POLICE AS MENTORS: ANALYSIS OF HOW A POLICE MENTOR PROGRAM CAN IMPACT THE LIVES OF 'AT RISK' YOUNG PEOPLE

A Thesis submitted by

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Abstract

Project Booyah was created to build on the concept of community, re-engaging youth that had displayed signs of isolation, disconnection and/or criminogenic behaviours. Through police mentorship, the objective is to guide each young person in a successful and fulfilling direction through intercepting, educating and supporting individuals facing adversity and poor decision making. Project Booyah incorporates police mentoring through a resilience program called RESPECT, adventure-based learning principles, vocational scholarships and strategic partnerships that ultimately support post program employment and/or educational opportunities. Mentoring aims to have a positive influence on the behaviour and attitude of participants and reduce their involvement in the criminal justice system, through enhancement of their consequential thinking capabilities, choosing peers with a positive influence, reducing substance use, engaging in healthy recreational activities and assisting with improving home environments through positive relationships.

To date, there has been limited research investigating the effects of a police mentoring program on 'youth who are at risk'. A review of previous research indicated effective youth mentoring can result in significant improvements in the relationships of young people, academic performance, criminogenic behaviours and attitudes, and an increase in a young person's self-concept. Project Booyah adopted best practice processes of youth mentorship, so police mentors could utilise proven characteristics to provide positive outcomes. Griffith University recently completed an evaluation of Project Booyah through examination of processes, outcomes and a cost analysis. Their paper examined all aspects of the program that could then be drawn upon to determine the effectiveness of police mentoring.

The findings indicated the program uses best practice methodologies and post-program, young people reported significant differences in the areas of self-esteem, self-control and health behaviours and knowledge. The young people reported lower levels of aggression, reduced delinquency and improved relationships with parents/carers. The paper reports the young people who completed the program were more likely to be engaged in education and employment than those that did not complete the program. The paper significantly noted a positive effect in reduced offending both throughout the program, with 74.3% not offending and post program,

with 54.4% not offending any further. The paper concluded police mentoring is a key feature of Project Booyah.

Police mentoring studies have not been explored in any great depth. The research conducted by Griffith University provides insight into the benefits of police mentoring in Project Booyah. This thesis will explore the role of police officers as mentors and how this has contributed to the reduction in anti-social tendencies, improvements in health and relationships, increase in education and employment opportunities and a reduction in crime of youth who are at risk through the Project Booyah program. This thesis will introduce a conceptual model that was built whilst considering all the components of Project Booyah that was supported by literature to promote best practice. This model has driven change within the program and challenged the author to pursue a futuristic conceptual model to have more far reaching implications for the community. This paper will analyse the research completed by Griffith University to conclude the positive impact that police mentors has on the lives of young people participating in Project Booyah, and the far-reaching implications on society and the fiscal gains for the government and community, will be analysed.

Certification of Thesis

This Thesis is the work of Ian Frame except where otherwise acknowledged, with the majority of the authorship of the papers presented as a Thesis by Publication undertaken by the Student. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

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Abbreviations

ABL	adventure-based learning
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
APA	American Psychological Association
ART	Aggression Replacement Training
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
ASRDS-R	Australian Self-Reported Delinquency Scale - Revised
AYMN	Australian Youth Mentoring Network
BAT	Booyah Assessment Tool
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
CSS-M	Criminal Sentiments Scale – Modified
DET	The Department of Education & Training
FTF	Framing the Future
GCI	Griffith Criminology Institute
IACP	International Association Chiefs of Police
IPP	Individual Pathway Plans
MAY	Mentoring Arlington Youth
MI	Motivational interviewing
PCYC	Police Citizen Youth Welfare Association
QPS	Queensland Police Service
RNR	Risk-Need-Responsivity
RoP	Rite of Passage
RSES	Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SBPO's	School-Based Police Officers
SBPP	School-Based Policing Program
SET	Social Emotional Training
SRS	Service Record System
TAPS	Teen and Police Service
YSO	youth support officers
YSP	Youth Support Plan

Chapter One - Introduction

This chapter will introduce policing approaches towards youth, traditional policing methods and changes that have occurred, the concept of police mentoring, the triple dividend contribution, and the researcher and reflective practice. The author has chosen to use the term 'delinquency' and 'at risk' to refer to the young people for whom the research is relevant. Delinquency is commonly utilised in criminology literature and is frequently referenced during the Griffith Criminology Institute evaluation throughout the thesis. Although the term 'at risk' has been historically utilised across research, journals, federal and state education policy in reference to a large group of young people, there is growing evidence the risk of social stigma can have on their life trajectory. Toldson (2019) identified the negativity the term 'at risk' has in describing individual young people and outlined the assessment of risk should be based on good data and thoughtful analysis rather than a 'catch-all phrase'. Clearly identifying the risk factors as a young person's unique experiences and perspectives should be normalised, not marginalised (Toldson, 2019). The application of providing the young person with a label indicates the young person already has deficiencies, which places blame on the young person instead of the factors that have contributed to the difficulties being experienced by the young person (Comber, 1998; Ryan, 2019; te Riele, 2006). When the term 'at risk' is used throughout this paper, it is indicative of the concept that young people may be exposed to risk factors that may contribute to the likelihood of the young person experiencing poor outcomes, however the author also recognises that a young person's protective factors are vital in increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes. The identification of a young person who is or may be 'at risk' ensures all information, positive and negative, is considered in research and their individual circumstances have led to their difficulties, not the individual (Ryan, 2019).

There have been a range of policing measures introduced in Australia to divert young offenders away from the criminal justice system. These include cautioning, conducting meetings between an offender and their victim via consent (restorative justice conferencing), and convening specialty courts (such as youth drug and alcohol courts). Research shows if an adolescent engages in criminal activities, it will have a negative impact on their education, which will in turn result in difficulties with employment (Beatton et al., 2018; Rud et al., 2013; Smart et al.,

2004). This finding has wider social impacts on the individual and the community including problems with health, lower incomes, and housing problems. In addition to the individual social outcomes, young people who display multiple risk factors are youth who are at risk of developing persistent delinquent behaviour and a criminal trajectory that is costly both personally for the young person and to society (de Vries et al., 2018).

For these reasons, early intervention targeting the increase in protective factors is critical to prevent poor outcomes in adulthood (Sutherland et al., 2005). Effective approaches to crime prevention are outlined in the *National Crime Prevention Framework* developed by the Australian Institute of Criminology (2012) on behalf of the Australia and New Zealand Crime Prevention Senior Officers' Group. Amongst other findings, it determined that crime prevention can reduce the long-term costs associated with the criminal justice system and the costs of crime, both economic and social, and can achieve a significant return on investment in terms of savings in justice, welfare, health care, and the protection of social and human capital.

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is the Queensland State Government's coordinating agency for crime prevention and are responsible for identifying effective and efficient pro-active programs that will contribute to the achievement of crime reduction and making Queensland safe. 'Project Booyah', which translates to an expression for 'joy, excitement or triumph', is a collaborative and transformative early intervention program for youth who are at risk, utilising the skills and knowledge of government, community, health, education and university sectors. The author utilised decades of policing experience as a senior leader to create a program that was adaptable to the needs of youth who are at risk across regional and urban communities as a shared local concern. For the program to be sustainable, the author explored the role government and non-government agencies, as well as families, communities, and businesses had to cooperatively address the individual, social and environmental factors influencing the targeted young people. The author recognised in the infancy of the program a connection between adverse childhood events and teenage difficulty with interpersonal relationships, disengagement from education, inability to obtain employment, poor understanding of health, and low levels of respect for themselves and others. The author also acknowledged the link between these issues in adolescence and long-term involvement with the criminal justice system. In response, the author created the Project Booyah police mentor program

and has been the appointed State Coordinator for over a decade during which time the program has reached various communities across Australia, integrated into broader social policy and permanently funded by the Queensland government.

During the development of the concept of a police mentor program, it was vital that a thorough environmental scan examine social, demographic, economic, legal and political factors that would influence the QPS long-term and the sustainability of the program (QPS, 2017). The operational priority that would improve the workplace vision of a police mentor program was articulated as a frontline service of reducing and preventing the incidence of youth crime and reduce rates of crime victims. That would be via a constructive crime prevention alternative that embraces a community inclusive police mentor early intervention program targeting criminogenic behaviours and enhancing protective factors of youth who are at risk (QPS, 2018). To achieve this aim, the importance of the role of a police officer being appointed as the mentor of youth who are at risk, challenged historical policing methodologies. Johnson et al. (2005) state that although public statements from policing organizations' promoted a balanced approach between arresting criminals and crime prevention, a deeper probe revealed a culture that did not reflect an appetite for alternative approaches.

The cultural web was such that the 'taken for granted' paradigm supported 'the way we do things around here' as the default business model that generated day to day activities. The complexity of this change was evident at the practitioner level whereby operational staff grappled with the concept of working with youth who are at risk that had caused significant angst in their day to day policing activities. Common attitudes of front-line police were that anti-social young people deserved harsher penalties, including incarceration, and the core business of policing does not include mentoring youth away from a life of crime.

To support QPS staff to appreciate the intent of a police mentor program, a marketing strategy that invited staff participation from the outset was implemented. This approach included an educational component that outlined the program intent of delivering a strength-based police mentoring program to support youth who are at risk and their families to build careers and vocational pathways. Communicating the nature of the planned changes and the expected results promotes greater understanding and ease of transition (QPS, 2015). Communication of the eventual outcomes of the strategy was important to promote inclusion and continued support

of the initiative in promoting the tangible benefits to the QPS and breaking down the cultural barriers. From a business-level strategic decision, the police mentor program needed to promote its value to the organisation via alignment to the strategic plan.

The program needed to understand the stakeholders needs, be better than most of its competitors, and be a point of difference to other programs. The managers of the program from the outset examined the QPS strengths and capabilities to embrace such an alternative approach of intervening early in a young person's development, particularly in disadvantaged communities, with an aim to produce significant long-term social and economic benefits. The international dimensions of a successful organisational environment as described by Griffin (1999), include economic, technological, sociocultural, political-legal and international. The acknowledgement of these dimensions in the original concept ensured the program supported the international trend towards a comprehensive approach to crime prevention programming.

Throughout the development phase of the program, the author observed that QPS senior executives had shifted from a bureaucratic approach to one that seeks continuous improvement via forward thinking, implementation of new policies and enhanced strategic plans that have realistic applications to its workforce. A further observation included a recognition that a cultural paradigm shift was occurring whereby development of professional strategic leaders and prudent management systems were viewed as paramount to support any future change and/or growth (QPS, 2015). This culminated in an interpretation by the author that the long-term direction of the QPS was to acknowledge that identifying trends and predicting them into the future in a linear way will only be successful if the intuition of visionary leaders were encouraged to oversee the complexities of desired change management processes.

When developing the concept of the program, the QPS executive leadership team empowered the author to design a strategic response that examined the external environment that may influence the effectiveness of a police mentor program and furthermore the internal, organisational needs of the QPS to determine the capability and readiness for change to a new strategic direction (QPS, 2017).

The police mentor program commenced in December 2011 as a partnership between the QPS and Department of Communities. The impetus for Project Booyah was police concerns regarding the increasing frequency and seriousness of offences

committed by young people residing in youth care facilities. These offences included violent assaults (particularly upon caregivers), property offences and young people absconding from care facilities. Further analysis of police data confirmed that young people in care were significant participants in offending, anti-social behaviour and drug use.

