had cognitive dissonance surrounding this issue.

This finding relates to the research sub question, "What factors contribute to the delinquency of these young women?"

After reading a lot of literature about female juvenile offenders, it was clear to me that the cases that are referred to the youth justice initiative program are relatively low risk. These young women did, however, have some of the risk factors for delinquent

youth, but they were generally not on the extreme end of the continuum. Most of them had found their way onto a path that was much different than the one they had been on previously. There were many factors, that none of the girls possessed (Wasserman, et al., 2003). For example, Wasserman et al., (2003) found that many delinquent youth have had a history of sexual or physical abuse, live in poverty, have low intelligence, have family violence, are teenage parents, and have school failure. These young women did not generally fit that description. I wondered if I were to do a study of those young women who are being referred to juvenile court, if I would find that they possessed more of the at risk factors. I read an interesting article about the referral process. Sinha and Jain (1986) discussed how people have a tendency to help people with similar backgrounds. They speculate that people from the middle or upper class try to help those who are in their same class. This made me wonder if the middle class police officers who are the ones who refer youth to either juvenile court or the youth justice program make their determination based on class.

So, I was left wondering if the girls who get referred to juvenile court have more at risk factors and if they belong to the poverty class. It would be interesting to conduct the same research project with that population and compare findings. None of these girls had a lot of strife in their lives, they did not speak of traumas or abuse that they had endured, they were all middle to upper class, and it seemed like their basic needs were met. So, I had some cognitive dissonance when thinking about these girls as criminals, just like they themselves did.

Similarly, labeling theorists believe that labeling and reacting to offenders as “criminals” has unanticipated consequences, deepening the criminal behavior and making

the crime problem worse. These theorists argue that it is not the harm that makes the act criminal, it is the label that is put on the crime that does. Tannenbaum (1938) was one of the first labeling theorists. He argued that if we put a negative label on someone, then they would be more likely to live up to that negative image. This made me think about the students in my school. I started to wonder if the label of being an “alternative high school student” conjured up for them a negative label. It reminded me of “self fulfilling prophecy.” If you tell me I am a bad kid, then I must be a bad kid and therefore I need to act like a bad kid.

Braithwaite (1989) explores the process of social control theory by discussing the two different types of shaming: reintegrative (bringing the offender back into society) and disintegrative (shunning the offender from society). This relates to labeling theory, for those that are outcasts in society are prevented from ever reintegrating and thus those individuals will most likely continue to live up to their criminal label. This reinforces the idea that crime will be reduced when it is addressed in a respectful way where the focus is more on the act, than the person. This theory is related to the term stigmatization. This theory says that we should pay attention to the negative labels that are put on offenders, as the labels themselves can be quite stigmatizing. When I asked the young women if they thought of themselves as “delinquents”, they rolled their eyes or vehemently said that they were not. The program effectively reintegrates the young women, for none of them seemed to think of themselves as criminals or delinquents.

Some of the young women did not feel that what they had done was terribly wrong and they felt like the punishment was rather excessive. This perspective relates to Defiance Theory (McGarrell et al., 2007). Defiance Theory says, “Punishment that is

perceived as unfair or excessive may evoke defiant pride that will lead to future criminogenic (Sherman, 1993) actions. Four things must happen in order for defiance to occur: the offender must perceive a criminal sanction as unfair, the offender must be poorly bonded to or alienated from the sanctioning agent or the community represented by the agent, the offender must define the sanction as stigmatizing and rejecting a person, as opposed to a lawbreaking act, the offender denies or refuses to acknowledge the shame the sanction has actually caused them to suffer” (p. 224).

Throughout the interview process, it was very clear from all parties that these young women did not see themselves as criminals or delinquents. Two girls, Andrea and Diesel, both vocalized that they had another sister that was “the good one” and that they had always been trouble makers. They both seemed to know that their actions were not the best, but neither seemed to feel too upset about what they had done. All of the young women seemed to have trouble believing that they had acted in a criminal way. They all seemed to have an air about them that said, “I am a middle to upper class person and I am above the law. The laws are for the ‘other’ people in society.”

I interviewed Diesel later in the interview process and I asked her a question that I did not ask all the others. I began to notice that the young girls did not see themselves as criminals, so I asked her what a criminal person would be like. She said, “Someone that is sneaky and really just doing bad, bad things, illegal things. I mean, drug users are not criminals. I feel they have a problem, but maybe somebody that’s breaking in and stealing something or harming another person physically is just what I feel is a criminal...” She then smiled and I could see the light bulb went on. “...or putting people

in harm. I guess that's why they would think I was a criminal, driving around in a vehicle with beer and pot in the car."

Likewise, Lauren did not think that what she did was all that bad. She did not want to be seen as a delinquent. "I got caught drinking and I didn't want everybody to know because I'm not like that, you know, it's something I used to do and I was trying to get away from it so I didn't want it to be publicized, you know?"

In fact, at one point during the interview Grace said in an arrogant tone that her monitor trusted her so much; she let her come to her house. She did not see herself as a typical person that would be in the program. She thought she was totally out of the ordinary and wasn't like the "other" people that go through the program.

Ashley said that being a thief was not how she pictured herself, either. She knew that it was wrong and she knew that she had been raised to know better. It was obvious that she felt she had really disappointed her parents when she said, "Because my parents went through bad stages, but overall, I wasn't that bad as a kid. They raised me to know better. I just did it, so I knew they would be really disappointed and hurt." Out of all of the young ladies, she seemed to have the hardest time believing that she had actually stolen. She had a lot of cognitive dissonance (Aronson, 1969) about the person she tried to tell herself she was and the person that stole many times from different stores.

Even though the girls did not see themselves as delinquents, some of them did realize that they were on a self destructive path. Grace demonstrated self awareness when she said, "It was out of character for me to do this, but I don't regret it because to me, if I had kept going down the road I was going, it would have gotten a lot worse, so I'm glad I

had gotten in trouble earlier rather than later because it would have been a whole lot worse later.”

In contrast, Diesel seemed to be in a state of denial about her past situation. I interviewed several adults that were a part of her experience. All of them said that she did not feel remorse for what she had done, but was more upset that she had gotten caught. She truly did not see nor does she now realize that she was spiraling out of control. “I did not see myself as out of control. I was just smoking and barely ever drank. Because I was not using all types of drugs and I was not drinking and really partying. Like I knew other kids my age were, so I just felt like I just liked to chill and smoke, and I really didn’t see it becoming a problem or anything.”

She told me later in the interview that she was smoking marijuana several times a day and her school attendance was abysmal-but she still did not think her problem was “that bad” because she was not doing harder drugs or using alcohol, as she saw those two things as being addictive. She did not think that marijuana was addictive, so it was not bad to use it. Even though she did well in the program and made many strides, her thought process still seemed to be rather off kilter.

When she entered the program 90% of her friends smoked marijuana on a regular basis and she had many friends on probation that were in trouble with the law. Because she had never been in trouble with the law before, she did not put herself in the same category as her delinquent friends. She decided to participate in the Youth Justice Initiative because she thought it would be easier than going through juvenile court. She had many friends that had gone that route and she knew they would be stricter with her. She feared being sent to treatment and she knew the court system was not very forgiving.

She did not want to have to do all those UAs and have consequences for smoking pot.

In the beginning, she thought she could manipulate the youth justice program by not using drugs when she knew she would have to have a UA. She would talk to her friend who was in the program to try to second guess when the urine analysis tests would be done. She would attempt to take Niacin pills to tamper with her urine, etc. Her responses were interesting, for the amount of use was her dividing line for whether or not she was a criminal. Diesel did not think she had a drug problem because she was not dependent on alcohol or harder drugs because she felt they were more addictive. She still does not think there is anything wrong with smoking marijuana once in awhile. Can the program claim that she was a successful case? The director believes that most of the young people will relapse to some extent, but her hope is that they all get in less trouble and do not fall into a serious life of crime due in part to the training that the program gives the young women. “Well I think they may get into trouble again, but my hope is that they would not make the same source of mistakes or to the degree that they did in the past. My hope is that as the young person, as we get better at teaching about how we function psychologically that we're going to improve in all those areas. They're going to be more awake to their own inner tensions and less likely to act when they're out of sorts, so hopefully helping someone learn along those lines will help them navigate through their challenging life situations more easily.”

Another trend that was noted throughout the interviews was that most of the girls were referred to the program for one particular issue, but they exhibited other delinquent behaviors as well. Several of the young women had been engaging in risky behaviors and were going down a bad path for some time. Even though Andrea's offense that led her

into the program was shoplifting, she mentioned alcohol and drug usage incidents many times throughout our 90 minute discussion. It was interesting how much minimization took place. She said, "I've never been a huge pot smoker. I mean, there were, let's see -- maybe like a year ago or so, I was smoking it more than usual, but not very often. Not at all. I've seen my friends smoke way more than I do. I probably would like maybe three times a month or so. Just whenever it was around." Many of the young women did not think they had a problem with substances, for example, because they said they were no longer using as much as they used before or they thought they used less than their friends. It seemed that they did not really comprehend the fact that using illegal substances at all was a negative choice.

After finishing the program, Andrea got in trouble with the law again and had to go to the courthouse. She still did not see herself as a criminal. "I was looking around at all the different people there and I just really felt like I didn't belong. Like, I am not like these people because they were like crazy people that were on dugs while they were at the courthouse. But, I was dressed up nice and I really felt like I didn't belong in those situations, but I get myself into them somehow." She also said that her getting into trouble does not fit into her family background. None of the young woman had a history of delinquency in their families.

Interestingly, the mothers of the girls appeared to minimize the behavior of their daughters, as well. They complained that their daughters felt like criminals when they had to go do the urine analysis tests. They all chimed in when I asked about the girls having to go do urine tests to see if they were using drugs. They all felt that their daughters were humiliated and they did not think it was necessary, since most of their

daughters did not come into the program because of drug use. A mother, Annie, stated, “Thank you for bringing that up. That was really humiliating. That was the most humiliating.” Ironically, they had all used drugs before, however, and that is the reason behind drug testing all of the young people. The program director wants to make sure that they know all of the issues that are going on in the young person’s life, so they can program accordingly.

Karen, a monitor, confirmed that most young ladies do not see themselves as criminals. They do not like to have to go before others and admit what they have done. Also, their families do not want to accept that their child has committed a crime. In our community there are many families that see criminals in a separate socioeconomic class that they themselves are not a part of. But, they are. One mother, Jane, made a comment about the types of people that are involved with crime, “Yeah, and she felt like such a criminal, and there were apparently some real weird looking characters down there!” She did not like the idea of her daughter being around “those people.”

One mom had a nonchalant tone when she said, “She took Jack Daniels to school to give back to her friend or drink during lunch or whatever. I mean, I think I did that at high school at one time.” She went on to say that she got angry at the program director when she was confronted about her enabling behavior at first, but then realized that she was only trying to improve the situation. One mother, however, did not appreciate her “assistance” and was put off.

The fathers seemed to have a realistic perspective about their daughter’s behavior once it was called to their attention. One father said, “They don’t equate themselves with other thieves and criminals. She didn’t think of herself, I am sure, as a criminal until the

process rolled along and probably thought about it a little more.” Another dad said, “I don’t think she thought her behavior really needed much changing. She thought she did a stupid thing and then now she had to pay for doing this stupid thing.”

Two mothers thought that their daughters were sorry they had gotten caught, but not necessarily sorry about committing the crime. “I think she justified her bad behavior by saying everybody else does it, I just got caught. So she didn’t look at herself as a delinquent, she just looked at herself as someone who got caught doing something that everyone else gets away with. And she’s the only one that got caught, so I don’t think she looked at herself as a delinquent, she looked at herself as someone who was not lucky.”

3. Negative peers, negative boyfriends, and fathers had a lot of influence on the young women who were in the program.

This related to research sub question, “What factors contribute to their delinquency?”

Throughout the interview process, there were three noticeable commonalities among the three young women. First, they all were involved with a negative peer group at the time of their incident. Second, the majority had a boyfriend at the time of the incident that was not a positive influence. And, third their relationship with their father seemed to be an important component.

It seems that all of the young women know what positive peer qualities were, but some chose not to be friends with individuals who exemplified those characteristics at the time of their involvement in the program. Bonnie Benard (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of the research and found that there are three central factors that resilient children have that include caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities to

contribute (Rodman, 2007). I think that the girls I interviewed showed resiliency and got their lives back on track, because those three factors were in place for them.

These young women all said they knew the difference between right and wrong, all felt that their parents loved them, and all had plenty of opportunities to not only contribute to the family, but to the community as well. Once these young women got in trouble, several of them had parents that took control and did not allow their children to associate with the negative peers any longer and others did not cut those connections off.

When asked about positive peers, Jenny, Andrea, and Ashley all responded by naming trust or honesty as a valuable ingredient. Andrea went on to state that people who follow the law are also positive peers. This seemed somewhat ironic for these girls did not perceive themselves to be delinquent, and yet they did not meet their own criteria for what a positive peer is. None of the girls connected thievery to being a person that people cannot trust, however. Ashley even stated that the girl she stole with is very trustworthy. "Like we're not friends, we don't hang out, but I can trust her. I know I could tell her a secret and she wouldn't tell anyone, just because we used to be so close. We're still going to be there for each other." The young women really seemed to have trouble connecting their actions and positive peer attributes. They could not connect stealing to being a negative peer influence.

Parents have the ability to influence the peer relationships that their children have. Diesel's parents struggled with setting limits for her and were not emotionally present during critical developmental periods in her life. This lack of parental influence is noticeable when looking at her peer situation, for she has been surrounded by negative peer influences for many years. It was ironic, therefore, that Diesel articulated that

positive peers are people who have goals that they work towards, have passions that they follow, they go to school and have solid family structures. She herself believes that she will be a successful, positive person and yet cannot make the connection to drug usage and the impact that it could have on her future. She continues to maintain some of her connections to friends who continue to make bad choices even though she knows they could lead her down a bad path in life.

Grace was riding around with a friend drinking and the friend dropped her off at a retail store. She was extremely intoxicated and yet the friend did not go in the store to make sure she was ok. She blacked out in the store and the friend left her there. Grace, amazingly, said that has no resentment towards the person. She was influenced a great deal by her peers when the incident occurred and had fallen into the wrong crowd. She had always been in activities and always did well in school. She was perhaps one of the luckier young women; for she realized that her peers were not good influences and cut all ties with the assistance of her family.

Similarly, Ashley was with some friends shopping at the mall and they were stealing from all different stores when she got caught shoplifting. When her parents found out she was “hanging out” with kids that were not good influences, they put a stop to it. She said this very matter of fact. They made her quit her job where she met these bad influences, started working closely with the school administration about school performance and they moved her bedroom to the top floor so she could not sneak out of the house any longer.

Lauren blames the kids she was hanging out with for her going down the wrong path. They were using alcohol and drugs and not listening and lived place to place. When

asked about their futures she said they would all probably get a job so they could pay for more alcohol. When I asked her what her goal for her future was, she said, "Not that." Positive peers in her opinion go to school, are nice, pay attention to their parents and do not curse. She sees that as I sign that a person is disrespectful. She said that she got rid of many of the friends she had before being in the program. Her parents began asking her more questions about who she was with and what she was doing and that made a big difference, in her opinion.

Peer pressure is tremendous during the high school years. One mom said that when her daughter started to have a certain job and engaged in risky behaviors because the kids that she worked with were doing them and her daughter wanted to fit in so she began using substances, too. "So she got a job. She got a job, and the whole crew was drug addicts. So, then we really had a problem." Another parent said, "She had made statements where all of her friends were doing it (shoplifting) and hundreds of her friends got away with it, and the big talk at school is that everybody gets away with stealing at a certain department store."