Initially commencing as a local community-based initiative to reduce drug and alcohol abuse and related anti-social criminal behaviours by young people in care, Project Booyah has, over the last 5 years, transitioned into a community inclusive early intervention program targeting criminogenic behaviours and attitudes of youth who are at risk. This was achieved through the program curriculum targeting a selection of known risk factors for adolescent offending, along with increasing protective factors which enable young people to desist from offending, re-engage with education and employment. Project Booyah's aim was adapted to provide a structured community inclusive program incorporating adventure-based learning, social, emotional and skills development training, police mentoring, youth support and vocational scholarships to support identified youth who are at risk build their self-worth, resilience and make better life choices. All cohorts were capped at 10 young people; of similar ages to ensure maturity levels and consequential thinking were aligned with optimal outcomes. A total of 50% of each cohort consist of youth who are disengaged from schooling, with the other 50% being made up with Youth Justice clients or young people identified by police who were youth at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

Historically, young people have significant more contact with police than adults (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2015). The fractious relationship between young people and police has been widely established (Crime & Misconduct Commission Queensland, 2009; Mazerolle & Wickes, 2015). The author has worked with young people in a policing role for decades and common issues impacting these interactions includes a sense of being targeted, treated unfairly, spoken down too with no respect and a preconceived negative perception about police through the environment they live. Anecdotally, young people can at times treat interactions with police as a game due to a perceived ease to navigate the criminal justice system with limited concern of consequences. Research conducted in Victoria (Grossman & Sharples, 2010) revealed young people believed police could form more meaningful relationships with them if they were treated with more respect, whilst Gray (2017)

found young people purely wanted the police to be empathetic and that this behaviour would improve the relationship between them.

On the opposing side of the interaction, is the way police view young people and commonly become increasingly frustrated with the lack of respect they show, refusal of young people to take responsibility for their actions, and their propensity to commit crime with little regard for others and/or consequences due to a criminal justice system that doesn't hold them accountable for repeated offences. Taking the views of the young people from research, and the commonly held police views which the author directly observed, the author determined that police required specific training and education about young people that would support positive interactions and forming trusting relationships. The mentoring framework was developed by the author and training to re-engage and realign relationships with youth at risk through authenticity, healthy role modelling, sharing knowledge, particularly around the offending continuum, provision of education and workplace development, ensuring they understood the role of police in the local community and displaying the human side of policing (Brooker, 2011). Police within Project Booyah were trained in all aspects of evidence-based approaches and were furthermore encouraged to use their policing experience, experience with youth, skills learnt through life experience and other police training, to become a trusted advisor, tutor, encourager and helper.

The aim of this thesis is to provide inferential statistical support that Project Booyah offers a tested solution that would be well suited to working with youth who are at risk to reduce recidivism and help them make meaningful connections with education, vocation, employment and other services including the police service so they can transition out of future contact with the criminal justice system. The thesis will also examine and integrate the findings of the Griffith University evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020) on Project Booyah, particularly relating to the participants' self-esteem, self-control, aggression, delinquent behaviour, criminal attitudes, relationship quality with parents/caregivers, the effect of police mentoring, criminal recidivism and victimisation, during and post-program.

The outcomes will provide insight into a proposal that investing in Project Booyah will help reduce future demand for acute services and deliver savings to government by reducing re-offending, keeping young people out of the criminal justice system, re-engaging young people with education, delivering youth

employment outcomes, and building stronger connections between young people, their families and communities. These measures are important predictors of longer-term criminality and social engagement, overcoming these issues equips youth who are at risk to make good choices and become productive community members (de Vries et al., 2018).

The anticipated outcomes of this thesis will support the findings that by incorporating Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and strength-based principles to deliver a resilience-based program and skill development training within a police mentoring program, will be beneficial. Furthermore, the thesis will highlight the benefits that youth support, education, adventure-based learning principles and vocational scholarships, can have on young people building careers and engaging meaningfully in future vocational pathways (Australian Institute of Criminology [AIC], 2003; Bandoroff & Newes, 2004; Lipsey, 2009; Tolan et al., 2014). The author anticipates that Project Booyah will be viewed as a constructive crime prevention alternative that embraces a community inclusive early intervention concept targeting criminogenic behaviours and attitudes of youth who are at risk.

Triple Dividend Contribution

Within the context of a triple dividend contribution, the benefits of work-based research are not only received by the individual researcher, but also the work environment or organisation and community of practice or profession (Fergusson et al., 2018). It is envisaged that this study will support the theory that the QPS, as the Government's coordinating agency for crime prevention, will benefit from confirming that Project Booyah is an effective and efficient police mentor program that can contribute significantly to the achievement of crime reduction in young people. This will support the theory that crime prevention police mentor programs can reduce the long-term economic and social costs associated with the criminal justice system and the costs of crime and can achieve a significant return on investment in terms of savings related to justice, welfare, health care, and the protection of social and human capital. From an organisational perspective, this thesis is aimed towards enhancing the reputation of the QPS in delivering innovative crime prevention programs that supports the strategic direction of the service. The author is furthermore interested in proving that the program rationale and objectives are directly linked to the Queensland Governments *Our Future State: Advancing*

Queensland's Priorities (Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 2018) which aims to:

- Create jobs in a strong economy
  - Engage more young Queenslanders in education, training and work
- Keep communities safe
  - Reduce rates of youth re-offending
  - Reduce the rate of Queenslanders who are victims of crime
- Keep Queenslanders healthy
  - Reduce suicides

Finally, from an individual self-development perspective, this research provides both professional and personal growth in identifying areas of strength and weaknesses in workplace practices in the context of service delivery in line with pre-agreed learning objectives. In relation to the Triple-Dividend, the thesis will highlight the significant contributions Project Booyah is making to enhance the reputation of the QPS in improving workplace innovative programs that support the strategic direction of the organisation. The thesis explores the proposal that the innovative notion that police as mentors can provide a positive impact upon the lives of youth who are at risk. The author will unpack the various elements of Project Booyah via a thorough literature review to support that Project Booyah has sound evidence-based academia behind the program logic and structure.

The Researcher and Reflective Practice

The researcher, as a requirement of a Master of Professional Studies program, focused on a work-based project, Project Booyah. The researcher's prior learning includes formal direct learning that included qualifications linked to program deliverables and workplace-based knowledge attained from over 27 years policing experience. This experience has included working within specialised fields including youth crime and child protection. The Professional Studies Curriculum Vitae Tool (Van der Laan, 2013) was used as part of the course requirements of the Master of Professional Studies to unpack the researcher's previous workplace knowledge and experiences. The completion of the tool challenged the researcher to reflect on: workplace processes and methodologies; the importance that collaboration through effective communication techniques has on the sustainability of programs; the impact innovation has within a government organisation and across government; and

the impact emotional intelligence and unleashing personal potential can have on successfully implementing workplace cultural paradigm change.

In the context of my degree, the notion of reflective practice proved highly useful as both a personal tool for connecting individual traits with professional growth and a professional tool for assisting to connect current work states with potential future outcomes by reflecting and acting on the stages of Project Booyah (Fergusson et al, 2020). Reflective practice is defined as a 'crucial skill' by Helyer (2015, p. 16) as a method that over time can be developed through workplace experience and learnings that can be honed and applied. A 'reflective practitioner' is one who researches his or her own "evolving relationship between self and work" and develops "self-identity, self-awareness and personal agency" (Helyer, 2015, p. 16).

Fergusson et al. (2019) state that practitioners that can harness and exploit the power of reflective practice, can learn to function effectively as advanced practice professionals. Reflective practice through this work-based project has deepened my learning beyond the dominant paradigm of focusing on micro-reflection into professional practice. Bass et al. (2017, p. 230) advocates a "model of holistic reflection" which "encourage[s] the practitioner to reflect inwardly on personal and professional belief systems, and outwardly on their practice and the wider social and political conditions [i]n which practice is situated" suggests a level of macro-reflection.

Rankine (2019, p. 105) describes a process of "thinking aloud" on how macro-reflection could assist a researcher to "evaluate and provide opportunities to develop future practice". Utilising a macro-reflection practice, my research is concerned with programmatic reflective engagement to explore the phenomena in my work environment of Project Booyah to determine future themes (Fergusson et al, 2020).

The learning objective for this study is to identify, analyse and evaluate the impact Project Booyah has on the self-esteem, levels of aggression, connections with other people, family and their community, and juvenile delinquency, and victimisation of youth who are at risk through a police mentoring approach. The researcher sought to consider the effectiveness of the service delivery model that incorporates CBT and strength-based principles to deliver resilience and skill development training, youth support, education, adventure-based learning principles and vocational scholarships to support young people and their families to build

careers and vocational pathways to achieve desired outcomes through long term police mentoring. In this sense, the author was an inside researcher to this phenomenon (Unluer, 2012), in that I am well placed to explore and discuss the key conceptual themes which are associated with both Project Booyah and the core police mentoring elements within it. Such identification is important in qualitative research to clarify the researcher's role in the research, and the advantages and disadvantages of insider research have been considered when designing the study. The findings of this research will make significant contributions to the work place as the literature review will highlight that Project Booyah has sound evidence-based academia supporting the initial concept, however, will provide innovative research into the impact police as mentors can have on providing positive impact upon the lives of youth who are at risk.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

In order to examine the key conceptual themes which informed and guided the development elements of the conceptual model that will be presented in Chapter Three titled Figure 1, this review of literature will consider the following topics: the context of issues for youth who are at risk, youth mentoring; police mentoring; important considerations given to police mentoring, including trauma-informed practice, adolescent development stages, suicide prevention, and interventions; mentor outcomes; and stakeholders.

Context of issues for youth who are at risk

Children can begin a trajectory of disadvantage in their early years, particularly if there are inter-generational cycles of poverty, homelessness, family violence and a family history of offending, unemployment and poor health (Clancey et al., 2020). The risk and protective factors associated with family are a strong influence on a young person's development, with one third of young people surveyed in the Victorian youth justice review commissioned by the Department of Health and Human Services, identifying family as being the main reason for the commission of serious, violent offences (Armytage & Ogloff, 2017). All of the factors mentioned in this section make it more likely that young people experiencing disadvantage will experience difficulties in education and health and will more likely require further services in relation to mental health, child safety, disability, homelessness and family (Armytage & Ogloff, 2017). These findings stress the importance of addressing the factors leading to a young person being deemed at risk and focusing services in these areas. The earlier the intervention in a child's life is commenced, the more likely their risk factors can be reduced (Baidawi & Sheehan, 2019).

In addition to the familial characteristics that can affect a young person, there are systemic circumstances for youth that impede their opportunities, creating barriers for young people to achieve their potential in contemporary Australian society. Such experiences include those born to poverty, health inequities, a lack of employment opportunities, ineffective behaviour management practices in schools, punitive and counterproductive justice systems, racism and family violence (Armytage & Ogloff, 2017; Atkinson, 2018; Booth et al., 2012; Dawes & Davidson, 2019; Quadara & Hunter, 2016). These barriers become more evident for young people who are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, are refugees, from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), living in rural or remote

communities, are in out of home care and/or have a disability (Woolfenden, et al., 2018). The Australian Child Rights Taskforce report (2016) shows a young person's health and well-being is adversely affected by the social determinants of culture, socioeconomic status and where they live. This report also highlights the need for health and well-being services to be available to all members of the community equally, but particularly those that are identified as being disadvantaged.

The systemic social, economic and cultural determinants of health and well-being relate to the way we live, meaning racism, lack of education, poor employment opportunities and a disconnection to culture can all have an impact on the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people (Wright & Lewis, 2017). In addition to the high rates of substance use, mental health and childhood trauma in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the deeper issues having an ongoing impact on the people in these communities includes the continuing disadvantage in the context of colonisation (SCRGSP, 2016). An example of systemic racism is the disproportionate representation of Indigenous youth in the youth justice system with Indigenous youth representing 5% of all Australians aged 10-17 years yet represent 49% of all young people in the youth justice system (ACRT, 2018).