Andrea also talked about the kids that she was hanging out with at the time of the incident. She started getting into drinking and partying. She changed some of her friends, but not all. She said she still likes to "party." It was interesting to me that the two individuals who have maintained some of their negative peer relationships were the two that admittedly still used alcohol or drugs.

Karen, a monitor, said that it is a challenge to get kids to understand that there are other kids who are not bad influences. So many times, the young women, because of who they have been associating with, have a skewed view of peers. I would add that they

normalize delinquency, because it is the only peer behavior that they know. They do not even realize how dysfunctional their relationships are.

Second, there was a strong similarity surrounding the negative influence of a boyfriend. The program director has worked in the medical field in the past and she came to a startling realization when I was talking with her. She said that something she learned when working with substance abuse is that if the man is using, the girlfriend or wife generally would follow suite and use substances, too. She said that she sees this often with the young people in the program. Girls so desperately want to be loved, that they allow their insecurities to win them over and they make decisions that the normally would not make.

I was reminded of what I know about adult female incarceration statistics. Criminal involvement often comes by way of a dysfunctional relationship with a significant other (Chesney-Lind, 1997). The most common pathway to crime is based on survival. Many women have been the victims of abuse and poverty and many turn to illegal substances. Many women remain connected to men who have abused them or who are supplying their illegal substances (Pollock, 1998). They are afraid to leave or have no financial means to leave the situation they are in. The program director said that this has led the program to utilize *The Three Principles of Mind* (Mills & Spittle, 2001), which is a teaching tool for helping young people understand that they can control their own thoughts and behavior. These young women need to feel empowered to make their own decisions and the program works very hard at increasing the level of self esteem that many of the girls are lacking.

When I asked Diesel about her boyfriend at the time, she smiled as if she knew that he was not a good influence on her. Consequently, he is still her boyfriend. She is aware that her parents and the other adults that were involved in the youth justice process all believed that this young man was not a good influence on her. I heard from several individuals throughout the interview process that he is verbally abusive towards her. I knew this information before I interviewed her and confronted her about this, but she denied that he was controlling in any way and actually said that he is a good influence on her because he does not approve of her doing “harder” drugs.

It took Andrea a long time to finally decide that she was better off without her boyfriend who was a negative influence. Her dad grounded her during the entire summer and she attempted to sneak out and see him, but finally broke the relationship off. “We tried to keep things going for a little bit by like me sneaking out to see him or something like that, but it just didn't work out, so I eventually just broke it off with him and just didn't talk to him much anymore.” Similarly, Grace’s association with a negative male was the reason she became drunk and got into trouble at a retail establishment. They had just broken up with her delinquent boyfriend and she was out joyriding with a friend. “Okay, well what happened was it was about a couple of weeks after he broke up with me – he left me for his ex-girlfriend. And I was really upset. He called me, and I don't know what he was talking about. I didn't care. I was just so mad at him. I went and hung out with my friend, and we just kind of started drinking. We were drinking vodka in his car, and I guess I drank way too much, and I blacked out at one point.”

Ashley said that she started having depression and had a boyfriend that was a bad influence. In her words he was, “a low life that mooched off his dad who smoked pot.”

She would skip school and hang out with him and she quit her activities so she would have more time to be with him. Her parents put a stop to the relationship.

Another interesting connection among the girls was their relationship with their fathers. Some girls did not talk about their maternal influence and a few discussed how that influence was negative in some way or another. But, the fathers, seemed to be the parent that the girls were either worried about disappointing or the parent with whom they yearned to have a closer relationship.

Sophie said that her daughter was very upset about how her dad reacted to her offense. Being the youngest in the family, she had always looked up to her dad and he was very disappointed in her. "Oh yeah. He did not look at her for awhile. He didn't talk to her for a while. It was tough at our house."

Grace comes from a religious home and stated that she hated disappointing her father. Her grandmother on her dad's side had passed away and she had been really close to her. She said that when she let her father down, it was as if she was letting her grandma down too. That hurt her deeply.

Diesel said that she was motivated to impress her dad more. He had higher expectations because of how he was raised and because of how successful he has become. She realized that he had higher expectations and she wanted to meet his standards. "He just has higher expectations because his parents and everything he's done. He's always been so good. Like you just -- he has higher expectations, so you just want to reach his standards." As she talked about this, a smile came across her lips as she compared his expectations to her mothers, who she lives with. She realized, and probably

took advantage of, her mother's inability to hold her accountable and to set high standards for her.

Most of the young ladies really wanted to have a stronger connection with their fathers and the program allowed them this opportunity. Grace never talked to her dad about her personal life, but after the program, she did. The family class really brought them closer together. It gave them an opportunity to talk about issues that they had never talked about before.

Similarly, Andrea said that she thought her dad really enjoyed the family class. He would try out the new strategies with her after the family classes and seemed to enjoy the time with her in the class. They would talk about the issues brought up in the class afterwards. "He'd always get all excited after the class, try to work on things that we were learning how to work on, and they had one lecture, I guess, about trying to write notes to your kids to encourage them, and he ended up writing me a really nice note and put it on my door. And I think he liked it." However, as a result of taking the class, he got more strict with not only her, but with her younger sister as well. He would ask her more questions about where she was going and what she was doing. Lauren and Grace said that their dads paid attention more and asked more questions about where they were going and who they were going to be with. Over all, it seemed like the dads were a little naïve about what their daughters were up to, but the mothers knew. It seemed like some of the mothers kept the information from the dads, which would be another interesting caveat to explore.

Throughout the interview Ashley talked frequently about how hard she has worked to be able to support herself. She took great pride in her accomplishments. She

noted that her father is a hard worker, as well, and she has always admired that about him. She knew that she had disappointed him and it was evident that she was working very hard to make him proud of her.

Grace and Andrea were afraid of what their dads might do when they found out that they had committed their offenses, as both dads get very angry. I sensed that they both can lose their tempers, but I did not ask follow up questions surrounding that, as I wished I would have after reviewing the transcripts. Andrea said that her dad gets very stressed out and he becomes really mad. He is a single parent so she does not like to stress him out any more than he already is. She articulated a lot of empathy for her dad throughout the entire interview. I was acutely aware that Andrea had been raised with good morals and values and it was evident that having divorced parents was really hard for her. She constantly felt like she was in the middle of her parents ugliness and she felt very uncomfortable with that position.

Half of the young women I talked with had divorced parents. I felt sad after these interviews, for it was obvious how much pain was there surrounding the divorce. Those dads did not really know what their daughters were doing. Diesel would be passive aggressive with her dad. She would not do what he told her to get negative attention from him and Andrea shoplifted when she and her dad would get in fights or when he would not give her what she wanted.

“I think circles educated my dad on really what was going on and even the whole using any type of drug at all... We probably got closer and, you know, fixed our relationship a little bit more because we got to talk about it and we got closer.”

4. Trusting relationships and the presence of social capital is at the heart of the success rate of restorative programming.

This finding connected with the research sub-question, “Do positive social relationships allow a delinquent youth to change her behaviors in order to then sustain her capacity to live as a responsible citizen?”

Social Capital

This is a community justice program that strives to work interdependently to help a young person get back on the right path. Because this is a community that believes in restorative practices, it was easier to build social capital for these young women (Braithwaite, 1989). The community and its views on how to address harms can make a big difference in the outcome. Social capital refers to the active connections between people. This includes trust, mutual understanding, shared values and behaviors that bind members of the group. “Trust” was a word that came up time and time again throughout the many responses of those interviewed. Social capital is the backbone of not only all relationships, but seemed to be a key ingredient that certain young women had that allowed them to move forward and prosper.

Social Competence

Bonnie Benard (1996, 2003) discusses a similar concept, social competence. She believes that it is one of the key components when discussing resiliency and achieving success in spite of the other factors surrounding the young person. She defines social competence as:

Social competence consists of relationship skills. It involves responsiveness, especially the ability to elicit positive responses from others; flexibility, including the

ability to move back and forth between primary culture and dominant culture (cross-cultural competence); and empathy, caring communication skills, and a sense of humor. (Benard, 1996, p.99)

It struck me, after learning more about social competency, that all of the young women that I interviewed had grown in this area. They had to be cooperative and responsive in order to even get into the program. They all seemed to have tender hearts at one point or another as they talked to me about their experiences. Some had tougher outer shells than others, but I sensed underneath a real vulnerability in all of the girls. Interviewing them was quite enjoyable, as well, for all of them had a good sense of humor and had positive interpersonal skills. They all said that their hope for the future was very strong and they felt confident that they would not go down a path like this again.

Moore's research (2004, p.76) emphasized my research finding when he said, "The more people have to lose from involvement in crime, the more likely they are to desist from criminal activity. It places emphasis on a sense of personal control and the presence of social support. If individuals feel they have some sense of dignity, a sense of hope for the future and significant positive relationships, then they have a great deal to lose from behavior that might damage those relationships." Many of the young women spoke about not wanting to go to court because they were worried that it would affect their ability to get a good job, go to college, or interfere with their future aspirations in some way.

Grace came from a religious home with two happily married parents and had always been able to trust not only her parents, but all the women in her life. Out of all the

young women, she seemed to be the best adjusted and she struck me as having the highest self esteem. She seemed very confident, intelligent, and she had a plan for how her life would be as a result of the program. She said that she looks up to the three women in her family: her mother, grandmother, and sister. The positive attributes that she noted were that they are loving, calm and attractive. She also stated that people you can trust and who genuinely care about you are positive peers.

As I reflected, I could not help but think how many of the young people that I work with in my school setting, do not have social competence. They do not have good communication skills, they are not flexible, and they are not cooperative and responsive. These individuals, therefore, are not even offered this opportunity; they are sent directly to juvenile court. I was reminded of Maloney's (2007) research, for he too believes that offenders do not have the skill set to cease their negative behaviors on their own and it is ridiculous to think that a single probation officer could influence the behavior of over 100 people.

One mother of a girl that did not successfully complete the program said, "My daughter is a very hard person to impact. She was determined she was going to be her, and she was hell-bent that no one was going to change that. She was who she was. If you didn't like it, too bad!" High verbal abilities and the willingness to "play the game" seemed to be important when not only determining placement in the program, but also completing the program successfully. This young woman got in trouble time and time again and never did finish the program successfully. I will discuss the referral process and the need for more intensive supports in Chapter 5.

Trust was the common denominator that I noticed running throughout all of the conversations surrounding relationships and the building of social competency and social capital in the program. Brady, an educator who was a part of a circle process, believes that relationships either make or break the success that a young person has in the program. He sees the value of social capital and has witnessed how increasing the level of trust, can really make a difference. The relationship between parent and child is critical and if the person connects with their monitor and has a strong connection, it can be very powerful as well. “The connections she made through her monitor was just wonderful. They really clicked, and I think that other six months allowed that relationship to grow and strengthen. And so I think everything combined, the school, the monitor relationship, the accountability of the program, the parents' involvement- it all finally clicked with her.”

The circle process (Boyes-Watson, 2005b) focuses on the strengths of the individual and builds the person up. This was reminiscent of what McElrae’s article (1994) articulated. This is not a deficit model, but instead focuses on the positive attributes that the young person brings to the table. There is a mutual understanding by all who are involved about what the goals of the program are.

One specific incident that Brady recollected centered on an issue that came up in Diesel’s circle. He encouraged and guided her about what steps to take to rectify the situation. She followed his advice, for there was trust that he cared about her and he would not lead her down a bad path. This young woman had very little social capital when the process began, but because of the trust that was built, left the program with many solid relationships.

Sometimes, social capital can be built up and destroyed all at the same time. Diesel said that the family class repaired a lot of the damage that had resulted from her parents' painful divorce. As a result of the class, she had more trust that her father did love her and she was able to communicate her feelings more and thus they became much closer as a result. On the other hand, during her circle process, one of the community members compared her to her daughter who had a significant substance abuse issue and she felt judged. The woman did not know her and yet she was passing judgment. This took away from the trust that she had developed about the circle being a safe place. It took everyone working together to repair the harm done, so the circle could become a symbol of strength again.

Diesel's mom knew how much she was smoking pot and did not really think that her daughter would stop. She knew that she was stubborn and she would not listen to anyone. She did not trust her to stop engaging in bad behaviors and she felt powerless to do anything about it, as she was working at nights and could not monitor her behavior. Similarly, another mother Annie said that the program really made her trust her daughter even less. With a sad look on her face, she confessed that she would go in her room and look around when she was gone. She just could not trust her anymore. "And so, you know, I'd go look in her room for stuff. And, you know some of my friends would say it's your right. You know, she got in trouble. You should keep an eye out and make sure -- you have a right to search her room or whatever. So I did, and I just had a hard time, you know, believing her. The trust wasn't there. So that was hard to lose that." It has been almost two years since the incident and the trust was finally beginning to rebuild. Being

able to talk more openly as a result of the work the family did in the program has helped them communicate more effectively and the trust has come back.

Diesel's father, who she had a troubled relationship with prior to the program, built trust when he advocated for her to stay in the program when they were contemplating referring her case to juvenile court. She was proud that he did not give up on her when she had a setback. "Yeah, they asked my dad if they should just let me go or—because some people they do move on to juvenile court. Some people they just think that there's no more help they can give you and really just don't do anything else with you and send you on. And some they let you, you know, stay in the program. She asked if she should keep me in and my dad said to keep me in."

Community Members

A vital component that assists with trust building is the circle process that the entire support network for the young person is involved in. The victims, the community, the family, and representatives from the program come together in the circles to support the young person. This increases the amount of social capital that the young person has. Karen, one of the program monitors, believes that having closeness and building trust is the key to success for working with the young women. She has, however, found that if she confronts the young girls about their negative behaviors, they often get upset and trust is broken. She said she has to be very aware of this when working with her young girls. "Just in general when I've confronted some girls it's like, that kind of breaks their trust in me or they don't want to continue meeting with me or they just don't want to continue meeting because they don't feel like we're doing anything."

There are many business people and educators that volunteer their time to be part of the process, as well, for they see the marked difference it is making for the youth in their community. A teacher who has been involved in the process liked the circle approach for it was more of a learning model. He thought it was very powerful when the community, the family and the school came together to support the young person. Additionally, a loss prevention person who works for a local department store has been involved in the program for the past seven years and also sees it as learning opportunity. He said that he really believes in the program. "I try to show them that the road they are going down is a very destructive road. Everybody makes choices in their lives and everybody is defined by their choices." He went on to say that he continues to be involved because he really feels like he makes a difference. He believes if just one person a year hears his message; it has all been worth his efforts. Sometimes, he admitted, he gets a feeling that the young person is not going to take the program seriously. And then, in the circle, he sees a turnaround.

I've been surprised by a few. And one was just a couple weeks ago where I honestly thought this girl was headed for prison by the time she was 18. That there was actually no hope for her, and that was the mind-set I went in with, and when I left there that day, I did a 180 degree turn around thinking this is a girl who just had a very hard life and she doesn't want to go down the road she's going, but that's the only way she knows how, and I think she's going to learn a lot from this program.

The community also takes on a significant role in providing community service opportunities. This component really made an impact on Diesel and her self esteem

soared. She became a part of a group that was for troubled teenagers. She became a leader in the group and found her voice. The drug abuse and poor school attendance had resulted from her lack of self esteem. She noted that the reason the program was so impactful, was that she really trusted the woman who ran the group. She felt comfortable really opening up to her and she knew that whatever was said in that group was going to stay there. She began to trust that she was in charge of her thinking and her actions and she realized that her mind became clear when she stopped smoking marijuana on a regular basis. The impact was so strong, that she continued to attend the group even after her program experience was over.