There are a significant number of young people in the youth justice system that come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The young people in the youth justice system are likely to have complex needs due to their experience of socio-economic disadvantage and exposure to highly dysfunctional family units (Armytage & Ogloff, 2017). These circumstances also make it nine times more likely that young people under youth justice supervision have been in contact with the child safety system (AIHW, 2019) and have also been victims of crime. It has also been found that young people with experiences in youth justice have significantly more problems than youth not involved in the justice system in the areas associated with substance use, mental health conditions, trauma history, learning disorders, intellectual disabilities and disengagement with education (Armytage & Ogloff, 2017).

There have been multiple reviews recently on the most effective approach to provide the best outcome for young people involved in the youth justice system (Armytage & Ogloff, 2017; Atkinson, 2018; RCPDCNT, 2017). It is vital to understand the characteristics and background details of young people who offend to ensure the response is appropriate. The response to young people in the youth justice system is complex, needing to address the nature of the young person's offending

and the factors that have influenced and may continue to influence the young person's life. Of the factors that can influence a young person's likelihood of offending is substance use. Queensland youth justice data indicates 76% of young people under a youth justice order are suffering substance use issues, and for 62% of young people, substance use contributed to their reoffending risk (Atkinson, 2018). The substance use problem amongst young people involved in the youth justice system in Australia is further highlighted in the 2016 report by the ACT children and young people Commissioner which found 5.1% of young people in the general community had a drug or alcohol disorder, whilst 64% of young people in youth justice systems had a drug or alcohol disorder (Roy et al., 2016).

A further factor contributing to a young person's risk of offending is education. Research shows that education is the key to breaking through the disadvantage (McLachlan, Gilfillan & Gordon, 2013). The premise behind this assertion is if someone receives an education and builds appropriate skills, they are more likely to gain employment, improving their level of income, enabling them to afford better health services, access recreational and social activities. It is therefore important for any intervention to focus on the young person engaging in suitable education to ensure they have the skills to gain employment.

Mental health is another factor to be considered given young people in the youth justice system are found to have significantly more mental health issues that have not been addressed. The prevalence of mental health issues in the general community for young people is between 13% and 20%, whilst for young people involved in the youth justice system in Australia this rises to between 40% and 70% (Roy et al., 2016).

Given the differences noted for young people which makes them more likely to offend or be at risk of offending, it is vital the response is tailored to young people taking into consideration their individual needs. This varies to adult offenders, as young people have the differing characteristics associated with the developmental stage of adolescence including risk taking and the strong influence of peers (Dustin et al., 2013; Steinberg, 2010). It is important to consider that young people are also disproportionately the victims of crime, given that research shows victimisation is linked to offending (Cashmore, 2011; Chang et al., 2003; Malvaso et al., 2017). Other considerations in the unique response required for young people are young

people who offend have complex needs, require a higher duty of care and tend to grow out of criminal behaviour (Richards, 2011).

The disarray of the juvenile justice systems across Australia have been scrutinised in recent years (Clancey et al., 2020). The reviews that have been conducted by the States of Australia analysing the policies and procedures utilised by the different states found common themes that needed to be addressed to improve the outcomes for young people involved in the youth justice system. The themes across jurisdictions that needed to be considered included the complex needs of youth entering the youth justice system, the over-representation of Aboriginal young people, the harm caused to young people who spend time in custody, alternatives to custody and altering systems in place in detention centres to address the needs of young people who are in custody (Clancey et al., 2020).

The welfare model has a long history of being used in juvenile justice, however, has also received criticism due to the confusion in the boundaries between criminal behaviour and protective factors (AIHW, 1998). Juvenile justice systems in Australia are not typically seen as a system adopting one particular approach and are often distinguished as a system which comprises of approaches from justice and welfare models (Richards, 2011). The justice model focuses on the criminogenic risks and needs of the young person, whilst the welfare model focuses on the rehabilitation of the young person. The discussion then surrounds which model should occur first when considering the most effective approach towards young people who have contact with the juvenile justice system.

A recent review by Armytage and Ogloff (2017) of the Victorian youth justice system revealed an overemphasis on the welfare needs of young people and argued the system had ‘lost its focus on responding to criminogenic needs’. This view supports the risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model for effective offender rehabilitation, which asserts welfare-based interventions cannot be completely effective without first addressing the criminogenic risk factors (Andrews et al. 1990). The recommendations from the review on the Victorian youth justice system suggested that interventions should focus on the young person’s criminogenic needs, whilst being simultaneously supported through the welfare needs, as the young person’s welfare could not be effectively addressed without the young person first obtaining the skills to address their criminogenic behaviours (Armytage and Ogloff, 2017). Reviews from Queensland and the Northern Territory (Atkinson, 2018;

RCPDCNT, 2017) revealed a differing perspective believing young people should be viewed 'victims of disadvantage' rather than offenders and recommended the initial response be focused on their non-criminogenic needs, taking a trauma informed perspective. Armytage and Ogloff (2017) agree that understanding the effects trauma can have on young people and trauma informed practice is important, however stress that placing too much emphasis on trauma can negate the young person's need to take responsibility for their behaviours.

Regardless of the approach, it is important that the risk factors of children are identified as early as possible, so prevention and early intervention initiatives can be commenced to improve these factors and improve the long-term outcomes for young people (Shepherd & Purcell, 2015). In addition to engagement in education and linking in appropriate support services for mental health, family and substance use for those young people who are at risk, the development of positive, supportive relationships with peers and adults is important (Atkinson, 2018). An effective method to address a young person's needs and have a positive effect on young people is mentoring, which if conducted appropriately has been shown to reduce offending and recidivism (Du Bois et al., 2011; Lipsey et al., 2010).

Youth mentoring

Mentoring of young people has become a method used frequently in assisting youth to develop the skills necessary to improve their well-being. This relatively new method of intervention is producing promising results. When aimed at youth, being a mentor involves a trusting relationship with another person who can assist a young person to grow through support, guidance and encouragement (Rhodes & DuBois, 2008). Providing a pro-social influence is the common goal of youth mentoring programs. It is hoped that such an influence will counterbalance negative influences and help youth avoid deviant behaviour (Miller et al., 2013).

Previous studies have found that programs using mentors from a helping role or profession reported larger positive effect sizes, compared to programs that did not report use of such mentors (DuBois et al., 2002). In a similar meta-analysis examining 73 youth mentoring programs, greater positive effects were found in programs using mentors whose professional or educational backgrounds matched program goals (DuBois et al., 2011). Further to this, in a meta-analysis, Tolan et al. (2014) found significant positive effects for mentoring equally with high-risk youth

and delinquent youth and their functioning in the school setting. At a lower level, but marginally significant, were the improvements in reducing drug use and aggression in high-risk and delinquent youth who participated in mentor programs. A further finding in this study to note were that stronger effects were found in mentor programs that included emotional support and advocacy for the young people.

This evidence highlights the importance mentoring can have when targeted at youth classified as high-risk for environmental risk, or those with behavioural problems such as delinquency. Effective mentoring can result in increased motivation, increased connections with people and the school environment, improved academic performance, increased confidence, increased self-efficacy, improved attitudes and a decrease in juvenile delinquency (Anton & Temple, 2007; Greenwood, 2010).

In acknowledging the problems young people who are at risk can experience within their family unit (Armytage & Ogloff, 2017), it has been shown that by introducing a positive, influential relationship through mentoring, young people can achieve positive outcomes (Lakind et al., 2015). Mentors who are employed full-time in a professional role have been shown to have more time to fulfil their mentoring role, have a standing in the community that enhanced access and cooperation, and possessed appropriate skills to develop the relationship (Lakind et al., 2014). Clarke (2017) suggests that police officers possess effective communication skills, have the emotional intelligence and the skills and experience to manage the difficult situations often encountered with youth who may be at risk, therefore are an excellent choice as mentors for youth. This is also supported through earlier research where it was suggested that professional people already in helping roles may possess the insight to manage the difficulties between police and adolescents (DuBois et al., 2002).

Police Mentoring

The review of the literature discovered an abundance of evidence on the benefits of mentoring youth, as outlined above. Research shows that productive interactions between police and youth provides positive outcomes (International Association Chiefs of Police [IACP], 2018; Rusinko et al., 1978), including positive attitudes towards police and healthy youth development, and that it is a strong protective factor (IACP, 2018). With the international coverage over the years of

negative interactions between police and members of the community, it is important police organisations put thought and effort into the improvement of these relationships. The USA is an example of where tensions have occurred between the police and community, leading to deaths. The media coverage from the USA shows a country where mistrust, negative attitudes and the dissonance towards police are obvious, as a result of police brutality, perception of racism and police shootings. Due to this divide, America has adopted numerous police mentoring programs across the states to "close the gap" and ensure the negative tensions between police and youth are reduced (IACP, 2018; Simonton, 2017). Police youth mentoring is an interesting concept, not only because mentoring is not considered a police role, but also because of the considerable amount of research that reports the negative attitudes of youth towards police (Brick et al., 2009; Hurst & Frank, 2000). The reasons these negative attitudes are formed include negative interactions with the police, involvement in delinquent behaviours and negative parental attitudes (Brick, et al., 2009; Leiber et al., 1998; Sargeant & Bond, 2015).

The Teen and Police Service (TAPS) Academy is an American police mentoring program developed to assist in bridging these gaps. TAPS is an 11-week mentoring program based in police departments in America and the Caribbean that aims to reduce the social distance between police and youth who are at risk. The program aims to change behaviour, learn effective decision making, participate in crime prevention projects and improve the relationship between youth and police through a curriculum which covers topics such as violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, bullying and topics related to law enforcement (Huffman, 2019). There have been several evaluations examining the benefits of TAPS, finding no statistical significance in changes of youth who participated in the program (Jones, 2018), whilst an earlier study found significant results in the youths improvement in perceptions of police, a significant decrease in undesirable behaviour and no change in the young person's beliefs about themselves (Houston Health Department, 2017).

The Mentoring Arlington Youth (MAY) also provides mentoring to youth in Grades 7 and 8. The MAY program runs for 12 months and includes sessions on leadership, team building, education and career development. The mentoring component involves adults from a range of professions. The program was evaluated using an extremely small sample size of 10. All participants reported improved

communication with parents, 66% reported an improvement in behaviour, whilst 50% reported better decision making. From the 22% of youth who had received citations pre-program, there were no reported citations throughout the program (IACP, 2018). However, further research conducted with a bigger sample size would provide more meaningful results. Although police may have been involved in this program at times, there is no consistency with police being a mentor for the youth involved in MAY.

Bigs in Blue is another program developed in 2017 by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, a prominent international youth mentoring organisation. This program aims to improve the relationship between police and youth through police mentoring. The mentoring involves police officers spending four hours per month with a young person they have been matched to, participating in activities in the school environment (Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Triangle, 2017). The belief that police mentoring is effective in making change in young people and communities has been so well received in America that the Office of Justice awarded Big Brothers Big Sisters of America $US10.75 million to fund Bigs in Blue (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2019).

Further to these specific programs, the IACP (2018) has reported multiple law enforcement agencies in America have implemented programs in response to young people who are at risk of offending. These programs include police officers working with youth through sporting activities, classroom learnings targeting identified gang members and delinquent youth, school-based police officers, camps and workshops. There is insufficient detail so far to report on the effectiveness of such programs, and all appear to be short-term programs focusing on one component (IACP, 2018). Further research in the police mentoring area would provide invaluable information on the importance of police mentoring programs. Research in Australia has also been conducted relating to the perceptions young people have of police (Gray et al., 2017; Grossman & Sharples, 2010). The findings support those found internationally where negative attitudes are formed as a result of experiences with police and parental attitudes (Sargeant & Bond, 2015), media exposure and police attitudes towards young people (Crime and Misconduct Commission, 2011; Hasna et al., 2012). These negative findings highlight the importance of police building better relationships with the community, including disengaged youth. Research conducted

by Grossman & Sharples (2010) included analysis of interviews with over 500 young people in Victoria regarding relationships between police and youth. The findings included recommendations by young people that police could develop better relationships with them by increased communication, friendliness and approachability, and a polite and respectful attitude. Further research conducted by Gray et al. (2017) highlighted that although the clear majority of young people reported negative interactions with police, they also described the beneficial role of police officers who could be empathetic towards them and who were able to communicate and effectively engage with them. These officers were described as positively influencing the young people they met (Gray et al., 2017).

The negative views between young people and police officers, is also reciprocated. Richards et al. (2019) asserted that police generally have a conceptualisation of young people as a 'problem', especially socioeconomically disadvantaged young people who were viewed as in need of 'saving' from inevitable trajectories towards criminality. This was identified as alarming considering police contact with youth at risk is a strong predictor of future criminal justice involvement. The role police have is vital in shaping young people's contact with the criminal justice system (Cunneen et al., 2015; Schulenberg & Warren, 2009). Research indicates that how police perceive young people influences their exercise of discretion in relation to this group (Marinos & Innocente, 2008; Mcara & Mcvie, 2005), which can in turn have implications for both young people's wellbeing and community safety (Shafiq et al., 2016).

The research of negative attitudes towards police and youth in Australia highlight the importance of police organisations altering a reactive policing approach to include proactive measures which can improve these relationships. Although there are programs that purport to assist youth through police mentoring, there is minimal research relating to the involvement of police with youth and the outcomes of such programs. A method which has been used in Queensland schools is the school-based policing program which was first trialled in 1995-96 (QPS, 2019). This program involves police officers being based permanently in a Queensland school. There are currently 51 police officers in 58 schools in Queensland. The aim of the program is to create positive, healthy relationships between police, the students, their families and the community. No research has been found on the effectiveness of this program; however one could deduce there are positive benefits given the longevity

of the program, continuing after 25 years.The mentoring framework has been found to be a positive police intervention as it provides a positive environment to re-engage and realign relationships, promote healthy role modelling, share knowledge, particularly around the offending continuum, provide education and workplace development, and understand the role of police in the local community (Brooker, 2011). It is important, that mentors offer a non-judgmental approach in the interest of building trust, mutual respect, and measured responses to enable them to work together with youth to achieve the desired goal of change (Du Bois et al., 2011). Research by Raposa et al. (2016) shows the importance of matching a mentor with the appropriate skills and characteristics to youth, in particular youth who are at risk. Police officers are experienced in working with youth who are at risk through their general policing duties that require them to manage all clientele in all environments through the communication and negotiation skills they have learnt through their training and experience. In considering the characteristics of an effective mentor, it is important police officers balance these skills with the empathy and support required to build a positive and trusting relationship.

Through the building of relationships between youth and police mentoring relationships, the police mentor can share appropriate life experiences with youth who are at risk. This self-disclosure is an effective method in developing a strong, trusting relationship and to maintain a relationship (Guerrero et al., 2007). Research on the effectiveness of self-disclosure in a mentoring relationship has shown it is a powerful communication tool when developing trusting, high quality mentoring relationships (Dutton, 2018). More recent research has shown appropriate self-disclosure has multiple benefits including, normalising emotions and experiences, improving self-esteem and self-identity, modelling effective communication skills, providing advice and guidance and expressing empathy (Dutton et al., 2020). Another important aspect of mentoring is for the mentor to be able to create and uphold a positive learning environment. It has been proven that a positive learning environment ensures students are more likely to engage in learning activities and exhibit appropriate behaviours (Arthur-Kelly et al., 2007).

In addition, the mentoring of young people can typically involve youth who have been involved in criminal activity or are exhibiting delinquent behaviour. It makes sense, as these youth are prime candidates to be provided with guidance and support. It is also important to understand young people are frequently victims of

crime and are disproportionately represented as victims of crime and in the criminal justice system (Baldry, 2014; Cunneen et al., 2016; Finkelhor et al., 2009). Not only is there a high rate of children being victims of crime, but research also shows a connection between victimisation and criminal behaviour (Cashmore, 2011; Chang et al., 2003; Malvaso et al., 2017; Shaffer & Ruback, 2002) and that offenders and victims are frequently linked (Baren, 2003; Loeber et al., 2001; McCausland & Baldry, 2017). It is worth noting that most young people who are victims do not progress to offending, although victims are at an increased risk of offending, particularly if the mistreatment occurs in adolescence (Hurren et al., 2017). A survey conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria (2016) of young people detained on sentence and remand revealed 63% were victims of abuse, trauma or neglect. In New South Wales, a 2015 health survey revealed 68% of young people in custody had experienced neglect or abuse in childhood (NSW Health & NSW Juvenile Justice, 2016). A further example of the rates of victimisation amongst young people in Australia showed young people aged 15 to 24 years are at a higher risk of assault than any other age group in Australia, whilst young males aged 15 to 19 years are more than twice as likely to be a robbery victim than males aged over 25 years and all females (AIC, 2010). For police mentors, when considering a young person's potential of being a victim, it is vital mentors understand that a young person's exposure to traumatic experiences can adversely impact an adolescent's development, which can ultimately affect the adolescent's response to their environment.

Important considerations for mentoring programs

Trauma-informed practice

In considering the potential of young people who receive mentoring being victims of crime, mentors must understand and use trauma-informed practice. Trauma-informed practices allow organisations to ensure practices, policies and culture recognise and respond appropriately to the trauma effects of clients (Quadara & Hunter, 2016) and that people deliver services aimed at the needs of the young people they are working with (Clawson et al., 2008). The six principles of trauma-informed practice complement the mentoring approach. These principles include safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment, voice and choice; cultural, historical and gender issues (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2014). In the range

of literature that discusses the principles of trauma-informed practice, it has been found that all have the same underlying philosophies and guide the principles adopted by those adopting a trauma-informed approach (Wall et al., 2016). The leading trauma training organisation in Australia, Phoenix Australia, has adopted these principles in their training packages, which have also been adopted by New South Wales Health. Youth Justice in Queensland adopts a trauma-informed practice approach and have identified young people who have experienced trauma have a decreased capacity to learn and use maladaptive coping mechanisms to deal with stress, including substance use and criminal behaviour (Atkinson, 2018). Youth justice systems have a duty of care to implement appropriate interventions whilst considering the impact of the adversity young people may have experienced and ensure their practices alleviate the harm already experienced and ensure no further harm is caused (Clancey et al., 2020).

This approach will ensure mentors appreciate the various complexities that young people encounter as they navigate through the difficulties of their adolescent years and previous traumatic events that may have negatively impacted their lives. The punitive responses by education and juvenile justice systems can be potential triggers for young people who feel they are being threatened or are in an uncomfortable situation. This can result in the young people exhibiting challenging behaviours which will require mentors to be equipped with the understanding and skills to be able to manage those situations with trauma-informed care (Kezelman & Stavropoulos, 2012; Quadara & Hunter, 2016). This highlights the importance of training of mentors in trauma-informed practice and a supportive environment, which are components of an effective mentoring program (Lawner et al., 2013). It has also been shown that mentors who receive training and program support, experience better quality relationships with their mentee which can also promote healing (Herrera et al., 2013; Bath & Seita, 2018).

Adolescent Development Stages

Therefore, when mentoring youth, it is important to have an appreciation of the developmental stage of an adolescent as it is a tumultuous time where changes occur physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, behaviourally and psychologically (American Psychological Association (APA), 2002; Day et al., 2004; Howard & Johnson, 2000; Sanders, 2013). Given that adolescents develop at different rates, this can be a period where adolescents become worried and stressed about the different

appearance of their bodies to others. The change in physical appearance can also cause an increase in self-consciousness, leading to negative reactions towards interpersonal exchanges and life events. It has been suggested that these physical changes can be linked to behavioural difficulties Bathelt et al., 2021; Day et al., 2004). Early adolescence is a period where young people are self-focused, have unpredictable moods and are more self-conscious (Ozretich & Bowman, 2001). As they successfully navigate themselves and their emotions, developing their self-identity, a healthy self-concept and self-esteem, they show an increased ability to empathise with others, manage their emotions and be a responsible member of the community (APA, 2002).

Mentoring has been shown to have a positive effect on adolescent development, however, there are varying factors that determine the size of this effect (IACP, 2018; Rhodes & DuBois, 2008). The mentoring factors that have been found to contribute to positive effects in an adolescent's developmental processes of social-emotional, cognitive and healthy identities include a strong connection between the mentor and young person and mentoring relationships are consistent over at least a one-year period (DuBois & Karcher, 2005; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Spencer, 2007). Building of a positive relationship is an expected outcome of effective mentoring.

An important type of support the mentor provides is the emotional support where time is spent listening and empathising with the young person without judgement (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Showing support through identifying strengths, offering encouragement and expressing confidence in the young person supports a young person's self-esteem. Being aware of the development of identity in adolescents is vital for police mentors, as it is thought to include the two concepts of self-concept and self-esteem (APA, 2002). Self-concept is the set of beliefs a person has about themselves, whilst self-esteem is the way a person feels about their self-concept. The beliefs can relate to personal attributes, goals, interests, values and roles (Baumesister, 1999; Crisp & Turner, 2010; Marcia, 1980). These beliefs can then affect a young person's self-esteem, which develops differently for everyone during adolescence. Self-esteem can remain stable, improve or decline during adolescence and can relate to the progress of development in other areas (i.e. physical, cognitive, social and emotional). A young person can develop low self-esteem when there is a gap between their self-concept (how they see themselves) and

what they believe they should be like (Harter, 1990). Mentoring has been shown to have a positive effect on youth self-esteem, either naturally or in a formal mentoring setting (DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005; DuBois, et al., 2011).

Mentoring requires the awareness of these developmental stages and furthermore the study of Julian B. Rotter (1954) pertaining to the concept of 'locus of control'. Rotter (1954) reports locus of control as referring to a person's perceptions about who or what is ultimately responsible for the positive and negative experiences they have. A person with an internal locus of control believes that they are responsible for their own positive and negative outcomes (Lefton, 1997). A person with an external locus of control believes that external factors are responsible for positive and negative outcomes (Lefton, 1997). Generally, people with an internal locus of control tend to be healthy and adjusted and this is seen to be the better orientation. If a young person has an external locus of control and they exhibit qualities that indicate they are unable to take responsibility for their actions and consistently blame others, then they will need assistance to develop a more internal locus of control where there is balance between them being able to take responsibility for their actions and provide themselves with an accurate appraisal of a situation. Having or being able to establish an internal locus of control is important as it is linked to healthy self-esteem and high self-efficacy (Griffore et al., 1990; Phulpoto et al., 2018). There is also research that has found people with an internal locus of control are less likely to develop depression and anxiety (Heath et al., 2008; Li & Chung, 2009; Hammond & Romney, 1995) and have a lower risk of suicide (Evans et al., 2005; Beautrais et al., 1999).

Suicide Prevention

Suicide prevention is an important component of any program targeting youth because suicide is the leading cause of death for children aged between 5 and 17 years; for young people aged 15-24 years suicide accounts for 38.4% of deaths and more than three quarters (78%) of child suicides were of children aged between 15 and 17 years (ABS, 2019a). Although males account for a larger proportion of suicides, over three times that of females, for children aged between 5 and 17 years the sex ratio gap is much lower with 1.6 male deaths for every female death (ABS, 2019a). It has been shown that if young people have a trusting relationship with a caring adult, like those relationships that build during mentoring, then the negative effects of their environment decrease and there will likely be positive outcomes,

including a reduction in self-harming behaviours and suicide (Blinn-Pike, 2011; Farruggia et al., 2011; Robinson et al., 2012).