Similarly, the community members that give of their time to be part of the young woman's experience can make a huge impact. Feuerstein (1980) states that researches often point to studies that have shown that people who have overcome adverse conditions can always point to a relationship from someone outside of their immediate circumstances who has provided a strong mentoring role. Several of the young women spoke about not wanting to disappoint an adult in their life by not completing the process successfully. One parent said that her daughter did not want to disappoint her favorite teacher, for he believed in her and was involved in all of her circle meetings. That was a motivational factor. Another did not want to disappoint the monitor that she had formed a close relationship with.

Family Structure

One more theme that emerged that relates to trust was that of the family structure. My research findings correlated with what I had uncovered in the research. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) stated that the inability for a family

to manage its problems is the number one risk factor for delinquency (Schumacher & Kurz, 2000). I saw many of the parents of these girls at a complete loss about how to help them. Schumacher and Kurz (2000) point out that youth who are chronic offenders will generally have at least three of the following issues. First, the families are disrupted. Half of those girls interviewed had divorced parents. Second, children may be raising themselves with very little support and guidance from the parental units or they may have a single parent who is struggling to provide the structure and accountability that youth need. Again, even if the parents were present, they were so busy with their own lives that they did not take the time to listen and spend time with their daughters.

Divorce

Andrea's parents were divorced, but her dad attended and completed the family class. Her mother went to one class and told her that it was not worth her time. I felt saddened by her situation. It seemed that she really held her mom up on a pedestal, but based on what she told me about her actions throughout the process, I felt that her priorities were not centered on what was best for her daughter. There was a profound feeling of sadness as I listened to what divorce had done to all of their family structures. It became abundantly clear that divorce really negatively impacted everyone's life to some degree. There was a lot of pain in the faces of the girls and their parents as they spoke about the divorces and what it did to the family system.

I walked away from this research experience really feeling the impact of the family structure and the impact that it can have on the children. The hurt that I heard and saw as these girls talked about their family situations, was overwhelming. Some parents seemed to be so busy with their own lives and activities that they had disconnected from

their daughters. I started to feel angry towards their parents for putting their kids in the middle of all of their issues. The divorces were devastating to the young girls. When they could no longer trust both parents to be present in their lives, the behavior issues began.

Diesel's mother was so devastated about the divorce, that she completely stopped parenting. "And then my mom was so distraught that she didn't really parent for a couple of years and she wasn't there for us, and we did kind of fend for ourselves and we had good friends that we went to elementary school with, so we were just with them a lot and kind of did what we just did."

Diesel's divorced mother was obviously overwhelmed. She seemed to be the saddest parent, for I could sense how much she loved her child, but she just really struggled with how to set boundaries for her and provide the parenting that she needed.

Yes, she was definitely hanging out with the wrong crowd and not coming home some nights at all. She would stay out until way late, four or three in the morning. Not calling. I would spend hours trying to get a hold of her. I'd be so worried. I knew she had been smoking pot. I virtually gave her no consequences, so about the only thing I felt like I could do was beg her not to, but it never really worked. She had, I would say, total lack of motivation. She was very angry and she had no direction. And I felt like her whole life revolved around when she could get her next joint. And if I even tried to give her consequences, she would threaten me with running away and I would never see her again and the fear of that was enough to keep me from giving her consequences that I wouldn't be able to follow through with anyway.

Later in the conversation, she had an epiphany while speaking to me about the family class experience that her family had. She said:

I think that she really enjoyed it. I think that maybe she thought that we cared because we all took it. And maybe she thought that we didn't up to that point because she was...she didn't get much discipline. She needed us to tell her-she needed her family to give her rules.

The daughter had attributed a lack of discipline with the idea that her parents did not care enough about her to discipline her.

5. The circle process and the monitor piece were the most impactful and helped to make the most change.

This finding helped to address the original sub question, "What was the impact of the various facets of the program on the female youth?"

"Circles promote: trust and respect, equal communication, support, emotional healing, creativity and problem solving, unity and a sense of shared purpose" (Boyes-Watson, 2005b, p. 200). This quote summarizes what I discovered the young women liked so much about the circle process. After coding the data from the interviews, I discovered that the two most impactful components are the circle process and the monitors that are assigned to the cases to work individually with the young girls. The young women truly felt impacted and changed as a result of the circle process. Both the young girls and the other adults I interviewed thought this was the most powerful component of the program.

The circles that I have been a part of have been extremely emotional and powerful. I believe it is attributed to the strong community where the program is

implemented. “Re-integrative shaming... will be more widespread in societies where communities are strong, where citizens are densely enmeshed in loving, trusting, or respectful relationships with others: strong communities are also the key resources for the prevention of criminal subcultures formation” (Braithwaite, 2000, p. 291). Frank Cullen (1994) researched and found that social support is of central importance to crime prevention. According to Sampson et al.,(1997, p. 918), collective efficacy is what strong communities have.

Several of the young women talked about how they felt having to talk about what they had done in front of not only their parents, but their extended family as well. It seemed that the girls really had a hard time having to tell their grandparents, who did not know they were acting in a delinquent way. Andrea felt really awkward having to tell her whole family about how she stole. She was ashamed and embarrassed, but all of her family members sent the message to her that they loved her and forgave her. She felt shameful, which I will address in the next section, but her family forgave her and made her feel better about herself.

Lauren liked the wrap around support that she felt by having someone from her school, her family, and the community in her circle. She liked hearing the different perspectives and she felt she learned a lot from that. I think what Lauren was really trying to say is that social capital was built for her as a result of being a part of the circle. Boyes-Watson (2005b) believes that it is the circle process that really builds the social capital for a young person. She liked being the center of the attention and she felt the circle process allowed her to have a voice in her family. “When you come from a big

family, when you talk, you get interrupted all the time or talked over you know so when you have the rock nobody else could talk so you could talk.”

Sometimes, the circles were difficult for the young women. Diesel was falsely accused of taking harder drugs, when she knew that she had not. She felt like they were all looking at her like she was helpless and had a drug problem and she did not like that. One female community member was very rude. She compared her to a very, very troubled young teen. She did not feel like she was that person and she did not appreciate being judged by someone that did not even know her. Interestingly, Tavuchis (1991) criticizes the circle process for this reason. He does not think that people who were not in the original dispute should be a part of the process, for it can shift the attention to the moral integrity of the offender, instead of being focused on the offense itself.

One girl, Andrea, thought that the program director was trying to fix the communication issues within her family during the circle process, when the focus should have been on her. She was frustrated that her family became a major issue in the process. It was interesting to me that the family could not see that the dysfunctional communication that was transpiring was what was causing the young girl to act out. The father of the girl complained about the same issue, but he too could not seem to comprehend that the director was shining a light on the family because that was the source of the girl's issues.

There were mixed perspectives about the circles from the parental perspective, as well. Some of the parents just thought the girls said what others wanted them to say in the circles; they were not authentic. I also discovered that some of the parents also felt shame. One parent said the following about her circle experience, “I hated it. I hated

sitting around that circle and talking. I did feel judged and I didn't want to be there. Part of the problem was I had to fight back tears a lot and I didn't want to cry in that group. I felt torn. I loved her to death and didn't want her to have to be there and it was rough."

Mike, one of the fathers, really enjoyed the circle process and it gave him a good opportunity to talk about the progress that his daughter was making. At one point in the process, the group seemed to be getting too large and was overwhelming to the young girl. The program director listened to the feedback and made the circle smaller, which the father really appreciated. He thought the flexibility shown throughout the circle process was exactly what his daughter and his family needed in order to meet with success.

The second most impactful component of the program on the young girls was the monitor relationship that they had throughout the process. Although some young women reported that they did not have a connection with their monitor and did not find it helpful, the majority found this to be very beneficial.

Several of the young ladies felt that the monitor was like a friend. Lauren really liked her monitor. She was, however, frustrated by the lack of a consistent schedule. This appeared to be an interesting statement, for her family structure seemed to be very chaotic. I think that she really yearned for structure in the other parts of her life to balance out the lack of structure in her family life.

Jenny and Diesel liked "hanging out" with their monitors. They felt they were easy to relate to and it gave them someone to talk to if they needed to. The young women really seemed to enjoy spending time with an older woman going for coffee, taking walks, and other activities that young girls might do with a mother or older sister.

Some of the girls could see themselves in their monitor and formed a special connection, which goes back to building social capital. The impact of the monitor relationship on Diesel was substantial.

She had a hard life. She went through a lot of things and so it just made me like—we related in a lot of ways and it just—hearing her story just impacted me more like being able to see where she’s come from and like the hard thing she’s gone through, and like we just related.

She also says that she matured a lot in her thinking during the process and when she began to take her sobriety seriously, that is when the change happened. She really started to process what the monitor was trying to tell her about how she could control her own destiny. Diesel began to see that she could change the course of her life, just like her monitor changed the course of hers.

The mothers seemed to be more aware of the monitor relationships than the fathers. It seemed that the young women talked to their moms about their monitors quite often. One stated that her daughter trusted her monitor because her monitor had self disclosed about her troubled youth. Another mother thought that her daughter opened up more because her monitor was younger and could relate to her experiences.

In contrast, several parents said their daughters just did it because they had to. Nick commented, “It was part of the deal, she had to talk with this person. She would talk with this person. She would do whatever she had to do.” Ashley, one of the young women in the program, did not get along well with her monitor. She felt the monitor tried to talk down to her and she believed that she is a smart person. She did not like the “vibe”

that she gave off and they never clicked. She did not think that the relationship was beneficial in any way and said that this part of the program was not necessary.

It seemed that it is essential for the young women to feel a connection with their monitor. This again goes back to building social competence. Many of the interviewees stated that there needs to be an even better process in place to match the young girls and their monitors. If matched appropriately, this can have a huge impact. If not matched appropriately, it is a waste of resources. A monitor suggested that they go along to the home visit to make sure there is a good match. It appears that the girls need to be told more specifically why they have a monitor. Some were unsure of what the person's purpose was.

6. Shame was lessened through the restorative process and is re-integrative in nature.

This finding relates to research sub question, "In what ways did the young women experience shame?"

The youth justice initiative program's goal is to help the young person take responsibility for their actions and to put right the wrong that they have done with themselves and the other stake holders. All of the young women, to some extent, received the message that they were good people who had made bad choices. The tone that was set by the program director is one of forgiveness, for the program's philosophy is centered on Braithwaite's Re-integrative Shaming Theory (1989).

"Re-integrative shaming is an effective deterrent, particularly when it comes from those who the individual is close to, because it poses a threat to relationships that are valued. The second mechanism, which Braithwaite suggests is more important, is that re-

integrative shaming communicates that certain behaviors are wrong and thus builds internalized controls” (Harris, 2006, p. 330).

Jenny felt guilty, ashamed and embarrassed about what she had done in the beginning. She did feel like a bad person at first, but felt forgiven as the program went along. She felt better when she went to the family class and saw other kids she knew there. The young girls and their parents seemed to feel less shame overall when they went to the family class. There was some comfort in knowing that other people just like them had either made similar mistakes or had children that had. One parent specifically said that he was amazed at how many prominent people were in the family class. He appeared to have preconceived notions about what types of kids commit crimes and when he realized that all types of kids commit crimes, his shame dissipated.

Jenny felt shame on two specific occasions. The first time she could remember was when the retailer referred to himself as the victim. His comments made her feel like a criminal. She had not thought that her actions impacted anyone but herself, so this was hard for her to hear. This reminded me of the reason restorative justice can be so powerful. Howard Zehr (2005) states that the distinct difference between participating in the formal justice system and a restorative process is that, “Restorative justice views crimes as committed against victims and communities, rather than government entities” (Ball, 2003, p.51). Even though it was uncomfortable, Jenny was able to face what she had done and make amends in order for her shame to lessen. She was also present when the school resource officer talked to her about the program and about what she had done. She felt like a delinquent after that conversation. She felt he was talking down to her and he made her feel “less than.” She was ashamed to have to meet with him at the school

with her parents, as well. She did not want others to know that she was in the program. This was a theme that ran throughout the interviews. If they had felt shame about what they had done, they did not want others to know they were in the program.

Lauren felt shameful every time her monitor brought the incident up. She wanted to just put it behind her. Her monitor would also come to the school to meet with her. She did not want anyone to know that she was in the program and she did not want anybody at school to think that she was a bad kid. She associated the program with “bad kids” and she did not see herself in this way.

Diesel was the only young woman that did not seem to feel shame about what she had done. Because Diesel did not really feel like she had done anything wrong by having marijuana in a car, when the community member in the circle tried to shame her and tell her how bad it was, she got very angry. She felt judged and did not appreciate the label that she was trying to attach to her. Diesel and Lauren, in particular, seemed to be concerned with being identified as kids with serious problems. In the end, however, the message that the program director sent about being a good person who had made a mistake, is what sunk in. Perhaps the director read Lawrence Sherman’s book (1994) where he insists that respectful policing, which involves procedural fairness, politeness and giving the offender the benefit of a presumption that they are a good person, who may have done a bad act, builds commitment to the law.

Diesel had another experience where others tried to make her feel shame, but she resisted. She had a false positive urine test and the results were brought up in one of her circles. She tried to tell them that she had not used substances, but the program director did not believe her. Diesel remembers the director’s tone of voice and the sarcasm that

she was using. Again, it seemed that someone was trying to make her feel ashamed of something that she had no shame about, for she knew that she had not used illegal substances. This event was very hurtful for her. Her trust had been broken and she felt she was being called a liar. She felt vindicated, however, when the test was re-done and the director apologized publicly. That was the turning point. She put her mind to doing the right thing.

I believe that all of the young women were able to process the shame they had and move on with their lives. The only young woman that I questioned was Ashley. She really seemed to still struggle with her feelings surrounding the event. She appeared to have the most unresolved shame (Harris, 2006) of the young women for she talked about one shameful experience after another. This was not surprising, for she was negative about most of the components of the program, and from my perspective did not work the program like she could have. She did not seem to have a lot self awareness of the ability to truly reflect and look deep within herself. She was the least emotional of the six young women I interviewed. I sensed sadness, pride and joy from the other girls, but Ashley was rather non emotional. Her monitor had a difficult time connecting with her and I could see how that would have been challenging.

Karen, one of the monitors, believes that the hardest part of the circle process for the young women is seeing their parent disappointed in them. They feel shame, for it was never their intention to hurt their family members. Ashley shared that she was really embarrassed at her first circle meeting. Getting other family members involved made her feel ashamed. She did not want them to think badly of her. Her grandparents drove several hours to participate in the process. She was glad that she did not have to go to

court, though, because it would have been more public. She resented going to the family classes and did not like having other people see her there.

Similarly, she felt so much shame about having to talk about her offense at the family class that she really targeted it in her interview. Her recommendation was to eliminate that component of the program. She did not see that it benefited her family, which she said was strong and yet only rated it a 5 out of 10 for being connected, and she did not like talking about her issues in front of her family, let alone people she did not know.

Another shameful experience occurred at her home. After she committed her shoplifting offense, her parents made her go upstairs and tell her little sister what she had done. She said that her little sister looked up to her and admired her and it was devastating to have to tell her what she had done. This is just one example of how some of the families tried to make the girls feel more shame about what they had done.

Ashley seemed so resistive and ashamed, that I am not sure if she was truly able to hear that she was forgiven throughout the process. She has not committed another offense, nor does she think what she did was acceptable. I am not sure, however, if the program itself helped her to move past her feelings. She seemed to be the least emotional of the six young women I interviewed.

Grace did not say that she still felt shameful, but she told me that she has not been back to the retail establishment where she blacked out from drinking alcohol two years ago for fear that an employee will recognize her. She still seemed to harbor a lot of shame surrounding her incident. From what she said, I believe her family contributed to her

shameful feelings. One of the monitors shared that she believes that many families feel shame and transfer that shame onto their daughters. I sensed that in Grace.