A further concerning statistic is the proportion of suicides in Indigenous youth aged five to 17, who are four times as likely to die from suicide compared to non-indigenous peers (ABS, 2019b; AIHW, 2011). In addition to the recent suicide statistics, one in 10 young people will self-harm, one in 13 will seriously consider suicide and one in 40 will attempt suicide (Lawrence et al., 2015). As can be seen with these statistics, programs that include topics of suicide prevention are just as important for male and female youth and it is essential for programs that include Indigenous youth. A review on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentoring has demonstrated that mentoring can have significant positive effects in improving the behavioural, education, training and employment outcomes for youth that are at risk, whilst also being a protective factor for suicide risk (Bainbridge et al., 2014). The research that has been conducted on the linkage between youth mentoring and suicide shows there are positive outcomes for youth who are at risk of suicide or have a history of self-harming and suicidal behaviour.

Risk Assessment

In the development of any youth program, one important concept is to determine how the clients will be determined suitable for the program. Staff in the youth justice system routinely conduct risk assessments to evaluate the risks and needs of young people to reduce recidivism and provide the young person with the support they require. Other assessments can also be used to assist in the assessment process of a young person to determine what intervention is best suited based on the young person's needs, e.g. behavioural, cognitive and mental health assessments (AOC Briefing, 2011). An evidence-based approach that has been found useful for effectively managing risk is Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) (Dowden & Andrews, 2000). Research has found that programs which deviated away from RNR principles did not reduce recidivism. Those programs that followed RNR principles showed a significant reduction in recidivism (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005; Andrews et al., 2006). Risk assessments developed from the late 1970's have used the principles of RNR. The four principles of RNR includes:

1. Risk Principle states the services provided should match the risk level of the person being assessed. A high level of service would be required for those

young people identified as being higher risk, compared with young people who present with lower risks.

2. Need Principle states the service provided should match the person's offending or criminogenic needs (e.g. substance use, anti-social peers or anti-social beliefs). The focus of this service should be on the dynamic factors that can be changed for the young person and/or their family. These may include participation in recreational activities, changing peer groups and improvement of parenting skills through parenting programs. A person's likelihood to violate rules or commit a crime are reduced when their criminogenic needs are addressed.
3. Responsivity Principle states the method of service should match the capabilities and characteristics of the person. This ensures the young person receives the appropriate style of learning to effectively improve their well-being. For example, consideration of the young person's level of motivation, their current mental health status and any learning difficulties. A treatment shown to be an effective response are cognitive behavioural approaches. Cognitive behavioural methods are deemed the most effective regardless of the type of offender, for example, female and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Bonta & Andrews, 2007).
4. Professional Discretion Principle states that having reviewed the level of risk, need and responsivity of the young person, decisions relating to case management and appropriate intervention should be made with good professional judgment.

Although RNR has been identified as best practice for corrections, the principles guiding this response are deemed necessary for programs where young people exhibit the risks and needs which these principles address (James, 2015). The response to the young person must be matched to their risks, needs and strengths. Identifying negative behaviours and the factors that drive these negative behaviours will be vital in determining the appropriate services the young person and/or their family require. Research has shown that when programs target high-risk individuals, the reduction in recidivism rates will be larger than programs that target low-risk individuals (Latessa et al., 2010). The risk principle in the RNR model states the higher the risk of the individual, the higher the level of service that individual will require (Dowden & Andrews, 2000).

Research on mentoring has examined its effects on young people with differing risk levels of recidivism. Herrera et al. (2013) examined seven youth mentor programs and found that youth with different levels and types of risk received similar positive benefits from the mentoring they received in the program. There were challenges encountered in programs that targeted higher risk youth, including greater attention required in the areas of behaviour and mental health. Programs that target low-risk individuals and/or those that show a willingness to attend programs are easier to co-ordinate and manage. However, the outcomes of these programs are not likely to obtain results that prove as positive an outcome for low-risk individuals (Latessa et al., 2010). This is because low-risk individuals are naturally likely to refrain from anti-social behaviours. It remains important for individuals at other risk levels to receive intervention aimed at improving their problematic areas.

Research shows that programs that comply with the RNR principles report significant improvements in participants compared to programs that do not comply with the RNR principles (Andrews & Dowden, 2005; Lowenkamp et al., 2006). Research has shown that programs who adhere to the RNR principles show a 30% reduction in offending, compared to a 6% decrease when the principles are not adopted (Bonta et al., 2010). Andrews et al. (2006) identify eight central criminogenic needs, with four being noted as the 'Big 4'. These 'Big 4' factors comprise antisocial attitudes, antisocial peers, antisocial behaviour and antisocial personality. The other four factors are family, school/work, leisure activities and substance use. If these needs are targeted in treatment, then research has shown re-offending is likely to decrease (Andrews et al., 2006).

Protective Factors

The young person's strengths and other positive factors in their lives are also important areas to be identified through the assessment process. These protective factors assist the young person to reach their developmental milestones and protect the young person from developing problematic behaviours, mental health problems and emotional difficulties (Dubowitz & DePanfilis, 2000). Examples of protective factors include pro-social behaviour, healthy self-esteem, supportive relationships with family, engagement at school, participation in recreational activities and good coping skills. The young person's protective factors can reduce the likelihood of a young person engaging in risky behaviours (Sutherland et al., 2005).

Families are a significant protective factor in providing pertinent resources for their children, as well as providing a sense of belonging and connectedness (Robinson et al., 2010). If the young person has a supportive, healthy family unit then this can serve as a significant protective factor for the well-being of the young person. If the family unit is chaotic, disconnected or dysfunctional, this can create undue stress on the young person and may also be traumatic (Larner, 2009). This can have an impact on the young person's self-worth, identity, trust, sense of security and cultural connection (Robinson & Pryor, 2006). Evidence demonstrates a young person's well-being can be enhanced if the family accepts the young person has a problem, the family is involved in resolving the problem, and the family accepts the level of intervention. Other protective factors include healthy attachments between parent and young person, good family communication, authoritative parenting, healthy marriage and father involvement (Carr, 2009; Luthar, 2006). In considering all of these factors, it is important youth mentors work closely with the young person's family, in recognition of the complex interplay of individual, environmental and social factors that contribute to a young person's life trajectory (Du Bois et al., 2011).

Therefore, using an effective resilience program to build a young person's strengths is a useful way to increase their protective factors. Resilience is a person's ability to adapt and manage changes that occur in their life (Johnson, 2008). As can be seen by all the developmental changes that occur during adolescence, it is important that an adolescent builds their resilience to cope with these changes as effectively as possible. Resilience can reduce the level of risk, whilst also highlighting the young person's strengths and competence. A young person develops further resilience as protective factors increase (Garbarino, 1999). Having noted the difficulties adolescents can experience, most young people cope well and do not develop any ongoing problems (Strasburger, et al., 2006). As a young person's resilience improves, their self-esteem is also likely to improve (Woolfe, 2019).

Stages of Change

As part of the assessment process it is useful to determine whether a young person identifies with their negative behaviours and recognises the need for change. As such, another consideration for youth mentors to be cognisant of is the Stages of Change model developed by Prochaska and DiClemente (1986) to assist mentors in recognising which stage the young person may belong when considering their

readiness to change. This model has typically been used when working with individuals in the area of substance use, however, can be used when examining any behaviours that would benefit from a change. Jim Prochaska and Janice Prochaska (2016) proposes that this model can be used for anyone in the youth who are at risk population and if a person can be assisted in moving one step forward in the stages of change model, they are more likely to change. Once the mentor can identify which stage the young person belongs, it can then be assessed how motivated the young person is to change their behaviour/s and assist them in moving to a different stage that will increase the likelihood that their behaviour will improve. This assessment is important in determining whether a young person is suitable for participation in a demanding program and whether they will be invested to complete the program components. Motivational interviewing (MI) can be used when a young person displays a reluctance to change.

Interventions

Motivational interviewing. The intervention MI can assist young people by encouraging them to change through communication. The developers of MI, Miller and Rollnick (2002, p. 25) state motivational interviewing is "a client centered, directive method for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence…". MI aims to promote engagement, minimise resistance, and encourage behaviour change. The five key communication skills used in MI are asking open questions, affirming, reflecting, summarising and providing information and advice with permission (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). During the MI process the young person identifies pros and cons of their problematic behaviour and they are encouraged to think about the problem, link the problem with current negative behaviours, identify positives that may be present if that behaviour was absent, highlight the discrepancy between where they currently are and where they wish to be and assist the young person to identify steps to get life back on track. The guidance of the mentor through MI can assist the young person to make a plan in taking the required steps to change undesirable behaviour.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). Another method that can assist young people make a change is CBT, which is an evidence-based approach that can be tailored to meet the needs of young people with a variety of mental health problems. CBT focuses on teaching the skills that allow people to reduce their negative thoughts and improve their behaviour and feelings. CBT is a mode of therapy that

has been identified as one of the most effective psychological treatments for depression (Cuijpers et al., 2013; Mor & Haran, 2009). Research has also found CBT based interventions enhance resilience and prevent depression, anxiety and suicide (Reavley et al., 2015).

Positive Psychology. Other areas of psychology that research has shown to be effective in making change in a young person's life include positive psychology and interpersonal skills training (Seligman, 2005; Skeen et al., 2019; Spence, 2003). Positive psychology is the study of the strengths and desirable morals that enables people and communities to thrive and live a good life (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Sheldon & King, 2001). The overall principles of positive psychology are outlined in Seligman's (2011) PERMA model. The principles that are believed to contribute to a person's happiness include Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Achievement. The four main aims of positive psychology include managing life's challenges, engaging and relating to others, finding fulfilment through creativity and productivity and helping others (Keyes & Haidt, 2003).

Interpersonal Skills Training. Interpersonal skills training focuses on developing effective communication skills, being self-aware and understanding your own and other people's attitudes, values and perceptions. Learning these skills can be beneficial in improving relationships, developing healthy coping mechanisms, building verbal and non-verbal communication skills and enhancing problem-solving skills (Robertson et al., 2008).

Adventure Based Learning. Adventure and wilderness-based programs are also recognised as an effective intervention strategy for youth who are at risk (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1989; Herbert, 1998; Russell, 2003; Russell & Farnum, 2004; Wilson & Lipsey, 2000). There have been many adventure/wilderness-based programs conducted throughout history, commencing as far back as the 1850s. The aim and processes of such programs have been unclear at times, and such programs must have clear theoretical foundations and explain how these processes will evoke change in the young people (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994). Russell (1999) has extensively studied the qualities of these programs and has created program guidelines and processes assist in the development of a successful program, ensuring change in the participants. Further to this, the most effective mentoring programs are those that are combined with activities such as sports, learning of life skills or educational assistance (Costello & Thomas, 2011). There have been positive findings

on the effects of adventure-based therapy on improving an adolescents self-esteem (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1989; Herbert, 1998; Mohr et al., 2001), self-efficacy (Berman & Davis-Berman, 1989; Herbert, 1998; Russell & Farnum, 2004), self-concept (Hans, 2000; Hattie et al., 1997; Russell, 2000; Wilson & Lipsey, 2000;), development of personal responsibility and internalised locus of control (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994; Hans, 2000; Hattie et al., 1997), behavioural problems (Russell, 2003; Wilson & Lipsey, 2000) and skill development (Russell & Farnum, 2004). Disequilibrium theory also plays an important role in explaining the benefits of participants being part of the bush experience (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994; Gass, 1993; Mohr et al., 2001). This theory states that participants are placed in unique situations which are outside their comfort zone. They are subsequently challenged to face their dysfunctional coping mechanisms and re-structure these to more effective types of coping, so they can tolerate this new environment (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994; Gass, 1993; Mohr et al., 2001). Research suggests that the alteration of these coping mechanisms can be reinforced in a natural environment, like the bush (Russell, 2001), and then applied to the participant's everyday life (Nadler & Luckner, 1992).

Rite of Passage. In many Indigenous Communities, the young people participate in a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. This pathway to adulthood is an important process in the recognition and acceptance of the young person in a community (Van Gennep, 1977). An African proverb identifies the dangers of not providing their young people with a Rite of Passage (RoP) into adulthood, "If a child is not initiated into the village, it will burn it down just to feel its warmth" (as cited in Lawson, 2011). An Australian Indigenous RoP is called Walkabout. Traditionally, Walkabout is a RoP where adolescent aboriginal males undergo a journey alone in the wilderness for up to six months where they follow their ancestors in surviving in the outback (Parker, 2011). These days, many aspects of the Aboriginal RoP are not practiced. In Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in contemporary Australia, there is little focus on assisting the young people in making a safe and effective transition into adulthood. There are RoP programs attempting to address this deficit in Australia including AdventureWorks 'Transforming Lives' and Outward-Bound Australia, that have adopted the historical significance of this indigenous practice. These programs contend that RoP principles enable maturation and personal development of young people to transition into adulthood with long

term positive impacts on their own values, self-perception, and connection to their family, culture and community (Rubinstein, 2013).

The question is subsequently pondered, if Australian communities do not provide a process facilitating the transition to adulthood, will they burn down the village through destructive behaviours to feel its warmth? Australian Aboriginal elders also ponder whether there is a connection between the loss of the Aboriginal RoP and the disillusionment in many young Australian Indigenous men (Parker, 2011). In considering this process, RoP may be an effective mechanism to assist the young people of Australia transition into adulthood.

The term RoP was coined by a French ethnographer Arnold van Gennep during his anthropological work in the early 1900s, which focused on observing the rituals and ceremonies of indigenous populations at various crucial phases of their life-stage development. The term basically refers to an experience, which an individual goes through (alone or as part of a group), during which they undergo transformation as a person and are not the same afterwards as they were beforehand. Something significant occurs which changes not only the individual but also the way the community sees and relates to the individual who has gone through their RoP (Rubinstein, 2013). The components of RoP include *separation from family* into a metaphoric *container* (the process of bringing the young people away from their families and regular communities), *challenge* (can take many forms including physical, mental and emotional challenges), *creation of liminal space* (a conceptual space which allows for contemplation and reflection upon deeper-level thoughts which would not normally be part of our focus in our day to day lives), *telling of stories* (personal, cultural and communal), *recognition of unique gifts, talents and abilities* (honouring the good things seen in each participant), *identification of personal challenges* (recognising, naming and confronting things which hold participants back) and *reintegration* (the process of reintegrating back into the family and community) (Rubinstein, 2013).

Mentor Outcomes

With all these considerations on what constitutes an effective program, mentors must be selected and trained appropriately to ensure they can work effectively with the diverse young people they will be mentoring. When related to criminal behaviours, mentoring has been shown to be effective when introduced early in a young person's offending history (Adler et al., 2016) and in reducing

offending and re-offending in youth (Grossman & Tierney, 1998; Maguire, et al., 2010). A meta-analysis comparing youth who participated in a mentoring program and those that did not participate in a mentoring program, it was found the youth who partook in the mentoring program received significantly better outcomes than those that did not participate including positive self-image, emotional well-being, psychological well-being, positive social relationships, higher academic performance and reduction in problematic behaviour (Eby et al., 2008).

Stakeholders

For mentoring programs to be successful, it is important the local community have a sense of belonging and ownership of the tangible benefits such an engagement strategy has for youth who are at risk (Johnson et al., 2013). This process can include the establishment of a clear framework that recognises the partner's objectives via service arrangements, maintaining trust and clear lines of accountability that involve monitoring and dissemination of outcomes. The program needs to understand the stakeholders' needs, be better than most of its competitors, and be a point of difference to other programs. Hemphill and Smith (2010), Johnson et al. (2013) and Victoria Department of Human Services (2008) recognise this multifaceted approach as best practice. A program's ability to form strategic partnerships across government, business and community sectors, provides a collective capacity for young people to re-engage with important social structures within their community and such approaches have been directly linked to a reduction in target behaviours' in young people (Hemphill & Smith 2010).

Summary

As has been outlined in this literature review, research on police mentoring and youth is limited. Although there are programs all over the world that suggest police mentoring is a component of the program, the degree in which police officers interact with young people and maintain contact with young people appears limited, the targeted youth are not necessarily youth who are at risk and there is a lack of information that examines the program content. When considering an effective mentoring program for youth who are at risk, the components of the program need to be examined to ensure each component is effective so young people reap the benefits and change occurs. In addition to program components, considering the clientele and the factors affecting each young person at risk will assist the program staff to work effectively with the young people and provide appropriate mentoring skills. It is

important that any mentors are trained to be able to deliver the components of a mentoring program well, and they obtain support from other professionals, family and community as required to ensure an inclusive program is delivered with all stakeholders involved in the expected outcomes.

This study is concerned with the connection between the elements outlined in this literature review and the features of Project Booyah, a youth program initially developed on the Gold Coast in 2011. The growth of Project Booyah has seen change occur in the concept of the program, whilst the program is now permanent in nine sites across Queensland and currently being piloted in other states and territories of Australia. The analysis of the program throughout this study will provide insight into the research question as to whether a police mentor program can have an impact on the lives of youth who are at risk and contribute new knowledge to the field of police mentoring.

The following chapter will outline the components of Project Booyah and how the program works. A conceptual model will be introduced to assist with this explanation and depict how the program currently exists.

Chapter 3 – Project Booyah

Methodology

A conceptual model has been developed to recognise the components of Project Booyah and inform the program conceptually of what alterations could be made to further shape the program and lead to a more favourable future model. The Project Booyah conceptual model was built whilst considering all the components of Project Booyah that have been developed over the years, since the program's inception, to make Project Booyah what it is today. The building of the model was systematically conducted and based on research to inform the program of best practices nationally and internationally on youth mentor programs. The literature review in Chapter Two provided a contextual understanding to provide meaning to the core components of Project Booyah, which were then mapped to assist in determining the appropriateness and importance of each item in answering the research question. The concepts that emerged from the literature and those through qualitative inquiry have been grouped, given labels and are related by means of their relationships. These concepts include youth mentoring, risk assessment, risk and protective factors, interventions and stakeholders. The concepts were then synthesised into a theoretical framework to build the conceptual model. The concepts are constructed in a manner so appropriate examination and analysis could occur to justify the presence of each item in the model.

As well as conducting research, the author developed Project Booyah and has gathered invaluable anecdotal evidence that has assisted in the formation of the Project Booyah conceptual model. This evidence has been gathered by the author who has used decades of policing experience and taken on multiple roles in the program including a police co-ordinator, a police mentor, program and case management developer, operations manager and support services. Other sources that have influenced the development of Project Booyah have been feedback from the young people, staff, community and government leaders, and other stakeholders. The program is a police led program, however the input from other sources involved in the program is crucial. To determine whether the conceptual model was reliable and valid, the author sought feedback from other police officers involved in Project Booyah, professionals that have been stakeholders in Project Booyah and QPS management to ensure the concepts presented provided a reasonable theory for other researchers and to validate the conceptual framework. During this process it was

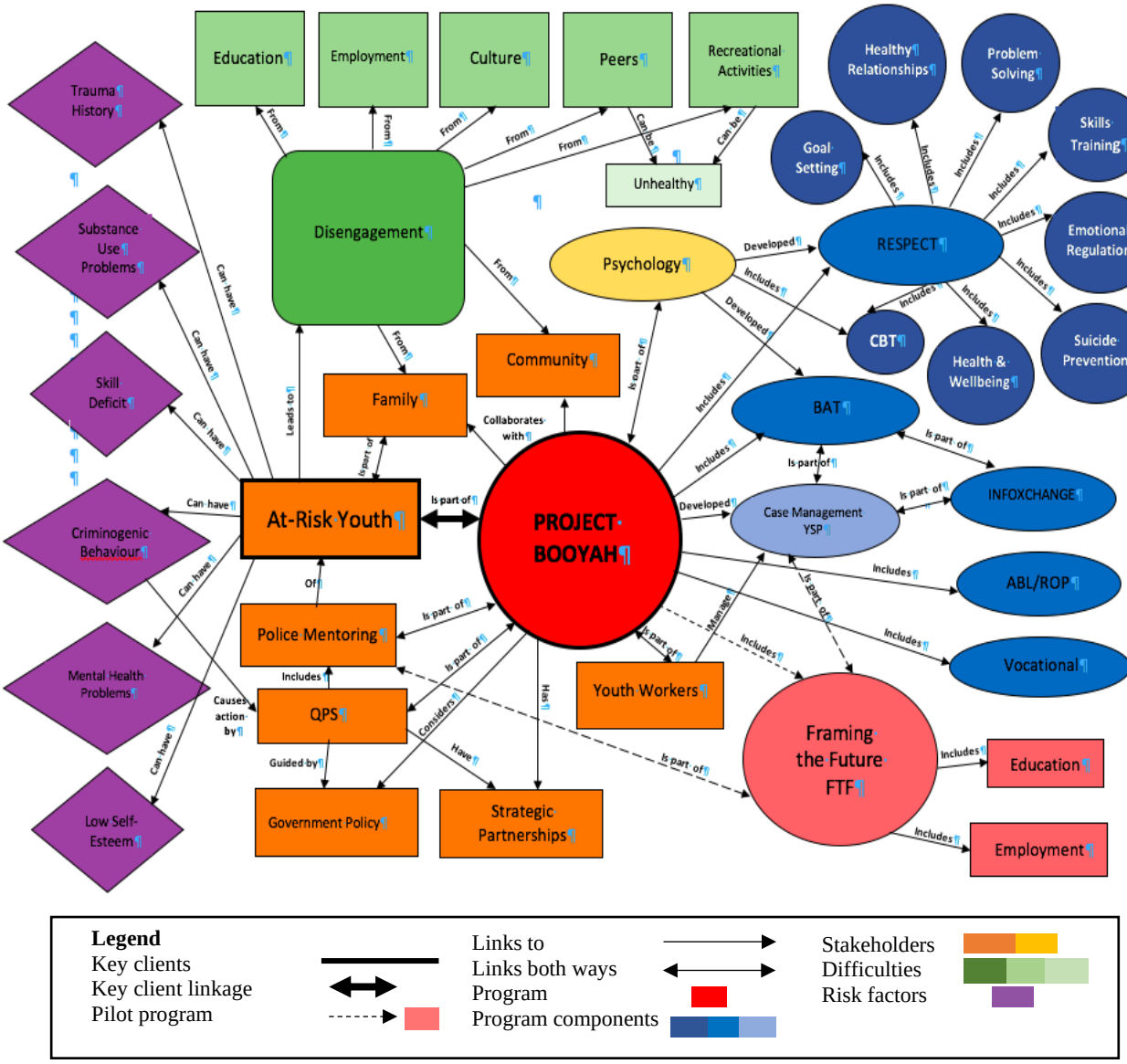
important the framework was dynamic, so new insights and feedback would allow the model to be appropriately altered. Each concept identified in the conceptual model will be explained in detail to ensure there is sufficient evidence to support that factor being part of the model. As such, the conceptual model is not being tested, it has been developed and can be enhanced to depict the future of Project Booyah based on the outcomes of research and other observations including the anecdotal evidence gathered over the years.