I asked one parent why he thought their daughter was not returning my phone calls and appeared to be uninterested in talking to me about her experiences. He said that he thought she still felt ashamed of what she had done and wanted to put it behind her. I started to wonder if this was the reason that I could only get six out of twenty-three girls to talk to me. One parent said that her daughter did not want to talk to me, but she encouraged her to do so because she thought it would be another positive step in her healing process and would help her to continue to work through the shame that she had felt.

Findings Summary:

After completing fourteen different interviews and coding the data, six major themes emerged: theft is the main offense of YJI young women, the young women have cognitive dissonance surrounding who they are and the crime they committed, negative peers, negative boyfriends and fathers were very influential on these young women, social capital is needed and developed by participation in the program, the circles and the monitor components had the most impact, and the majority of young women experienced re-integrative shame through the process. Those themes were each supported by quotes from the interviews, field notes taken during the interview process, and by restorative justice and related research in the field.

Chapter 5

SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

This research that I conducted can be effectively applied to the school setting in which I work. The themes that ran throughout the interviews positively reinforced the current work that my staff and I are doing with the young people that we work with on a daily basis. Over the past four years, I have worked diligently to infuse restorative practices into our school culture. Conflict mediation, circles of concern and support, and restitution are all forms of restorative justice that my school continues to use in order to encourage and maintain a culture of respect. Restorative justice allows us to focus on repairing the damage that has been done to the individual or the school populace as a whole. The process allows the offender to take accountability and be respectfully reintegrated into the larger school community. The application of restorative principles in the school setting has had a tremendous positive impact on my alternative high school culture. This way of working with not only the youth in the building, but the adults too, has been an interesting and exciting evolution. This chapter will examine what restorative justice can look like in the school setting and how the research findings can be applied to current practice in my alternative setting.

Relationships

The main relationship that has existed between administrators and students has been that of control (Varnham, 2005). Schools traditionally have used a punitive discipline model when working with students with behavior issues. Restorative methods take a much different approach. When we use a punishment model with students, we are really doing a disservice not only to the school community, but also to the community at

large (Varnham, 2005). Students need to know how their actions impact the other members of their community. The student still has consequences, but there is a deeper learning that takes place and it allows for self-reflection and sustained behavior change. The student is asked to take ownership of what they did and make amends, or repair the damage they have done to the community as a whole.

The young people in my research study were deeply impacted by hearing from the victims of their crimes. I have also found this to be true in the school setting. Generally, it is not the intent of the person to make the other person feel bad or to hurt their feelings. When victims are given the opportunity to share their feelings with the offender, there is generally a great sense of remorse and the offender has a desire to make it right. Thus, restorative practices offer an effective alternative to traditional school discipline procedures.

Real Life Skills

In a restorative school setting, healthy conflict resolution skills are taught and modeled. Young people are given ways to peacefully resolve conflicts which creates a safe learning environment. Students often come to school lacking appropriate ways to manage their anger and they do not know how to effectively solve their conflicts. Many young people have witnessed the adults in their lives model unhealthy ways of resolving conflict by using intimidation, threats, and violence.

Conflict Mediation

Conflict mediation is one method that can be used to encourage positive conflict resolution. New Zealand (Varnham, 2005) created an initiative to address the increasing number of students who were being expelled and suspended called the Suspension

Reduction Initiative (SRI). Even with this in place, there was an increase of nearly seven percent in the number of suspensions. The violations that were most typical were: disobedience, physical and verbal assault, and drugs (Varnham, 2005). Varnham (2005) states that many schools focus on getting rid of the trouble makers in their schools or they use a punishment model to try to stop the behavior. But, New Zealand could see that this mentality was not working, for discipline was on the rise and something else had to be done to address the issue. So, they began to use restorative justice practices in their schools. They began to stress responsibility and the restoration of relationships. The victim and the offender worked through the process in a respectful manner. They began using alternative dispute resolution practices, negotiation, and mediation. These schools became known as “Cool Schools.”

Similarly, we use a conflict mediation process such as this in my alternative setting. We have been amazed at the success rate. There are “bottom lines” in restorative justice, which in the school setting all revolve around matters of safety. These bottom lines are enforced by school board policies that speak to: weapons, alcohol and drug offenses, and acts of violence. If students engage in these activities, there will be a punitive consequence, suspension or expulsion, for example. But, when and if the student returns to school, they will be reintegrated into the community and a restorative process of some sort will be utilized. For example, when I have two students that engage in an altercation while at school, they will both be suspended from school to preserve a safe learning environment for the other students. But, when they return, they will engage in a conflict resolution meeting with me. I want to do everything possible to ensure that we will have no more violence in the school. This gives both parties an opportunity to share

their thoughts and feelings and for all of us to come up with agreements to ensure the safety of all parties. I have even had parents involved in these meetings. I have found parents to be very supportive of this type of consequence. Parents do not want to see their child or other children harmed. They are willing to do what they can to assist.

Conflict resolution meetings are held at other times, as well. Students can request a meeting with another student or staff member to proactively address issues that are building. Because this way of working with one another has infiltrated the culture, the staff will use this process to work with one another if they have issues that need to be worked through. Staff report using the basic process that we use outside the school setting with their own family and friends, as they have been impressed with the positive results that the process has yielded.

Circles

Besides conflict resolution meetings, many schools are using justice circles to resolve conflicts in the school setting. Circle conferencing provides a conversation with a formal structure (Moore, 2004). All parties that were affected by the crime come together in a circle to discuss the impact and problem solve towards positive ends. Conferencing can improve the quality and quantity of the relationships in a group (Moore, 2004). A third party is brought in to help all parties effectively resolve their issues and develop a plan of action.

This can be applied in the school setting, which is being advocated for by the Restorative Practices Department Team from the School of Education at the University of Waikato (Varnham, 2005). Conferencing first began in the early 1990s and was used with the criminal justice system. Schools, however, have been reluctant to implement

restorative methods, for this method takes a lot of time and a lot of energy and skill, but the benefit is clearly worth the time and effort exerted. Some schools have begun to use this model to address bullying. Australia has implemented a program called REACT, which aims to repair harm, expect the best from others, acknowledge feelings/harm done, care for others, and take responsibility for behavior. The data collected from this program was positive and students learned a great deal and bullying behaviors decreased (Varnham, 2005).

Schools can choose to use circle conferencing in many different ways, which include: application, healing, support, agreement and follow-up (Coates, Umbert, & Vos, 2003). We have been using the circle process in my alternative school for the past three years. We hold different types of circles, but predominantly we hold circles of concern to address negative behaviors that we see. The student is asked to select three to four staff members of whom he or she feels are supportive of them. We then come together in a conference space and I am the circle keeper. I begin by having each person tell the young person what they are concerned about. After they have all spoken, the young person summarizes what she hears and responds. Next, each person tells the young person what positive attributes and behaviors they have seen and what they would like to see more of. Again, the young person summarizes what they heard and comments. Lastly, the talking piece is put in the center of the group and agreements are made. All parties, including the young person, make commitments that will allow the student to become more successful. A follow up circle is scheduled for approximately three weeks after the original circle meeting and all participants complete a circle satisfaction evaluation after each circle

meeting. They generally take 60 minutes to facilitate and we have seen tremendous growth and behavior change as a result of this process.

The circles of concern have been held for males and females in my school. We have students that exhibit very challenging behaviors. Each person that has engaged in the circle process has experienced success on some level. I have found that often, students and even staff become emotional during the conversation. If there is trust and the right tone has been set, students have been able to let their guard down and open their minds and their hearts to what others have to say. This research helped me to see that we need to do more of this work in my school. For those students who are highly at-risk, we need to also involve their families or others who can build their social capital.

We have also held circles of concern that originated from community concerns. Last year, a citizen from the neighborhood that surrounds my school came to me with many concerns. Students were smoking, driving at high rates of speed, attempting to sell drugs to young children, and intimidating elderly individuals. I facilitated a circle process that involved student leaders, concerned citizens from the community, parents, police and school officials. We all worked together to come up with agreements to improve the situation. The results were positive and the situation has improved immensely.

The circle process is effective for many reasons. Moore (2004) states that students are much less likely to re-offend if they feel a sense of control, there is a presence of social support, they are treated with dignity, they have a sense of hope for the future and they have positive relationships. When thinking about the application of my research study, I will use the circle process more with our highly at-risk young women. We have a tendency to target the delinquent males, for some reason. We must also, involve our

delinquent young women in the circle process. When the young person is surrounded by school staff that she trusts and that she knows have her best interest at heart, she will more likely feel reintegrated and will therefore be able to return to the school community strengthened.

Braithwaite's (1989) work surrounding re-integrative shaming is important to consider when applying restorative justice practices to a school setting. Instead of stigmatizing and segregating those who have misbehaved, what we really need to do is reintegrate them and help them have a change of behavior. He observed many conferences, audio-recorded and analyzed transcripts and spoke to participants at length in order to collect data about conferencing. It became evident that the conferencing process could be seen as not only a way to work through problems, but also an example of participatory democracy (Moore, 2004). I have seen amazing growth in students as a result of this process. Once students feel supported and they have the opportunity to work through their issues in a supportive and nurturing way, they come back to the group strengthened.

After conducting my research, I could see that we need to involve the entire family system and the community in the circles of concern for the delinquent young women, when appropriate. Many of our families lack the skills to appropriately encourage and support their young people. This process could help them to develop better communication skills and it would allow families the opportunity to work collaboratively with the school system for support. We hope to do more circle work to address academic and social emotional concerns that includes the entire family system in my alternative school, especially with our young females.

Under the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989*, New Zealand provided a program that allowed youth who have offended to attend a conference with their family, other support individuals and the victim (Varnham et al.,2005). The conference allowed the offender to put things right and the group decided what consequences the young person should have received. Similarly, when New Zealand noted that Maori boys were over-represented in number of suspensions, the Ministry of Education brought forward the concept of restorative justice to help schools look at discipline in a new way to help reduce the number of offenses, conferencing was used (Drewery, 2004).

Schools in Queensland, Australia have used restorative conference practices such as conferencing to address behavior issues like this in their school district as well. They began to use the process when they had a bullying incident at a school dance. Because it was so successful, 119 schools became involved and 379 district personnel were trained in how conferencing works and how to use it in the school setting. They conducted 89 conferences in the two studies and data was collected throughout that time. They used conferences to deal with assaults, property damage, theft, drugs and verbal abuse to name a few (Cameron & Thorsborne, 2001).

The South Saint Paul Restorative Justice Council (SSPRJC) was created in 1996 to find alternative ways of dealing with conflict in the community and in the schools. The circles described in this article were done as a part of a diversion program. Qualitative studies were done to evaluate the effectiveness. A total of 62 individuals were interviewed and 13 circles were observed. The data showed that people viewed circles as places where they were listened to and a place where each individual has equal status.

The respondents said that they liked working to solve problems as a community and they liked the affirmation of shared values.

I have conducted circles of concern that have involved parents, guardians, community members, school staff and students to address gang activity. I collaborated with our community justice director and co-facilitated a process that involved parents, community members, police, school personnel, and youth. The entire process took several weeks, but the time was well invested. After the final circle, there were no more school or community issues among the two groups of boys. This was the most rewarding professional experience that I have had, thus far in my career. I was in awe about the power that a restorative process could have to change the course of lives. Before the circle process, parents and school staff members feared that some of the young men might lose their lives. After the process, all parties felt reassured that the young people would remain safe.

Restitution

Restitution is another way for students to right their wrongs. For example, in my school setting if students are caught with tobacco products or are using tobacco, they can choose a punitive punishment (suspension) or they can choose a restorative consequence of picking up cigarette butts out in the community several days in a row. They may also choose to take a tobacco education class that my school nurse teaches. We encourage our students to choose the restorative consequence so they do not miss instructional time and they almost always do. Parents are very supportive of restorative consequences, as well. When I explain that I want their child to learn from what they did and that I want them to

remain in school, all parents have responded positively. Restorative practices make sense to parents.

We will continue to use restorative practices to address behavior issues, but we will work towards using them to involve families and to address not only behavior, but academic concerns as well. After completing my research, I can also see that we can do more restorative work with our delinquent young women. We have no mentoring program in my school, for example. I will speak to the community justice director to discover if the school might be able to utilize the monitors that she has for the Youth Justice Initiative program. This might be a way to collaborate with the community and build the social capital of these young women.

I am also interested in developing a course that would give these young women information and skills surrounding interpersonal and intrapersonal communication. They all seem to need information and skill building that would assist them with making good decisions. Perhaps the mentoring piece could be a part of this class. Many of these young women choose to be involved in unhealthy relationships and have unhealthy boundaries, especially with men. Many steal and regularly use alcohol and drugs. They could benefit from programming that addresses all of these issues. Another area to explore would be how divorce has impacted the young women. This seemed to be a pervasive issue and one that negatively impacted the young women that I interviewed.

School Connections Summary

After completing this research, it was very clear to me that restorative justice is an impactful and effective way to address misbehavior that my delinquent young women exhibit. It is respectful and positive way for the school, community, and home to work

together. The different forms that restorative justice can take all teach real life skills that students will be able to use the rest of their lives. Conflict resolution, circles, and restitution are all viable options. Effective programming for the young women in my school will continue to involve restorative justice. What I did learn, is that it is essential to work with the entire family system and whenever possible, the community at large. We will be analyzing how we can involve the families and community to a greater extent in my school environment.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS

School, community, and home need to collaborate in order to critically examine the juvenile delinquency epidemic. There are troubled young people in our community and in the school system that need the type of support that restorative programming can provide. These individuals lack the skills needed to experience success. The young people who commit offenses in our communities and schools are not getting the proper supports to sustain behavior change. As a community, we need to take a look at the layers of neglect and implement services that will adequately address the deficiencies these youth and families have.

Overview of the Study

My perspective shifted from a general orientation of a post-positivist (Creswell, 2007) to that of a critical theorist (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). My study investigated twenty-three young women who were in the youth justice initiative program during the past two years who are now over the age of eighteen. Six of those young women responded to my invitation to be interviewed about their experiences in the program. I would have preferred to have interviewed all of the young women, as the data would have been much richer. I hypothesized that many young women did not respond, for they still felt shame about what they had done and did not want to talk about it. Data were collected in three different ways. First, individual interviews of the young girls were conducted to explore their experiences in the program (Appendix G). Most of them felt shame about what they had done and could not see themselves as criminals. Some minimized their behavior and others were devastated by what they had done. Although many of them had divorced

parents, there was still strong parental support from at least one of the parental units. They all had goals, dreams, and hopes for their futures and realized that if they would have continued on their path of self destruction, they would not have gotten to the desired destination. Currently, they each self reported that they were doing well and were back on the path to a healthy and successful life.

Next, two parent focus groups were facilitated. They were asked several open-ended questions about how the experience was for their daughters (Appendix F). The parents were candid about their feelings surrounding the delinquency of their daughters. It was, however, challenging for them to speak about how the experience was for their daughter, for it was obvious that they had their own feelings about the program and the impact that it had on their lives. There was a sense of shame felt by several parents and yet some seemed to minimize the behavior. All seemed optimistic about the futures of their young daughters.

Last, six additional adults who were involved with the program were individually interviewed (Appendix H). Each of these individuals was a part of the process of one of the young women who were in the program during the past two years. They all had devoted a great deal of time and energy to the program and felt that it was a life altering experience for the young people involved, if they put forth the effort.

Every interview was transcribed professionally and returned to me for coding purposes. Each transcript was read through meticulously and coded for emergent themes. There were many commonalities among the different data sources and emergent themes resulted.

Discussion

One emergent theme was these young women were not the stereotypical at-risk youth that so much of the literature describes (Bazemore, 2005). These young women were intelligent, financially secure, goal orientated and personable. Many of these young girls were raised well and knew the difference between right and wrong. Because of the Youth Justice Initiative program, these girls were able to get back onto the well paved road that their parents had worked so hard to prepare for them. One monitor noted about the program “It changes lives.” This, I discovered was a true statement.

The second emergent theme that dominated throughout the research process was the far reaching impact this program has. It not only changed the lives of the offenders, the young women, but it also had a tremendous effect on the parents who were involved and the various other adults who were a part of the process in some capacity. In Braithwaite’s (1989) book *Crime, Shame, and Reintegration* he reminds us that the community and parental influence is key to the development of a healthy young person. It is essential that a young person be raised to know what is and is not acceptable by her community. She also needs to know that when she veers off that path, the family, the school, and the community will reintegrate her in a positive manner. The program allowed all stake holders to express their feelings, be reintegrated, and move forward. The victim, who in most Youth Justice Initiative situations are the family members or members of the community, must also be remembered.

The third emergent theme that resulted was that of social class and its relationship to crime. The young women in this program were all of the middle or upper middle class. They had trouble seeing themselves as “one of those people” and so did their family

members. The referring officer seemed to subliminally refer those individuals to this diversion program and others to juvenile court. Those families who were uncooperative were not allowed the opportunity of the Youth Justice Initiative. I was left feeling like the families that truly needed the support and skill building the most, were not going to have access to the services.

Conclusions

Programs such as The Youth Justice Initiative program prevent many young women from being adjudicated. This seems to be an effective program for the population that it serves, the young women, but also for their families. I was surprised by the feedback that I received from the parents. I began the research process with a focus on the young women and how the program impacted them, but the study took a slightly different turn, for the parents had a lot to say about how the process impacted them and their families. The families are a large component and most were satisfied with the result that the program had on their children. They were relieved that their daughter would not have a record and many needed someone to help them get their young person “straightened out.”

The different components of the program were explored and much information was collected. The young women seemed to mature and learn many valuable skills from the various components. It was obvious that the young girls appreciated the parental participation. All parties conveyed that it is a very important component, for the program itself relies heavily on parent support, involvement, and accountability. It appears that most of the families that are in this program are middle to upper class and are referred by the school resource officers, who are also juvenile detectives for the city. Many of the

young women had loving and yet disrupted family situations. Divorce seemed to be an initiating incident for the delinquent behavior for many. The program helped to open the lines of communication and heal old wounds.

It was interesting and thought-provoking to interview the various stakeholders. Much of what was learned can be applied to the school setting. If I were to conduct the study again, I would also interview young people that were referred to juvenile court and their families. We work with children and families who are involved in the Youth Justice Initiative program and juvenile court. I think it would be valuable to learn more about the types of behaviors the juvenile court youth are exhibiting, the types of interventions that the court uses, and the recidivism of the youth that are served in this capacity. It would be interesting to look at socio-economic and ethnicity data for this group, as well. The family dynamics in both groups could be compared, as well, to see what similarities and differences exist.

The research I conducted reinforced how vital it is for the school to partner with the families, outside agencies, and the community in order to support young people. There are many youth who exhibit remarkable resiliency in my school setting. For those who are not resilient, however, we must focus on protective factors (Benard, 2003) in order to increase their level of resiliency. When the school, community, and home all work together with they young person, their social capital (Braithwaite, 1989) will increase and so will their level of success. Reed and Leavitt (2000) agree that wraparound models and other integrated and holistic approaches can be very effective. The research I conducted will be considered when making programmatic changes for the young delinquent girls who attend my school and their families.

Recommendations

It would be meaningful to look at how we can apply a lot of what the Youth Justice Initiative is doing to the school setting. We need to focus on protective factors. When we begin to see students struggling, we need to learn who in their world is an advocate for them and involve them in restorative practices at school. Who do they not want to let down? Who is supportive of them? All of those connected with the youth could work together as to help guide the young person back onto the right path. The family system needs to be involved to maximize results in circles. Perhaps we could partner with the youth justice program and have monitors for our students who are extremely at risk to provide support that could connect the school and the community.

When thinking about skill building, the principal, school counselor, or social workers could offer parent trainings or a family class. Using the feedback from this study, the school could create an opportunity that was engaging, meaningful, and gave parents and their children a structured time to communicate effectively with one another. As this research showed, it was not necessarily the programming that was effective, but merely the time the family had together that made the difference. Families are so busy, that they do not have or take the time to connect with one another. Social capital (Braithwaite, 1989) needs to be built if these families are going to be able to improve their functioning.

Additionally, there were several program components that could be improved. A theme throughout many interviews centered on the importance of matching a monitor and youth effectively. Perhaps it would be helpful to have some sort of personality indicator test or some objective way to ensure a good match. Perhaps the monitor could attend the

home visit as a way of getting to know the family and youth in the beginning. This would allow all parties to see if the match seemed to be a good one early in the process.

Also, the community service requirement could be examined. Most young women perceived this to be punishment. It is recommended that the community service connect with the offense that the young person did in some manner, so as to truly give back to those who the person harmed. This could be a meaningful component of the program if the community service allowed for personal connection and thus impact, but at this time it does not seem to make much impact.

Some questions surfaced surrounding gender differences and cognitive ability. The young women that I spoke to had strong verbal skills and seemed to be intelligent. I began to wonder if females and males have the same success rate in the program. Are boys able to articulate their feelings throughout the process? It appears that this program requires a lot of self reflection. If a person is low cognitively, what can be done to help them achieve success? Is this type of youth served in the Youth Justice Initiative program or are these individuals referred to juvenile court? I began to wonder what implications there would be for the school setting surrounding this issue.

Additionally, there were many parental recommendations. I discovered that it was very difficult to get the families to talk about the program from their daughters' perspective. Many times I would try to redirect the conversation to the young women, but the families really wanted to talk about how the process impacted them. It seemed that the focus group discussion would be a great way to gain feedback about the program and could be something that the program director could implement. Kumpfer and Alvarado (2003) clearly expressed that parents are a critical factor in the social development of

their children, thus it is important to listen to and help families to be as highly functioning as possible. Currently, parents are asked to fill out a survey about their experience. But perhaps, more complete and rich data could be gathered in focus groups at the conclusion of the family class, for example.

Parents also felt that the family class could be adapted in a few ways. The consensus was that the program needs to be differentiated. Some families need more support than others. Dick said, "I think that it was a one size fits all. I think it should have varying levels." They did feel that the class helped them feel that they were not the only ones with children that were misbehaving. It provided a sense of normalcy. The parents enjoyed spending time with their children. If this could be increased, they would view that as a positive change. It was not the curriculum that was good necessarily, but just the time together as a family to get to know each other better and to really listen to one another.

Divorced parents felt it would be helpful to devote a session during the family class to this topic. There are unique challenges to raising a challenging young person in two different family structures and guidance surrounding this would be helpful. It was also difficult to share personal information in the circles and in the family class, since there were strangers in the circles. Some attention to trust building exercises would be helpful and appreciated.

There was some feedback about the program in general. Although many were complimentary of the program director and the energy that she exudes, others felt it would be helpful if the program director was a little less intense. At times families felt

that she was too “pushy” and others felt that she tried to help with family issues that were not hers to solve.

Additionally, it might be helpful to pull back and examine why some individuals felt that the program was at times sending the message that their family was dysfunctional. A parent also needs to be sent the message that when their child commits a crime, it does not mean he is a bad parent. One parent stated:

The program had quasi-missionary underpinnings. Like you would have at a 12 step program or something. Everybody is suffering from this malaise and the malaise is going to manifest itself...it’s all because of this dysfunctional family and all this and so much of this we just didn’t identify ourselves with.

Also, several families thought that the program was expensive. Some parents paid for items, even though they knew they were not supposed to. This might be an area to look into.

Implications for Future Study

Referral Process

First, it seems that it would be helpful to look at the referral process. I began to see that the process for entry into the program is rather subjective. It seems that the goal of the program is met, for the majority of young people who go through the program do not reoffend. However, those that are referred seem to be more compliant and cooperative by nature, so there is a skewed, specific population that is afforded this opportunity. I was left asking, “What about the kids that are not cooperative and lack resources/skills? What are we doing as a society to help those kids get rehabilitated and on the right track?” I began to wonder if this was truly a diversionary program or a

program that served young people that would probably have gotten back on track without this intervention. One of the young women that I interviewed seemed to realize why she was referred and others are not. She said:

I think that was kind of why they referred me to the program, because they could tell I wasn't a bad person. I made a mistake. A bad person would have had to go to court and pay a fine. They would have made them have it on their record because they would have deserved it.

It might be beneficial to have all of the stakeholders at the table to discuss the purpose of the program and to clarify who the programming is trying to serve. Perhaps services need to be broadened to encompass the whole community. Throughout this process it was clear to me that the program is serving those individuals who are cooperative and who the police officers have not had negative encounters with previously. The program director said, "If the police have seen the kid for numerous things in the past, and they've been in trouble in the community, then they're likely not going to get this option even though they might benefit greatly from it."

I also learned that there is a great deal of effort that is involved when the officer makes a referral. I wondered if some officers are reluctant to refer young people to the program because it might be easier and more expedient for them to make a juvenile court referral. Perhaps the referral process could change in such a way that it might become more equitable and more efficient.

Who Receives Services

Second, the type of service that the youth justice initiative program provides should perhaps be broadened to different factions of our population. Upon reflecting what

I know about the trends of incarceration in our country and the cycles of incarceration in many families, it seems that those families could really benefit from a program such as this. When I asked the juvenile court officer about youth crime statistics pertaining to this community, none could be given. There needs to be, “a significant devolution of authority to respond to crime through balanced partnership between public systems and stakeholders within the community” (Boyes-Watson, 2005a, p.360). It seems that the Youth Justice Initiative program is effective based on the research that I and others (Wright, 2008) have done. I was left wondering about whether or not the juvenile court process is also effective for the young people that it serves.

Types of Offenses

It would be interesting to learn how many felony offenses are referred to the courts from this particular community. Perhaps there would be few enough that this program could additionally work with these individuals, if staffing were increased. I would recommend that statistics be kept on both programs and a study be done to determine if it would be beneficial to increase the staffing for the restorative justice program. With more staffing, the program might be able to serve additional youth and perhaps those with more serious crime offenses. It seems that the young people who might need the services the most are not getting them.

Socio-Economic Status

Another important consideration might be socio-economic status in relationship to this program. The majority of the individuals who were referred to me were of middle, middle to upper or upper class. Those who were in poverty were not as successful. Admittedly, the program director stated that this program relies a great deal on the

efforts, cooperation and follow through of the parental units. This led me to wonder several things. First, could it be that those families in poverty are not referred or are not successful because they lack skills and resources that are needed to be successful in a restorative justice program? Families in poverty have many barriers. Often times they lack reliable transportation or transportation at all and have trouble making it to appointments on time. Often they lack the social skills to maneuver through a system productively. They might not know their rights or how to advocate for themselves. Often, the parent does not follow through, so the young person gets in even more trouble with the court system. I see these issues arise with families who are in the poverty class frequently in my school setting.

Program Needs More Resources

The program director agreed that the program is not currently serving all facets of society. She realizes that the program would need more resources if they were to take cases that involve families with multiple issues and those that do not have family structure and support. Currently, they have no way to enforce immediate consequences if they do not have the families' cooperation. If so, how might we as a community help to build those skills and competencies so as to not perpetuate the cycle of incarceration that so many families in poverty fall victim to? I am concerned that those in poverty, which includes minority youth as well as non-minority youth, need the intensive assistance that the type of programming could provide.

Change Begins with YJI, Not Juvenile Court

Juvenile court referrals are not viewed as effective for long term behavior change. The police officer that I interviewed reinforced my line of thinking, for he said

that he can see the cycles repeating. Arresting these youth and sending them to court is not working. He does not see youth reoffending once they have been in the youth justice program, however. He has hope and optimism that taking the time to work through the youth justice program will help long term behavior change occur. A lot of families do not have the resources to help their children do the right thing or to work the program. He believes that many parents, especially those who have experience with “the system”, know that juvenile court will be swift and they as parents will not have to be an active part of the process. Many families lack control and might not have the resources and skills necessary to help their children get back on the right path. The Youth Justice Initiative program made a difference in the lives of all of the young people that I spoke to, their families, and the other adults that are involved with the program. Perhaps if the schools, community, and families could work more together, all of society would benefit.

Final Thoughts

After conducting this research study, I am left feeling very positive about the direction my school has been moving. We have developed a restorative culture in our building, but the question I keep pondering is how to grow these initiatives out into the other schools. The school can implement many of the programmatic pieces that the Youth Justice Initiative has even though resources are few. What I know to be true is that there must be strong administrative leadership that supports this way of working with others in order for the philosophy to permeate throughout the building. I will work to educate the rest of the administrators in my district about restorative practices and the powerful outcomes that result. I truly believe that if we want our schools to become places where people are respectful of one another and if we truly want to see students learn healthy,

positive communication skills, we must provide the tools and supports that are necessary. Our schools, communities, and families must work in tandem to guide and encourage our delinquent female youth and put a stop to this juvenile delinquency epidemic.

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Appendix A

Definition of Terms

1. Adjudication Judicial determination (judgment) that a juvenile is responsible for the delinquent or status offense that is charged in a petition.

2. Circle Process A time-tested paradigm for healing relationships and keeping them healthy. Peacemaking Circles explore how communities can respond to crimes in ways that address the needs and interests of all those affected - victims, offenders, their families and friends, and the community. The circle process is based on indigenous teachings and is combined with current research in conflict resolution. The circle process builds an intentionally safe space where we can bring our best selves to some of our most difficult conversations.

3. Criminogenic Producing or tending to produce crime or criminality (Sherman, 1993).

4. Diversion Program An attempt to divert, or channel out, youthful offenders from the juvenile justice system.

5. YJI Youth Justice Initiative

6. School Resource Officer (SRO)-A police officer who works in the school setting.

Appendix B

Letter from Program Director

West Des Moines Youth Justice Initiative
PO Box 65320
250 Mills Civic Parkway
West Des Moines, IA 50266
April 23, 2009

Dear former YJI participants,

The Youth Justice Initiative has been in existence for the past 8 years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for being a part of the program. Kim Davis, principal of Walnut Creek Campus, the alternative school in West Des Moines is working toward her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. For her research, Kim will conduct a study to examine what the impact was on young women who participated in the Youth Justice Initiative from 2006-2008.

I will give Kim Davis your contact information if I do not hear from you by May 1, 2009. If your phone numbers have changed since you were in YJI, please call my office and leave numbers where you can be reached. If you prefer not to participate in the study, please contact me by phone or email by Friday, May 1, 2009.

Sincerely,

Claudia Henning, Youth Justice Initiative Coordinator
(515) 222-3310 (work)
(515) 360-8084 (cell)
Youth.justice@wdm-ia.com

Appendix C

Script for Initial Telephone Call by Kim Davis

Kim Davis: “Hello. May I speak to _____.

No longer lives at this address:

Kim Davis: I am Kim Davis principal at Walnut Creek Campus, the alternative school in West Des Moines. I am conducting a study as part of my doctoral research at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. This research project will examine the experiences of young women who participated in the Youth Justice Initiative program from 2006-2008 who are currently over the age of 18. Data for my research will be collected through individual interviews and focus groups.

I was hoping to speak to _____ about being a part of my study.

Would you be willing to give me her contact information?

Contact information:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number ____ (____) _____

Kim Davis: Thank you for your time. I really appreciate your cooperation.