Project Booyah Description

Project Booyah's intent from the outset was to promote the new practice and proactive strategy of diverting youth who are at risk away from delinquent behaviour through an intensive police mentor program (Miller et al., 2013). This was a unique aspect of Project Booyah in that the young people engage with a QPS police officer who forms a mentoring relationship with the young person. Based on these initial concepts, a conceptual model was able to be built outlining the aspects of the program that were appropriate and contributed to maximising the program outcomes. The conceptual model of Project Booyah is illustrated systematically in Figure 1 and will be discussed in detail throughout this chapter.

Figure 1

Project Booyah Conceptual Model



Youth Mentoring

After reviewing the literature on the effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth, Project Booyah adopted the characteristics deemed suitable and have created a formal and informal mentoring framework, whilst taking into consideration the mentoring guidelines from the Australian Youth Mentoring Network (AYMN). The AYMN is supported as the peak body of youth mentoring by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and their guidelines have been developed for youth mentoring both nationally and

internationally. The AYMN first developed benchmarks for mentoring programs in 2000. These benchmarks have been reviewed and evolved in line with best practice in 2007 and 2012. These benchmarks are the standard that all mentoring programs must achieve to be considered a successful and sustainable program (AYMN, 2012). The benchmarks are contained in 10 elements of mentoring. These elements are:

1.Planning and Design
2.Management and Governance
3.Evaluation
4.Staff
5.Recruitment
6.Screening and Selection
7.Orientation and Training
8.Making the Match
9.Monitoring and Support
10.Closing the Match

Police mentoring is an interesting concept, as it is not considered a typical police role and in addition to this, the literature review also revealed systemic negative attitudes youth have towards police (Brick et al., 2009; Hurst & Frank, 2000). The mentoring framework provides a positive environment to re-engage and realign relationships, promote healthy role modelling, share knowledge, particularly around the offending continuum, provide education and workplace development, and understand the role of police in the local community (Brooker, 2011). Project Booyah staff are therefore encouraged to use their policing experience, experience with youth and skills learnt through life experience and training, to become a trusted advisor, tutor, encourager and helper.

Youth Workers

As Project Booyah was in its infancy, and best practice was still being determined, it was clear that although the police officers were providing mentoring that was providing positive outcomes, a more holistic approach was required. It was determined necessary for Project Booyah police officers to link with other stakeholders to further assist the young people in the program. To achieve this, it was identified that is was paramount to combine the skills and capabilities of youth workers experienced in case management, to complement the police mentor role and further address a young person's risk and protective factors. The value of working

alongside youth workers was identified by the author as crucial to value add to the research methodologies to affect change of youth who are at risk. The police mentor role was deemed to be challenging in how to engage with youth who are at risk , therefore providing an operational response that combined the skills of experienced youth workers that communicated at different levels and in more therapeutic approaches, would improve deliverables and outcomes. Good-quality relationships between youth workers and young people was viewed as crucial to value add to the program. Youth workers function is idealistically in conflict to traditional relationships between police and young people however the combination of both disciplines was viewed as providing a framework that complemented the program logic to facilitate change for youth at risk. Although internationally, there is limited research on the effects of police officers working in collaboration with youth workers, it was obvious that the gap in service delivery in Project Booyah could be filled with a specialist in youth work who could provide a complementary skill set.

Case Management

Long term case management and police mentoring involving a community-inclusive approach was considered necessary by the author in helping young people develop appropriate life skills to build their capacity to make sound decisions and better choices as well as bridging their disconnect with society. This approach is in line with the QPS Strategic Plan 2019-2023 (2019), where police are encouraged to strengthen relationships by forming collaborative partnerships with other organisations and groups to reduce crime. Project Booyah designed the community inclusive model around interdependent phases, with each successive element building on the previous component, promoting the relevance of the elements and their sustainability. Adopting a youth support focused approach that ensures ongoing police mentoring and case management support, remains available within and beyond the program.

Government Policy

An important government policy which Project Booyah considers regularly is the Queensland Governments *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* (Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 2018). A priority of this policy is the engagement of young Queenslanders in education, training and work. Project Booyah aims to improve the future educational and employment prospects of young people in the program. Project Booyah achieves this through providing education

and training on social and emotional development, numeracy and literacy skills, job readiness skills and a qualification in a meaningful area, all in readiness for the young person to be more employable and meet the future demands of the Queensland economy. A further priority considered in Project Booyah's outcomes of the program is assisting in the reduction of youth re-offending and the reduction of Queenslanders who are victims of crime.

Program Components

Project Booyah draws upon the young person's risk and protective factors, as well as their needs to provide relevant services to assist the young person to develop their strengths and reduce negative attitudes and behaviours. Project Booyah staff achieve this through delivery of the resilience program, RESPECT, police mentoring, adventure-based learning (ABL) activities, re-engagement with education, employment, culture, pro-social peers and recreational activities and thorough case management through a Youth Support Plan (YSP), which addresses the risk factors including criminogenic behaviour. Although the young people in Project Booyah can be recruited as a result of their criminogenic attitudes and behaviours, there is also a large percentage of young people on the program who are also victims of crime. The RESPECT program specifically focuses on topics including Family and Domestic Violence and healthy relationships, and the young people are provided with strategies and plans to assist them in these domestic violence situations.

This education and training can certainly assist with the reduction of victims of crime statistics. The final priority Project Booyah considers is the reduction in suicides. Through the RESPECT program young people participate in a suicide prevention session that aims to educate and provide strategies, build skills and assist young people to manage their thoughts, emotions and behaviours. Project Booyah staff have access to program psychologists to assist with any young person who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts, whilst also being able to link the young person to mental health services to assist their mental well-being.

Youth who are at risk

Project Booyah receives referrals for youth who are at risk from a variety of stakeholders including the QPS, Education Queensland, Youth Justice, Queensland Health, Department of Communities (Child Safety Services), and their local community. Project Booyah also has a website whereby there is a provision for

families and young people to make self-referrals. Youth who are at risk are referred to Project Booyah due to stakeholders having concerns with them presenting with one or more risk factors that require intervention. It has also been found that the clear majority of young people that are referred to Project Booyah are disengaged from areas in their life that are important, or otherwise have unhealthy relationships with others or a disconnection with recreational activities. Once referred, the young people and their parents/carers are interviewed to determine their suitability. Once accepted into the program the police mentoring relationship continues and the young people participate in the program to address their risk factors and needs through the delivery of the program's components including RESPECT, ABL/ROP and vocational studies.

Police Mentors

All Project Booyah staff have been recruited and selected for their positions as they have been deemed to possess the appropriate characteristics that make a quality mentor for the young people in the program. Research shows the importance of matching a mentor with youth who are at risk (Raposa et al., 2016). Police officers are experienced in working with youth who are at risk through the general policing duties that require them to manage all clientele in all environments. This ultimately is the point of difference from other youth mentor programs. Police mentors are asked to call upon past experiences that include coal face interactions with various members of the community, policing domestic violence and child protection incidents, and using effective communication techniques to negotiate and/or resolve dangerous situations. This often culminates in the police mentor sharing appropriate life experiences with youth who are at risk during the program to challenge previous mindsets of the role of police and provides a perfect segment to promote learnings via lived experiences. Research shows that self-disclosure can be an effective method in the mentoring relationship between police and youth (Guerrero et al., 2007).

Understanding and managing the emotions of Project Booyah participants effectively is a crucial part of maintaining levels of respect, healthy learning and reaching the program goals and expectations. Police mentors must be respectful to the young people. Modelling of this behaviour will assist the young person to learn how to interact with others and reshape previous negative interactions and/or thoughts of the role of those in positions of authority. This includes being open and

honest with the young people and setting appropriate boundaries, all components of mentoring. Figure 2 shows Project Booyah youth participants working in collaboration with police mentors at the Commonwealth Games in 2018, whilst meeting the Police Minister, Mark Ryan, and previous QPS Commissioner, Ian Stewart.

Figure 2

Police mentoring youth who are at risk during Commonwealth Games community service

As is the case when working with youth who are at risk, negative events can occur while they are in the program. This is especially the case when mentors are developing relationships with young people. Although police mentors have the experience to manage youth who are at risk, the youth and situation must be managed in a positive manner (Karcher et al., 2010), which may be in contradiction to traditional police training in managing volatile situations. To support the police mentors, the program developed a positive behaviour plan to help ensure that all participants and staff feel safe, valued and connected to the Booyah community, and contribute to building respectful relationships, resilience, and well-adjusted participants who can learn effectively. Positive behaviours must be always promoted to maintain the staff and participant learning environment and emotional wellbeing. With mentors teaching and modelling expected behaviours, it is likely to assist in the reduction of existing problematic behaviours and reduce the likelihood of new problems developing.

Trauma-informed Practice

Project Booyah staff must be trained in trauma-informed practice so they are aware that these negative behaviours may also be an indication of a young person's

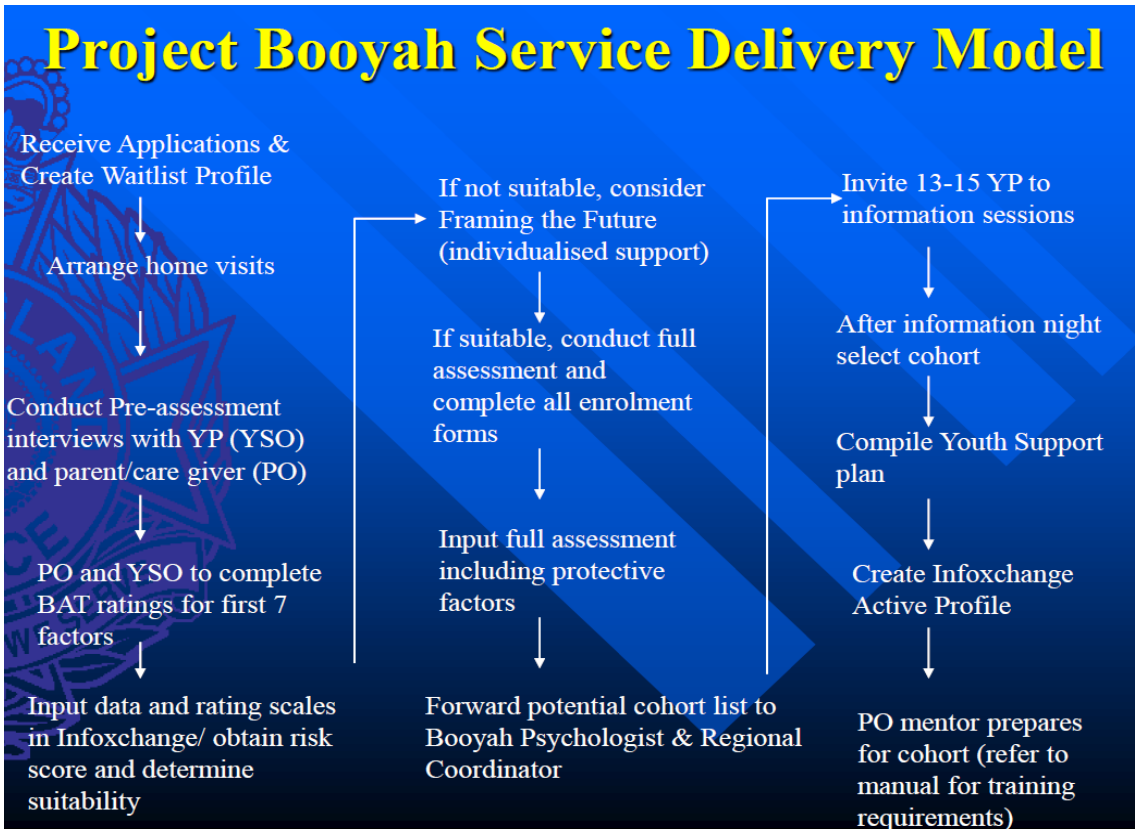
trauma history. Although criminal history is always checked as a risk factor, Project Booyah staff do not routinely check for victimisation history. The young people and their parents/carers are interviewed about prior traumas, so staff are aware of any serious victimisation that is disclosed, however undisclosed cases of victimisation are not known unless reported. Project Booyah police mentors receive ongoing training to assist in the mentoring and management of youth who are at risk, including trauma-informed practice, to value add to their skill sets to ensure youth who are at risk receive appropriate and measured reactions and support. Trauma-informed practice should be strength-based, which is one method practiced by Project Booyah staff. The six principles of trauma-informed practice complement the mentoring approach in which staff are trained.