Participant still lives at this address:

Hello. I am Kim Davis principal at Walnut Creek Campus, the alternative school in West Des Moines. I am conducting a study as part of my doctoral research at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. For my research, I am planning to conduct a study that will examine the experiences of young women who were in the Youth Justice Initiative program from 2006-2008 who are currently over the age of 18. This data will help me to

determine what is working in the youth justice initiative program and what components might want to be reconsidered. I also use restorative practices in my high school and am hopeful that this data will improve the programming at my school. Data for my research will be collected through individual interviews and focus groups and will be audio taped. Your responses will provide valuable information for my study. Please be open and honest when answering the questions. I need to request your consent to participate in this study. Even though I will be reporting a summary of all of the responses that I receive, your individual responses will be kept confidential. A follow up check with all participants will help me check my accuracy in summarizing your responses. Participation is voluntary and if you feel you need to withdraw from the study, you may do so at any time without any consequences. If, at any time, it proves difficult for you to talk about your experiences, please alert me and I will provide information about counseling assistance. All participants will receive a \$10.00 gift card. Would you be willing to be part of the study?

Yes, I give my consent: _____
Read the consent form (Appendix C).

No, I do not give my consent: _____

If yes: “Would you please give me your contact information?”

E-mail Address:

Mailing Address:

Telephone Number:

Scheduled one-on-one interview date and time:

Date _____

Time _____

Kim Davis: Thank you for your time and attention. I really appreciate your cooperation

Appendix D

*Participant Consent Letter for Interview/Focus Group
Consent to Participate*

April 17, 2009

Dear former YJI participants,

The Youth Justice Initiative has been in existence for the past 8 years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for being a part of the program and we hope that this letter finds you doing well. I am principal at Walnut Creek Campus, the alternative school in West Des Moines, and am working toward my doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa.

For my research, I am planning to conduct a study that will examine the experiences of young women who were in the Youth Justice Initiative program from 2006-2008 who are currently over the age of 18. This data will help me to determine what is working in the youth justice initiative program and what components might want to be reconsidered. I also use restorative practices in my high school and am hopeful that this data will improve the programming at my school. Data for my research will be collected through individual interviews and focus groups and will be audio taped. Your responses will provide valuable information for my study. Please be open and honest when answering the questions. I need to request your consent to participate in this study. Even though I will be reporting a summary of all of the responses that I receive, your individual responses will be kept confidential. Your participation will indirectly effect and possibly benefit many future participants as the summary information will be shared with the program director. A follow up check with all participants will help me check my accuracy in summarizing your responses. Participation is voluntary and if you feel you need to withdraw from the study, you may do so at any time without any consequences. There should be minimal risk involved. If, at any time, it proves difficult for you to talk about your experiences, please alert me and I will provide information about counseling assistance. All participants will receive a \$10.00 gift card.

Thank you very much for your consideration. If you would be willing to be individually interviewed or part of a focus group and give permission for the researcher to take notes and audio tape the interview please sign this consent form. The research findings will be summarized in my dissertation study and submitted to Drake University. The final research study will be available to all of those who participated. I appreciate your cooperation and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Kim (Jordan) Davis, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate

Sally Beisser, PhD.
Dissertation Chairperson

Drake University
davisk@wdmcs.org
mattandkim@mchsi.com

Drake University

I give my consent to participate in an individual interview or in a focus group for this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

I do not wish to participate in this study.

Appendix E
Master List of Girls

Master List of Girls

Names	Participate- Y or N	1st Interview date and time
1. Name of girl		
Parents Names:		
2. Name of girl		
Parents Names:		
3. Name of girl		
Parents Names:		
4. Name of girl		
Parents Names:		
5. Name of girl		
Parents Names:		
6. Name of girl		
Parents Names:		

7. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				
8. Name of girl				
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9. Name of girl				
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12. Name of girl				
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13. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				

14. Name of girl				
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15. Name of girl				
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16. Name of girl				
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17. Name of girl				
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18. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				
19. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				
20. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				
21. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				

22. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				
23. Name of girl				
Parents Names:				

Appendix F

Family Focus Group Questions

Kim Davis: Welcome and thank you for participating in the focus group. The purpose of the study is to learn more about the experiences of the female participants of the Youth Justice Initiative from 2006-2008 who are currently over the age of 18. Thank you for participating. OK, if you could all take a seat we will get started.

1. To begin with, I would like each of you to describe the delinquent activities that brought the young person in your family to be in the YJI program.
2. Next, please describe how the young person's behaviors before entering the program affected your family.
3. Tell me about the single most impactful part of the program on the young woman who is a part of your family: the initial home visit, personal visits prior to the justice conference, the initial justice conference and follow up circles, the monitoring, the restitution and community service, the family class. Were there any other components that made an impact?
4. What was the process like for you as a family?
5. Please respond to the following words based on the experience you think the young woman in your family had in the YJI program:
 - a. Shame
 - b. Delinquency
 - c. Self control
 - d. Responsible citizen
 - e. Family

f. Accountability

g. School

6. What part of the program could be improved? How so?

*Thank you for your time and attention.

Appendix G

*Female YJI Participant
One-On-One Interview Protocol*

Project: Youth Justice Program

Date:

Time of interview:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Grand Tour Question: What was the Youth Justice Initiative experience like for the female youth that were in the program for the past two years?

Introductory:

1. Please tell me about what life was like for you before you were in YJI.
2. What happened to get you into the YJI program?
3. Who referred you to the program? Tell me what you thought about that.

Impact of the program:

4. Tell me about the single most impactful part of the program. What part had the biggest effect on you? Explain.
5. What were the challenges/setbacks you had when you were in the program?

Initial home visit:

6. Tell me about your experience with your first home visit. What do you remember about it?
7. Tell me how you were feeling before your first justice circle.

Initial Justice Circle/Conferences:

8. Tell me about your experiences with the justice circles.
9. How did the circle process affect your family? Others who were in the circle? How did the circle process affect you?
10. Explain the role of the victim in your circle.
11. How did you feel when others were talking about the harms that you had done?
12. Did you feel better or worse after your first justice circle? Explain. How about the follow up circles?
13. Did you feel a sense of shame? Were you made to feel ashamed of what they had done or did you instead feel reintegrated and forgiven for what you had done? Explain.
14. Did you feel stigmatized by being in YJI? By stigmatized, I am asking if you felt ashamed of yourself. If so, explain the stigmatization that you felt.
15. During the conference, were you treated as though you were a criminal? Explain.
16. Do you remember apologizing for what you did? If so, to whom did you apologize? What was that like for you?
17. Were there community members in your circle? Talk to me about their participation, if so.
18. How hopeful were you at the end of the circle process?

Monitor/Mentor:

19. Tell me about any mentors that you have had as you have grown up.
20. Tell me about your experiences with having a monitor/mentor in the YJI program?
21. What was valuable/not valuable about that experience?

Family Class:

22. Tell me about your family before you entered YJI. Did you eat meals together? Spend time together? What expectations did your family have for you? What boundaries were there for you in your house?
23. How was your family affected after you took the family class? What stayed the same? What changed?
24. Tell me about how your situation impacted your parents? What was the impact on your siblings? What was the impact on the other family members/friends? By impact, I mean what effect did it have on their lives?
25. How do you think your relationship with your parents was affected by the family class?
26. What were the main lessons you learned in the family class?

Restitution/Making It Right

27. Tell me about what your restitution plan was and how that went for you.

School:

28. Tell me about your experiences in school before being in the program and after. Example-did you feel connected? Were you in activities? Were you recognized for your accomplishments?

Delinquency:

29. What factors contributed to you getting into trouble?
30. What protective factors did you have?
- a. Parent/family connectedness
 - b. Connectedness to school and neighborhood

c. Positive sense of one's future

31. Do other people in your family get into trouble with the law?

32. Have you had any negative interactions with law enforcement since the program ended for you? Have you been arrested since you were involved in the program?

Peer Relationships:

33. What are positive peers? What characteristics make people positive peers?

34. Explain whether or not you feel you had positive peers before entering YJI. How about after your participation?

Suggestions for improvements:

35. If you were to make changes to the program so that it could be better, what would you change? Why?

*Thank you for your time and attention.

Appendix H

Adult One-On-One Interview Questions

Kim Davis: Welcome and thank you for participating. The purpose of the study is to learn more about the experiences of the female participants of the Youth Justice Initiative from 2006-2008 who are currently over the age of 18. Thank you for participating.

1. To begin with, I would like you to describe the delinquent activities that brought _____ to be in the YJI program.
2. Tell me about the single most impactful part of the program on the young woman who was in the program: the initial home visit, personal visits prior to the justice conference, the initial justice conference and follow up circles, the monitoring, the restitution and community service, the family class.
3. How did the circle process affect _____? Others who were in the circle? How did the circle process affect you?
4. Explain the role of the victim in your circle.
5. Did you think _____ felt better or worse after her first justice circle? Explain. How about the follow up circles?
6. Did you think that _____ felt shame? Was she made to feel ashamed of what she had done or did she instead feel reintegrated and forgiven for what she had done? Explain.
7. Do you think _____ felt stigmatized by being in YJI? By stigmatized, I am asking if she felt ashamed of herself. If so, explain the stigmatization that she felt.

8. Do you remember if she apologized for what she did? If so, to whom did she apologize? What was that like for her?
9. Were there community members in your circle? Talk to me about their participation, if so.
10. How hopeful did she seem at the end of the circle process?
11. What was the YJI process like for you when you worked with _____ in the program?
12. Please respond to the following words based on the experience you think _____ had in the YJI program:
- a. Shame
 - b. Delinquency
 - c. Self control
 - d. Responsible citizen
 - e. Family
 - f. Accountability
 - g. School
13. What part of the program could be improved? How so?

*Thank you for your time and attention

Appendix I

*List of Pseudonyms and Coding Abbreviations for Participants***Girls:**

Pseudonyms:	Abbreviation:	Number:
1. Ashley	As	1
2. Andrea	An	2
3. Lauren	L	3
4. Diesel	D	4
5. Grace	G	5
6. Jenny	J	6

Parents:

		Number of focus group
1. Annie	Ann	1
2. Jane	Ja	1
3. Nick	N	1
4. Dick	Di	1
5. Sophia	S	1
6. Bella	Be	1
7. Jessica	Je	2
8. Bob	Bo	2
9. Mike	M	2

Other Adults:

1. Roger	R	1
2. Teri	T	2
3. Brady	Br	3
4. Samantha	Sa	4
5. Fred	F	5
6. Karen	K	6

Appendix J
First Iteration of Interviews

**First round of coding:
Girls**

1. Crime was:

- Shoplifting An, As, J
- Alcohol/drug related G, L, D

2. Bad friends influence An, D, L

3. Family information

- Mom naïve before YJI G
- Dad naïve before YJI D
- Lied to them An, D, As
- Not very open G, As
- Improved after YJI G, L, D, As
- Hated disappointing/
hurting dad An, G, D
- Mom didn't really
want her to have to
do all this G, D
- Parents paid more attention D, L, An, G
- Divorced parents are
communicating better L
- Stayed the same-good As, J
- Divorced parents An, D, L

4. Bad boyfriend influence An, G, D, As

**5. Parents took control
when I got in trouble.** An, G, L, As, J

**6. Grounded/ lost
bad friends** An, L, As

7. Activities

- Never in activities D,
- Had quit activities An, L, As
- In activities G, J
- Kicked out of activities/
made to miss G

8. Had job/got job An, L, As, D, J

9. Felt when incident happened/got caught

-Scared An, L, As, J
 -Blacked out G, L
 -Annoyed/angry D

10. Diagnosis

ADHD/Impulsive An, J
 Depression As

11. Why shoplift/drink/do drugs?

-Wanted something An, As, J
 -Boyfriend break up G
 -Hanging with friends L, D, As

12. Did not think she would get caught An, D

13. After YJI

-More offenses An
 -No more offenses G, L, D, J
 -Has used An, D

14. Minimizes

-Pot/alcohol use An, G, D
 -Shoplifting J

15. Who referred to YJI

-SRO An, G, D, J
 -Other officer L, As

16. Why YJI?

-Get off record An, G, L, As, J
 -Parent encouraged An, G, L
 -Did not want to mess up future/Job An, G, L, As
 -Thought it would be Easier than JC D

17. Home visits

- Realized lots to do G, D
- Program director helpful G, J, D
- Thought it was costly L, D
- Grumpy-did not really As
- want to do it

18. Most impactful part of YJI?

- Circles An, G, L, J,
- Family class G,
- Panel in FC As
- Monitor D,

19. Self image

- Troublemaker An
- Sees herself as good kid G, As, J
- Shame still at the end of YJI G, J
- Wants to be perfect G
- Smart G, As, D
- Event does not fit with G, L, As, J
- self image-cognitive
- dissonance
- Stubborn/challenging D

20. Frustrations with program:

- Family therapy in circle An
- Family class multiple times An
- FC did not like goals An
- FC quote activities are bad An
- Had to do UA's G
- Monitor schedule not L
- consistent
- Cost a lot of money L
- No time for family class L
- Lame alcohol class G
- Did not like monitor As
- Monitors are not necessary As
- Had more com service than As
- friend who did same offense
- Follow up circles boring As
- SRO made her feel like a J
- delinquent
- Com rep rude in circle D

21. Positives about program:

- Parent/kid time talk in FC An, J
- FC guy talking when calm An
- Liked program director An, G, L
(Desire to help)
- FC parent liked it and used An, G
strategies he learned
- Circle process L
- Liked FC colors activity As, D
- Liked FC panel of kids As, D
that went to juvenile court
- Helped relationship with D
Parent
- Helped build self esteem D

22. Longevity in program:

- 11/2 years An
- 1 year D
- 6 months G, As
- Less than 6 months L, J

23. Setbacks

- Drinking incident An
- Forged note at school An
- False (+) UA, D
- Drug incident D

24. Feelings before circle

- Nervous An, G, As, D
- Afraid to go G
- Scared L, J
- Angry D
- Excited D

25. Feelings during circle

-Cried	An, G, L
-Uncomfortable	An
-Good person/did bad thing	An, G, L
-Awkward	An
-Shame	An, L, As, J
-Embarrassed	An, G, As, J
-Sad	G
-Apologetic	G, L, As, J
-Mad at self	G
-Safe-family there	L
-Mad	D, L
-Relieved	L

26. End of circle

-Felt good/better/proud	G, J, D
-Kicked out	L

27. Circle feedback

-Community members (+)	An
-Community member (-)	D
-Liked everyone listening/ talking	L
-Com member helped parent	L
-Sometimes pointless	As
-Felt good that family came	As
-Talked as a family after	D

28. Monitor

-Not connected/not helpful	An, As
-Connected	G, L, J, D
-Monitor made her feel like bad person	L
-Monitor talked down to her	As

29. Do you see yourself as a criminal?

-Does not see herself as criminal	An, G, L, As, D
-Felt like a criminal at some point	J, D

30. No family history crime

An, G, L, As, J, D

- 31. Family history of substance use/abuse** G, D
- 32. Stigma being in YJI?**
- No stigma being in YJI An, G, D
 - Kids thought it was cool G
 - Embarrassed/secret L, As, J
- 33. Do you think you will get in trouble again?**
- Probably An
 - Maybe, but hope not G
 - No L
- 34. Mentors/Role Models**
- Mom An, G, L, As, J
 - Dad An, As, J
 - Grandparent G, D
 - Sister G
 - Teacher L
 - Brother J
 - Family friend D
- 35. Community Service**
- Just put my time in An, G, As, J
 - Valuable D
 - Did not do L
- 36. School performance**
- Improved D, L,
 - Stayed the same An, G, As, J
- 37. Positive view of future as result of program** An, G, L, As, J

38. What are positive peers?

- Honest An, As
- Follow the law An
- Family oriented/Good An, D
- Can trust them G, As, J
- Go to school regularly L, D
- Respectful to parents L
- Don't use profanity L
- Nice L, J, D
- Dependable As
- Understanding/Accepting As, J
- Focused/make something of themselves D

39. Program Recommendations

- FC more interesting An
- Differentiate the program L
- Get rid of FC for families that don't need it As
- Don't use the word "victim" J
Makes it sound criminal
- Match monitors better D
- FC activities to get to know more about family D

40. Application to school setting

- Learn from ISS, not OSS An

41. Socioeconomic status

- Poverty
- Poverty/Middle L
- Middle An, J
- Middle/Upper G, As
- Upper

42. Parent feelings about program

- One parent angry they had to do this An, G, D
- One parent liked process An, G, D
- Too busy for program L
- Both parents felt punished for what daughter did As, J
- One parent was not sure about RJ J
- Parent paid sometimes and was resentful D

First Round of Coding Focus Groups/Parents

1. What offense did girls commit?

-Theft	Ann, N, Ja, Di, Bo
-Alcohol	S
-Prescription drugs	S
-Marijuana	Je, M

2. Reason to be in YJI?

-No juvenile record	Bo, M
-Straighten my kid out	Bo, M, Je
-Parents who care about their kid and their future choose YJI	Bo, M

3. Parent reactions to girls getting in trouble:

-Crying	Ann
-Shocked	Ann, Ja, Bo
-Disappointed	Ann, Ja, Di, Bo, S
-Incensed	N
-Incredulous	Ann, N
-Impulsive decision	Ja
-More premeditated	Di
-She needs to be taught a lesson- glad she got caught	Di, Ann, N, Je
-Worried	S
-Was raised better than this	Bo
-Did wonder if court would be easier	Je

4. How did the girl seem when you went to get her:

-She was crying	Ann
-Owned up to what she did	Ann
-Very upset	Ann, Ja
-Oh darn, I got caught!	S, M, Ja

5. What did parents do after incident?

-Grounded her	N
-Encouraged daughter to talk to researcher-help shame go away	Di
-Gave daughter more attention	S
-Set better limits	M, Je
-Question more about where she was going/what she was doing	Ann, Ja, Je, M, Bo

6. Behavior leading up to event:

-Brand conscious	Ann, Ja
-Heard that a certain store was easy to steal from	Ann
-Somewhat into party scene	N, Bo
-Antagonistic towards school administrator	S
-Would lie/omit information	Di, M, Bo
-Parent/child strife	Di, M
-Bad job influence-drug users there	S
-Poor school performance	M, Je
-Bad group of friends	M, Bo, Je
-Not coming home	M, Je
-Drinking/using drugs	M, Je, Bo
-Parents are divorced	M, Je, Bo
-Parent not giving consequences	Je
-Would threaten to run away	Je
-ADHD/Impulsive	Bo, Ja

7. Personality of daughters:

-Outgoing	Ann, Ja
-Strong willed	Ann, Ja, S, Je
-Good student	N
-Teachers would say good role model	Ja
-Smart	S
-Opinionated	S
-Low self esteem	S
-Sibling rivalry	N
-Responsible	N, Ann
-Caring/loving	Bo
-Insecure: Girls are all skinnier and wealthier than me	S

8. Struggles that parents had throughout process:

- Hard to keep track of your kids now days/so busy N, Je
- Program was expensive S, Je, Bo
- Program made her more suspicious of her daughter Ann
- Inconvenience to do program Ja, Bo, Je
- Had to work with other parent-divorce situation not amicable Bo
- Lack of supervision-parent working so much out of necessity Je
- Enabled her-paid for her YJI expenses S, Je
- Didn't want to cry in circle-trying to be on my daughters' side/friend instead of showing my true emotions Je

9. What was most impactful part of program on daughter?

- FC kids went off by themselves Ann
- Not much-girl did a stupid thing and did not really need program N
- Program director would not give up on her S, Bo
- Time for family to talk FC N
- Circles not as impactful when girl was in YJI for short time Ann, N, Ja, Di
- Monitor relationship M, Bo, Je
- Community service M, Bo, Je
- Circles and accountability plan Bo
- Restitution-had to pay back \$ Bo
- Got job to pay back restitution Bo
- Circles-did not want to disappoint people with lack of progress Je, M
- House arrest Bo

10. How did daughter feel being in program?

- Humiliated Ann
- Embarrassed Ann, Bo
- Kept it a secret Ann
- Did a crime, had to pay a price Ja, Je
- Do what I need to do and get it over with Ja, Ann, N, Je
- Shame about incident Ann, N, Ja, Bo
- Shame about getting caught and in YJI Ja, B
- Might have sabotaged success to be in program longer-subconsciously needed the support and knew it Je
- Angry Je
- Nervous about circles Bo

11. Criticisms of the program:

- Home visit was ridiculous-too much to do for the offense/felt judged like bad parent Ann, Je
- Over-reaction to a small crime Ja
- FC sessions were not effective N
- Mad they had to go Ann, Je
- FC was repetitious Ann
- FC sending message that they were responsible for their kids being naughty-parent felt shame S, Ann
- UA's make girl feel like a criminal Ann, Ja, S
- Girl hated circles-lied in them S
- Circles not good-girls just said what people wanted them to say N
- FC not that effective Bo
- Circles-parent felt judged Je

12. Positives about program for daughter from parent perspective:

-FC personality inventory- Colors test	N, M
-FC Youthful Offender panel	Ja, Di, Je
-Monitor can be good	S, Ann
-Community service	S
-Has not committed another offense	Ann, N, Ja, Di, S
-Girl learned that parents really did care about her	Je
-She was falsely accused of something and showed everyone she could do it-didn't give up	Je
-Retailer in circle to share about impact	Bo
-She had to work through her guilt	Bo
-Community members were positive and encouraged my daughter	Je
-Self esteem and self control went up	Bo, Je
-Girl realized that just because she had a thought, she did not have to act on it (self control)	M
-Would not have not graduated without YJI	M, Je
-Grades improved	M, Bo

13. Did girls see themselves as delinquents/criminals?

-No	N, Ann, Ja, Di, S, Bo, Je
-Yes, when they had to do UA's	Ja, Di, S

14. Setbacks:

-Alcohol incident	Bo, S
-Falsely accused of something by YJI	Je
-Graffiti	Bo

15. Positives for parents:

- Man who spoke about how mind works Di
- Going through the process as a family-not in this alone Ja, Bo, Je, M
- Got to know each other better as a family Di, N, M
- Got us to talk about topics that we normally would not Di
- Program director held me accountable/called me on my enabling behavior S
- Daughter now takes our feelings into account Di
- RJ good for events like this Di
- Director has lots of passion/articulate/handles intensity well Di, S, Bo
- Helped me to be less naïve Bo
- Realized that girl thought lack of discipline=lack of caring Je, M
- Enjoyed the FC discussions with other parents
- Daughter was strong and did what she needed to do Bo
- Flexibility-circle too big, so we made it smaller/more effective M
- Program people apologized when wrong M
- FC- realized other parents were in the same boat-less stigma Je, Bo
- Daughter said all her friends should be in YJI so they could get a life Je
- Helped to heal old wounds Je, M
- Respect for family for devoting the time Bo, M

16. Minimize behavior

- Mothers Ann, Ja, S, Je
- Daughter Ja, Je
- Sister "We both did this" B

17. Suggestions for the program:

- Less time for parents to be at FC Di, M
- Needs to be a good monitor fit S
- Monitors need to be young- Ann
connect better
- Program should not be a one N, Di, S
size fits all
- Religious underpinnings N
- Message that they must be a N
dysfunctional family
- Serious crimes need to go to Di
court-need punishment
- Program/director is pushy S
- FC speakers who speak well/ Ann, M
concise/more speakers
- Don't have their friends in the Je
circle
- FC- have one session devoted to M
divorce issues
- Friends who are both in YJI tell Je
each other when the drug
tests are coming-all need to be
random
- No window to get drug tests-right Je
on the spot
- Program director needs to butt out Bo
of legal matters the family is
going through
- Program director should spell out Bo
what will happen to kids if they do
not do the program well
- FC readings were weak-not helpful M
- Program director-sometimes needs M
to step back and listen/get info
- Program director would always ask Bo
how my daughter was doing staying
away from drugs-offensive-not a
drug user

**First round of coding-
Other Adults**

1. YJI family characteristics:

- Low income Sa
- Parents have to be willing to participate R
- Lots have drifted apart K
- Lots have divorced parents K
- Parents are friends, not parents K
- Girls are stubborn Sa
- Girls can be perfectionist Sa, Br

2. Why do kids choose YJI?

- Think it will be easier than JC Sa
- Impact future/jobs R
- So it is not on their record Sa, R, T
- Parents encourage Br, T
- Friend encourages Br
- Parents need help T
- Parents think their kids need a wake up call T

3. Referral process:

- Sometimes parents try to bargain with the retailer so they won't turn their kid in to the police F
- Police decide who gets referred R, T
- Sometimes consult with program director R
- Misdemeanor offenses, occasionally felonies R
- Young person needs to be cooperative and have voluntary compliance R, T
- Parent needs to be non-combative T
- Has to be willing R
- SRO referral out of hope and optimism for changed behavior R
- Is a lot of work for SRO's R
- If SRO has had bad history with young person, won't get in most likely R, T
- Few kids in poverty and they have not complete K

4. Keys to program success:

-Parental participation	Sa, Br, R, K
-Maturity	Sa, Br
-Ability to reflect/have insight/ take responsibility	Sa, R
-Girls who are stubborn do well	Sa
-Ability for family to adjust to expectations/process	Sa, R, K
-Girls held accountable	Br
-Relationships strong/develop	Br, R
-Girl needs to trust monitor and open up for that part to work	K

5. Reasons that girls commit crime:

-Parents overwhelmed/don't parent	Sa
-Parents are friends-don't set limits	Sa, Br, K
-Divorce situation	Sa, Br, K
-Bad boyfriend influence/want love	Sa, Br, T
-Bad group of friends	Sa, R, K
-Wrong place, wrong time	Br, R
-Insecurity-want friends, etc	T, K
-Search for excitement	T, K

6. Feelings throughout process for girls:

-Shame	Sa, K
-Embarrassed	Sa
-Good person, bad thing	Br
-Belief in self increased	Sa, Br, K
-Guilt	F

7. Circle feedback:

-D seemed to like them	Sa
-Helped D's parents communicate better	Sa
-G's were non-confrontational	Sa
-Good to get perspective of everyone, but tough	Br
-Focus on strengths (+)	Br
-Victim not a focus	Br
-Success depends on who is in them	T
-If one shows emotion, others will	T
-Seeing their parents disappointed makes them upset	K

- Community members (past parents) K
help new parents feel supported/
normal
- Past parents support kids and K
parents
- Few male community members T, K

8. During 1st circle

- Girl embarrassed at 1st circle Br, K
- Retailer gets to talk about F
impact on his store when
kids steal
- Girls feel a lot better after first T, K
circle
- Most seem remorseful K

9. Follow up circles

- Some were celebrations Br
- Some focused on accountability Br
- Community members do not F
always stay for the full circle process

10. As a result of program:

- Adult hopeful that life would be Br, K
good
- Girls might still experiment/might Sa, Br, T
get into some trouble again, but
hopefully less

11. Stigma

- As income goes up, more Sa, K
concerned with how it looks to
be in program
- Did not feel stigma-confidential Br
- More successful kid, more stigma T
- Some feel stigma/secret K

12. Minimize

- Wealthy parents minimize crime Sa
- I am not a criminal mentality/
not that big of a deal T, K
- Mothers T

13. Why kids shoplift

- Thrill Sa, T, K
- Want everything/Greed Sa, F, T
- With friends/fit in K
- Way to alleviate family stress or anxiety-bigger issues underneath K

14. Remorse

- Most don't seem to feel remorse F, Sa
- Some feel above the law T, K

15. Positive feedback about program

- Send message of good person, bad thing Sa, T, Br, K
- Kids feel sense of pride at end Sa, Br
- Kids learn they can control their own lives-internalized change Sa, Br, K
- Support and accountability=change Br, K
- Gave girl self esteem Br
- Girls increase in self control Br, K
- Recidivism is low/non-existent R, F
- FC youthful offender panel makes an impact T, K
- As a result of FC, parents ask more questions of their kids K
- Kids do better in school K, Br, Sa
- FC talking to other parents (+) Sa
- FC (+)if not a good relationship before T
- Feel guilty T
- Circles Sa, T, K
- How family class is ran now Sa, T
- We look at the big picture-that is why we do UA's, etc want to know all the issues Sa
- Program changes lives Sa
- Kids learn more than they do in JC Br, F, R, K
- More comprehensive programming/not a slap on the wrist like JC R, K
- Community has a voice-victim F
- Kids like circle part of FC T
- Community member involvement is good for high risk cases T

16. Most impactful part of YJI:

-Monitor	Sa, Br, T, K
-Community service	Sa
-Adults followed through with consequences/set limits	Sa, Br
-FC Colors	Sa
-Time with parents/communicating (Circle/FC)	Sa, R
-Circles	T, K
-House arrest	K
-Victim in circle	K

17. Do girls commit offenses alone or in groups?

-50% steal alone	F
-50% steal with friend/groups	F
-Most girls commit in groups	T

18. Home visits-Assess Risk

-Academics, family, mental health/ substance abuse/pre-delinquent activities	T, K
-Under 15 when you commit your first offense	T
-Lack of social capital	T

19. School connections

-Expulsion very stigmatizing	T
-Need consistent administration of policies/fairness in enforcement	Sa
-Need some additional programming besides 4 Oaks	T

20. Lessons learned by adults

- Don't give up on kids Sa, Br, F
- Until kids change their thinking,
little change will happen Sa
- Offer program even if they
refused previously R
- Great option so kids don't go
to jail/cycle begins R
- It is a learning model Br
- Some parents are not willing
to put forth the effort for YJI-sad R
- Kids can change F
- Girls needed someone to talk to Sa, K
- Girls needed self esteem help Sa, Br, K
- Maybe we don't focus enough
on the fact that they did commit
a crime T

21. Program recommendations

- Young Women's Resource should
become a key component Sa
- Make sure monitors are matched
up well-can have huge impact Br, K
- Need more good help R
- Look at family class-maybe
creates stigma/no anonymity T
- Maybe all families don't need a
family class T
- Parents want more time talking to
their kids during FC T
- Need more resources if they would
work with higher risk cases T
- Keep focusing on the 3 Principles T
- Look at how kids are referred T, K
- How can we help those families
who don't have resources, multiple
issues, etc? T
- If family does not hold young
person accountable, need resources
to do sanctions or other supports T
- Don't have way to give immediate
consequences if parent does not T
- Have monitor go to home visit to
see if good fit K
- Kids still see community service
as punishment K

- Relate community service to the offense K
- Watch how many youth a monitor has-impacts effectiveness K
- Look at holding circles at another place, other than police station-sends wrong message K

Appendix K
Second Coding

Second Round of Coding-All groups combined

PROFILE OF EVENT

1. Theft offenses

-Theft	Ann, N, Ja, Di, Bo, An, As, J
-Program less than 6 months	J, N, Ann, Ja, Di
-Program for 1 ½ years	An, Bo
-50% steal alone	F
-50% steal with friend/groups	F
-Most girls commit in groups	T
-Wanted something/greed	An, As, J, Sa, F, T
-Thrill	Sa, T, K
-Alleviate family stress	K

2. Alcohol/drug offenses

-Alcohol	S, G, L
-Prescription drugs	S
-Marijuana	Je, M, D
-Kicked out of program	L
-1 year in program	D, M, Je
-6 months in program	G, As
-Trigger-Boyfriend break up	G
-Trigger-with friends	D, L

3. Emotions of girl at time of incident:

-She was crying	Ann
-Owned up to what she did	Ann
-Very upset	Ann, Ja
-Oh darn, I got caught!	S, M, Ja
-Scared	An, L, As, J
-Blacked out	G, L
-Annoyed/angry	D

4. Parent reactions to girls getting in trouble:

-Shocked	Ann, Ja, Bo
-Disappointed	Ann, Ja, Di, Bo, S
-Incensed	N
-Incredulous	Ann, N
-Impulsive decision	Ja
-More premeditated	Di
-She needs to be taught a lesson- glad she got caught	Di, Ann, N, Je

- Worried S
- Wondered if court would be easier Je
- Grounded her N, An, As, L

WHO ARE THESE GIRLS?

1. Behavior leading up to event:

- Brand conscious Ann, Ja
- Heard certain store was easy to steal from Ann
- Invincible/Thrill seeker An, D, T, K
- Somewhat into party scene N, Bo
- Antagonistic school admin S
- Would lie/omit information Di, M, Bo
- Parent/child strife Di, M
- Bad job influence-drug users there S
- Poor school performance M, Je
- Bad group of friends M, Bo, Je, An, D, L, Sa, R, K
- Not coming home M, Je
- Drinking/using drugs M, Je, Bo
- Parents are divorced M, Je, Bo, An, D, L, Sa, Br, K
- Parent not giving consequences Je, Sa, Br, K
- Would threaten to run away Je
- ADHD/Impulsive Bo, Ja, An, J
- Bad boyfriend influence An, G, D, As, Sa, Br, T
- Quit activities An, L, As
- Depression As
- Insecure and wanted friends T, K

2. Personality of girls:

- Outgoing Ann, Ja
- Strong willed Ann, Ja, S, Je, D
- Good student N
- Good role model before incident Ja
- Smart S, G, As, D
- Opinionated S
- Sibling rivalry N
- Responsible N, Ann
- Caring/loving Bo
- Insecure: Girls are all skinnier and wealthier than me S
- Troublemaker An
- Sees herself as a good kid G, As, J
- Perfectionist G
- Event does not fit with self image-cognitive dissonance G, L, As, J
- Girls can be perfectionist Sa, Br

3. Role models for girls as they grew up:

-Mom	An, G, L, As, J
-Dad	An, As, J
-Grandparent	G, D
-Sister	G
-Teacher	L
-Brother	J
-Family friend	D

4. What would positive peers be like?

-Honest/trust them	An, As, G, J
-Follow the law	An
-Family oriented/Good	An, D
-Go to school regularly	L, D
-Respectful to parents	L
-Don't use profanity	L
-Nice	L, J, D
-Dependable	As
-Understanding/Accepting	As, J
-Focused/make something of themselves	D

5. Family information

-Mom naïve before YJI	G
-Dad naïve before YJI	D
-Lied to them	An, D, As
-Not very open before YJI	G, As
-Hated disappointing/hurting dad	An, G, D
-No history of family crime	An, G, L, As, J, D
-Family history of substance abuse	G, D
-Low income families	Sa
-Most families middle/upper class	T, R
-Families had drifted apart before YJI	K
-Lots have divorced parents	K
-Parents are friends, not parents	K
-Family did not change much	D, As, J

HOW DID GIRLS REACT TO BEING IN PROGRAM?

1. Stigma being in YJI?

- No stigma being in YJI An, G, D, Br
- Kids thought it was cool G
- Embarrassed/secret L, As, J, K
- As income goes up, more Sa, K
concerned about how it
looks to be in program
- If kid really successful, T
more stigma

2. Did girls see themselves as delinquents/criminals?

- No N, Ann, Ja, Di, S, Bo, Je, An, G, L, As, D
- Yes, when they had to do UA's Ja, Di, S
- Felt like a criminal at some pt J, D
- Don't use the word "victim" J
makes it sound criminal
- UA's make girl feel like a criminal Ann, Ja, S, G

3. Girls has hope for the future after YJI participation

An, G, L, As, J, Br, K

DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN YJI

1. Motivation to be in YJI?

- Did not want a juvenile record Bo, M, An, G, L, As, J, Sa, K
- To straighten my kid out Bo, M, Je, T
- Parents cared and encouraged Bo, M, An, G, L, Br, T
- Did not want to mess up future/
job An, G, L, As, R
- Thought it would be easier than D, Sa
juvenile court
- Friends encouraged who had been Br
in program

2. Referral Process

-SRO referred	An, G, D, J, R, T
-Other officer referred	L, As
-Sometimes parents try to bargain with the retailer so they won't turn their kid in to the police	F
-Police sometimes consult with program director	R
-Misdemeanor offenses, occasionally felonies in YJI	R
-Young person needs to be cooperative and have voluntary compliance	R, T
-Parent needs to be non-combative	T
-SRO referral out of hope and optimism for changed behavior	R
-Is a lot of work for SRO's	R
-If SRO has had bad history with young person, won't get in most likely	R, T
-Few kids in poverty and they have not completed	K
-SRO made her feel like a delinquent	J

PARTS OF PROGRAM:

1. What was **most impactful** part of program on daughter?

-FC kids went off by themselves	Ann
-FC	G
-FC Youthful Offender Panel	As
-FC Colors	Sa
-Time for family to talk FC	N, Sa, R
-Program director would not give up on her	S, Bo
-Monitor relationship	M, Bo, Je, D, Sa, Br, T, K
-Community service	M, Bo, Je, Sa
-Restitution-had to pay back \$	Bo
-Got job to pay back restitution	Bo
-Circles	Je, M, Bo, An, G, L, J, T, K
-Victim in circle	K
-House arrest	Bo, K
-Adults followed through with consequences/set limits	Sa, Br

2. Program director feedback

- Director has lots of passion/
articulate/handles intensity well Di, S, Bo
- Held me accountable/called me
on my enabling behavior S
- Girl liked program director An,G, L
- Is pushy S
- Needs to stay out family legal
issues Bo
- Needs to inform young person of
what will happen if program is not
completed well Bo
- Sometimes needs to step back and
listen/get info M
- Ask how my daughter was doing
staying away from drugs-offensive Bo

3. Home visits-assess risk

- Realized lots to do G, D
- Program director helpful G, J, D
- Thought it was costly L, D
- Grumpy-did not really
want to do it As
- Components: academics,
mental/health, substance
abuse/pre-delinquent activities T, K
- Under 15 when you commit
your first offense is high risk T
- Trend is lack of social
capital T

4. Circle

-Before girl felt: Nervous/Scared/Afraid	An, G, As, D, L, J, D
-Message that girl was a good person/did bad thing	An, G, L, Br
-Not as impactful when girl was in YJI for short time	Ann, N, Ja, Di
-Community members were positive and encouraging	Je, An, L, K
-Circle process powerful	L, Sa, T, K, Br
-Community rep rude in circle	D
-Community member (-)	D
-Community has a voice-victim	F
-Community member involvement is good for high risk cases	T
-Community members don't always stay for full circle	F
-Not good-girls just said what people wanted them to say	N, S
-Parents felt shame	S, Ann, Je
-Girl angry she had to go	D, L
-Girl cried	An, G, L
-Uncomfortable	An
-Awkward	An
-Shame	An, L, As, J
-Embarrassed	An, G, As, J, Br, K
-Sad	G
-Apologetic	G, L, As, J
-Mad at self	G
-Family there (+)	L, As
-Relieved	L, T, K
-Retailer impact good	F
-Some focused on accountability	Br
-Retailer in circle to share about impact was good	Bo
-At end felt good/better/ proud	G, J, D
-Most seemed remorseful	K
-Most don't seem to feel remorse	F, Sa
-Liked everyone listening/ talking	L
-Sometimes pointless	As

- Talked as a family after D
- Helped family comm. better Sa
- Focused on strengths (+) Br
- Victim was not a focus Br
- Success depends on who is a T
part of the circle
- If someone shows emotion, T
others will
- Seeing parents disappointed K
makes them upset
- Not many male community T, K
members
- Flexibility-circle too big, so M
we made it smaller/more effective
- Program people apologized M
when wrong
- Not good to have girl friends in the Je
circle
- Circles should not be at police K
station
- Family therapy in circle is negative An
- Follow up circles boring As

5. Monitor feedback:

- Not connected/not helpful An, As
- Connected G, L, J, D, S, Ann
- Monitor made her feel L
like bad person
- Monitor talked down to her As
- Needs to be a good monitor fit S
- Monitors need to be young- Ann
connect better
- Make sure monitors are matched Br, K, D
up well-can have huge impact
- Have monitor go to home visit to K
see if good fit
- Watch how many youth a monitor K
has-impacts effectiveness
- Monitor schedule not L
consistent

6. Community Service

-Just put my time in	An, G, As, J
-Valuable	D
-Did not do Community service	L S
-Kids still see community service as punishment	K
-Relate community service to the offense	K
-Had more com service than friend who did same offense	As

7. Family Class Feedback:

-Sessions were not effective	N, Ann, Bo, An
-Parents felt shame	S, Ann, Je
-Personality inventory/Colors	N, M, As, D
-Youthful Offender panel	Ja, Di, Je, As, D, T, K
-Parent/kid time talk	An, J, D
-Lesson about talking when calm	An, Di
-Parent liked it and used strategies he learned	An, G
-As a result, parents ask more questions of their kids	K
-Positive if not a good relationship before the class	T
-How family class is ran now	Sa, T
-Realized other parents were in the same boat-less stigma	Je, Bo, Sa
-Speakers who speak well/ concise/more speakers	Ann, M
-Have one session devoted to divorce issues	M
-Readings were weak-not helpful	M
-Kids like circle part	T
-Look at family class-maybe creates stigma/no anonymity	T
-Parents want more time talking to their kids	T
-No time for family class	L
-Did not like goals activity	An
-Quote activities are bad	An
-Less time for parents to be there	Di, M
-Maybe all families don't need a family class	T, As, An

SHAME**1. How did daughter feel being in program?**

-Humiliated	Ann
-Embarrassed	Ann, Bo, Sa
-Kept it a secret	Ann
-Did a crime, had to pay a price	Ja, Je
-Do what I need to do and get it over with	Ja, Ann, N, Je
-Shame about incident	Ann, N, Ja, Bo, Sa, K
-Shame about getting caught and in YJI	Ja, B
-Might have sabotaged success to be in program longer-subconsciously needed the support and knew it	Je
-Angry	Je
-Nervous about circles	Bo
-Guilt	F

2. Setbacks:

-Alcohol incident	Bo, S, An
-Falsely accused of something by YJI	Je, D
-Graffiti	Bo
-Forged note at school	An
-Drug incident	D

3. Minimize behavior

-Mothers	Ann, Ja, S, Je, T
-Daughter	Ja, Je, An, G, D, J
-Sister "We both did this"	B
-Wealthy minimize	Sa
-I am not a criminal mentality/ not that big of a deal	T, K
-I am above the law attitude	T, K
-Not much-girl did a stupid thing and did not really need program	N
-Home visit was ridiculous-too much to do for the offense/ felt judged like bad parent	Ann, Je
-Over-reaction to a small crime	Ja
-Parent paid sometimes and was resentful	D

PROGRAM FEEDBACK

1. Program Big Picture Reflections:

- Girl learned that parents really did care about her/heal wounds Je, D, Je, M
- Showed everyone she could do it-didn't give up Je, Bo
- Helped build self esteem/pride D, Sa, Br, K
- Send message of good person, bad thing Sa, T, Br, K
- Kids learn they can control their own lives-internalized change Sa, Br, K, Bo, Je, M
- Support and accountability=change Br, K
- We look at the big picture-that is why we do UA's Sa
- Program changes lives Sa
- More comprehensive programming/not a slap on the wrist like JC R, K, Br, F
- Going through the process as a family-not in this alone was positive Ja, Bo, Je, M
- Family situation improved after YJI G, L, D, As, Di, N, M
- RJ good for events like this Di
- Helped me to be less naïve Bo
- Realized that girl thought lack of discipline=lack of caring Je, M
- Daughter said all her friends should be in YJI so they could get a life Je
- Don't give up on kids message/ they can change Sa, Br, F, R
- Until kids change their thinking, little change will happen Sa
- Great option so kids don't go to jail/cycle begins R
- It is a learning model Br
- Some parents are not willing to put forth the effort for YJI-sad R
- Girls needed someone to talk to Sa, K
- Girls needed self esteem help Sa, Br, K

2. Struggle that parent had throughout process:

- Hard to keep track of your kids now days/so busy N, Je
- Program was expensive S, Je, Bo
- Program made her more suspicious of her daughter Ann
- Inconvenience to do program Ja, Bo, Je
- Had to work with other parent-divorce situation not amicable Bo
- Enabled her-paid for her YJI expenses S, Je
- Struggle with parent/friend role Je
- Parent angry they had to do this An, G, D, As, J, Ann, Je
- Too busy for program L
- One parent was not sure about RJ J

3. Other Adults: Keys to program success:

- Parental participation Sa, Br, R, K
- Maturity of the girl high Sa, Br
- Ability to reflect/have insight/take responsibility Sa, R
- Girls who are stubborn do well Sa
- Ability for family to adjust to expectations/process Sa, R, K
- Relationships strong/develop Br, R
- Girl needs to trust monitor and open up for that part to work K

4. After YJI

- More offenses An
- Has not committed another offense since completing YJI Ann, N, Ja, Di, S, G, L, D, J
- Has used An, D
- Encouraged daughter to talk to researcher-help shame go away Di
- Thinks will get in trouble again An
- Might get in trouble, but hopes not G, Sa, Br, T
- Divorced parents communicated better L
- Parents paid attention/set limits D, L, An, G, M, Je,S
- Question more about where she Ann, Ja, Je, M, Bo, G, L, As

was going/what she was doing

-Recidivism is low/non-existent R, F

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

-Program should not be a one size fits all N, Di, S, L

-Religious underpinnings-change N

-Don't send message that family must be dysfunctional N

-Serious crimes need to go to court-need punishment Di

-Friends who are both in YJI tell each other when the drug tests are coming-all need to be random Je

-No window to get drug tests-right on the spot Je

-Young Women's Resource should become a key component Sa

-Need more good help R

-Need more resources if they would work with higher risk cases T

-Keep focusing on the 3 Principles T

-Look at how kids are referred T, K

-How can we help those families who don't have resources, multiple issues, etc? T

-If family does not hold young person accountable, need resources to do sanctions or other supports T

-Need a way to give immediate consequences if parent does not T

-Cost a lot of money L

-Lame alcohol class-change G

-Should we focus more on the fact that they did commit a crime? T

SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

- Expulsion very stigmatizing T
- Need consistent administration Sa
- of policies/fairness in enforcement
- Need some additional T
- programming besides 4 Oaks
- School performance improved D, L,
- School performance stayed the An, G, As, J
- same
- Would not have not graduated M, Je
- without YJI
- School performance D, L, K, Br, Sa, M, Bo
- improved

Appendix L
Emergent Themes

Findings	Data Sources
1. Theft was the main offense of the young women	Ann, N, Ja, Di, Bo, An, As, J, F, T, Sa, K
2. These are good girls who have done bad things. These young women had cognitive dissonance surrounding this issue.	G, L, As, J, N, Ann, Ja, Di, S, Bo, Je, An,
3. Negative peers, negative boyfriends, and fathers had a lot of influence on the young women who were in the program.	M, Bo, Je, An, D, L, Sa, R, K Boyfriend-An, G, D, As, Sa, Br, T
4. Trusting relationships and the presence of social capital is at the heart of the success rate of restorative programming.	Je, M, G, L, D, As, Di, N, K

5. The circle process and the monitor piece were the most impactful and helped to make the most change.	Circles: Je, M, Bo, An, G, L, J, T, K Monitor: M, Bo, Je, D, Sa, Br, T, K
6. Shame is lessened through the restorative process and is re-integrative in nature.	An, L, As, J, Ann, N, Ja, Bo, Sa, K