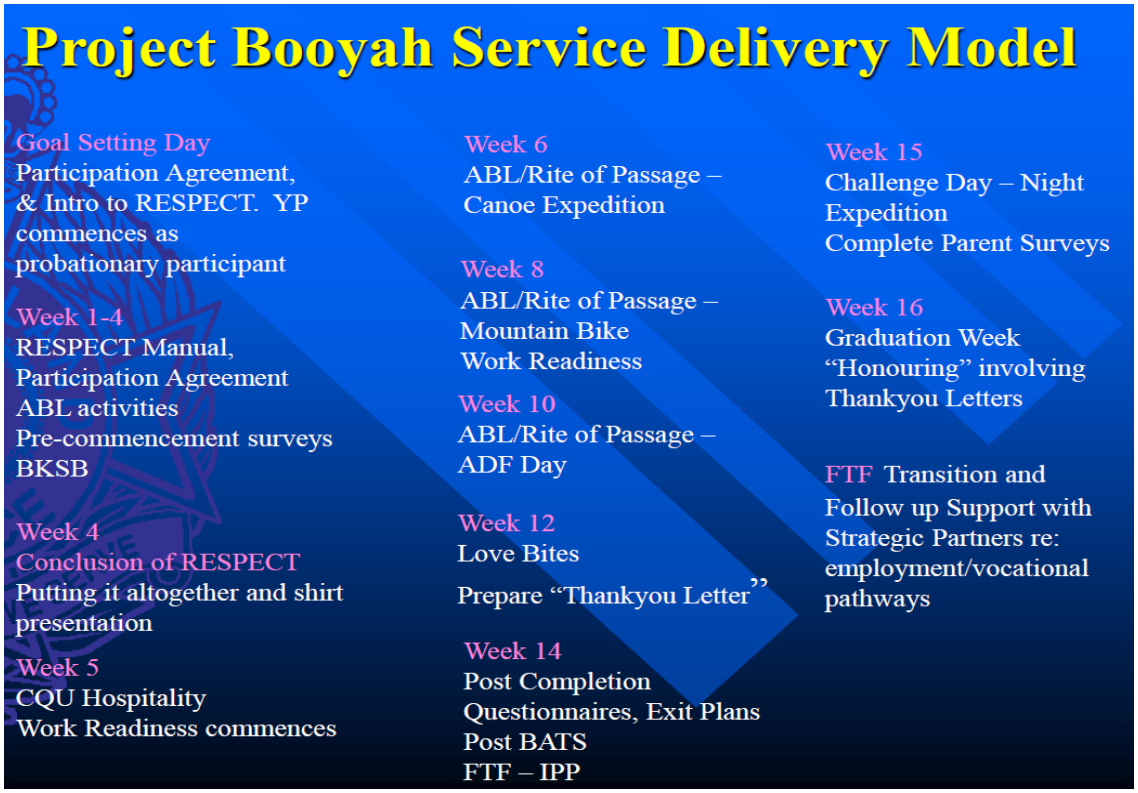
Training/Infoxchange

Staff training is a vital component of the assessment process to ensure staff are trained in all areas of Project Booyah. Management facilitates state training annually which covers the ongoing training of the Project Booyah assessment process, Infoxchange, the resilience program RESPECT, interactions with young people, police mentoring and self-care. Staff are provided with extra training in any other identified areas as required. The Project Booyah leadership team have researched and worked in partnership with Infoxchange to design a web-based platform for project management and reporting. In 2016, Project Booyah implemented an operational and functional Service Record System (SRS) with Infoxchange for all sites across Queensland. Project Booyah has continued to work with the staff from Infoxchange to improve the operational efficiency in line with the service delivery model (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

Project Booyah Service Delivery Model





Interactions

A natural flow-on effect of the interactions between the police mentor and young person is the support that is provided as a result of the relationship that is built between the police officer and young person. There are different types of support that police provide to the young person and these include, emotional support, where the police officer spends time to listen and empathise with the young person without judgement (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Showing support through identifying strengths, offering encouragement and expressing confidence in the young person supports a young person's self-esteem. Police mentors in Project Booyah are trained to be aware of the processes in adolescent development, in particular the development of identity in adolescents that is thought to include the two concepts of self-concept and self-esteem (APA, 2002). Police mentors also seek to enhance the development of a young person's internal locus of control through the program by challenging their beliefs pertaining to blaming others and taking responsibility.

Strategic Partnerships

To increase the employment, vocational and educational opportunities for Booyah participants, the police mentors form strong corporate partnerships, who support young people by providing work experience and ultimately, employment and training opportunities. There was an emphasis on increasing the recognition of the advantages of building long-term strategic alliances with other government departments and importantly, community-level interaction. Although it was identified that there was no 'magic wand' approach that would help in forming partnerships and networking; building trust, maintaining communication, and aligning the program objectives to that of our partners were key aspects that would help engage and sustain mutually beneficial relationships. Project Booyah has since formed multiple partnerships through a provision of promoting a shared vision that has included the development of reporting templates for stakeholders which consolidates outcome data at a whole of program level and development of a stakeholder survey. This approach, as identified by Johnson et al. (2005), seeks to implement corporate social responsibility, which exceeds the minimum obligations to stakeholders through regulations and corporate governance.

Family and Community

Families and communities play a significant role in assisting the young person during Project Booyah, but also once the standard 16-week program is finished.

Police mentors work closely with the young person's family, in recognition of the complex interplay of individual, environmental and social factors that contribute to a young person's life trajectory (Du Bois et al., 2011). Although the Project Booyah team remains in contact with the young person post-program, the family and community remain constants in the young person's life. The young person can feel disconnected from their family and/or community, so an important component of Project Booyah is providing the young person with the skills to be connected, but also by liaising with family members and relevant community members to support the young person in this process. Project Booyah staff facilitate this process and involve the family and community for potential re-engagement and connectedness. Further family and community factors that may be impacting on the young person's well-being are identified in the recruitment and selection process and form part of the case management process. The relationship between the young person, their family and police mentor commence at the very beginning during the initial application and interviewing process to determine suitability. In considering the developmental stage, risk level, needs of the young person and the young person's attitudes and beliefs, the staff at Project Booyah strive to select ideal candidates to participate in the program.

Assessment Process

Through their extensive experience with youth and cohorts in the program, Project Booyah management and staff identified the need for youth to be assessed and selected more robustly. This was deemed necessary after numerous problems were experienced with individuals and groups progressing through the program. As such, it was decided a risk assessment was an important process to adopt to minimise the problems experienced. Through extensive research of evidence and the processes adopted worldwide, it was determined a structured tool be utilised to classify the young person's risk level for problematic behaviours to determine whether they were suitable for the program. It was also identified the individuals could be profiled and the cohort could be selected more effectively to enhance positive group dynamics. Finally, after reviewing the case management system, it was determined more information could be gathered in the assessment process to identify the needs of the young person and formulate a case plan to address the same. It was identified the needs and strengths of the young person were to be the main focus of the assessment to ensure the response is measured and effective.

In addition to the research conducted on risk assessment, the RNR model also influenced the assessment process. Many factors were identified as being important in the assessment of youth. Given that there is research indicating factors can be chosen that lack empirical support or factors that have empirical support are omitted altogether (Borum, 2003; Wiebush et al., 1995), it was important to judge each factor taking into consideration the evidence base and their relevance to the young people in Project Booyah. A range of factors were identified as being important in the assessment and to gather all pertinent information to provide appropriate intervention to the young person. The risk assessment aims to ensure young people with an appropriate profile were considered for the program. This is to ensure the chances of completing the program are optimised, the appropriate level of intervention is delivered and the risk of harm to the young person and other young people on the program are low. Generally, the higher the risk level, the more intervention the young person will require (Latessa et al., 2010).

Booyah Assessment Tool

All of these considerations led to the development of the Booyah Assessment Tool (BAT). The BAT is used to identify the young person's risks, non-criminogenic needs and strengths. It is acknowledged by previous studies that focusing on non-criminogenic needs results in practically no effect on criminal behaviours (Andrews et al., 2006), however, Project Booyah focuses on much more than criminal behaviours. For example, there are young people in Project Booyah who do not have a criminal history, however, they are identified as having other risk factors that may prevent them becoming a productive member of their community. Such factors include disengagement from education, healthy peers or recreational activities, substance use or mental health issues. Therefore, interventions must assess the at risk status of the mentored young people, to optimise positive outcomes and determine whether they are suitable to participate in Project Booyah.

The BAT comprises three primary factors encompassing 15 total factors. These primary factors are Individual Factors, Social Factors and Environmental Factors. The fifteen factors examine risks, needs and strengths. The six factors used in the risk assessment in the BAT are offending history, substance use, mental health, recreational, education and peer relationships. These factors are assessed at the pre-assessment interviews with the parents/carers and young people, in addition to a personality factor which does not have any weight in the scored risk assessment

profile. Once the pre-assessment interviews are completed the police co-ordinator and youth worker determines a risk rating for each of the six factors. The information from each interview is then entered into the Project Booyah IT platform, Infoxchange. Once the risk ratings for each factor are entered, a scoring process occurs which allocates the young people an overall risk rating of low, medium or high risk. These completed pre-assessment BAT's are then sent to the Project Booyah psychology unit to assess suitability for the program. Typically, there are no more than two or three young people in a cohort that are high risk. The RNR principle (Dowden & Andrews, 2000) advises the benefits for accepting high-risk youth in programs, as the reduction in recidivism rates will be larger than programs who target low-risk youth (Latessa et al., 2010; Makarios, Sperber & Latessa, 2014). Once the young people have been deemed suitable for further assessment, the young people and their parents/carers complete a BAT full assessment interview that explores eight final factors. These include attitudes and behaviour, personality, physical health, skills, family, culture, significant life events, employment and housing. After the interview process, the police mentors work in collaboration with the Project Booyah psychology unit to select 10-15 young people to attend an information night. As a result of observing the young people, their interactions with others and group attitudes, a final 10 young people are selected per cohort whilst considering the optimal outcomes for each young person and optimum group dynamics.

A further consideration is the protective factors that are identified in the assessment process, which highlights positives and strengths in the young person's life. These protective factors can be built on to reduce the risk factors. A needs analysis of all data collected on the factors from the interview process also assists in determining what level of intervention and other services the young person requires. The information obtained from all these factors in the BAT process allows a comprehensive assessment to build a profile of the young person, which then auto-populates and creates an individualised case management plan, called the Youth Support Plan (YSP). The YSP identifies the areas of need for the young person and can be addressed by setting individual goals or through the group program approach of Project Booyah.

RESPECT

The Project Booyah team recognised the importance of using a resilience-based group program to enhance and develop appropriate skills to build on the young person's strengths and provide the best opportunities for them to develop healthy coping mechanisms. Project Booyah mentors seek to enhance the young person's resilience to make sound decisions conducive with community standards and expectations. To achieve this, Project Booyah endeavours to build incrementally upon the young person's skill base and develop resilience. Through the development of a young person's skill set, the young person is then likely to develop healthy self-esteem and believe that there are people in the community who observe their worth and believe they can be a worthwhile member of the community (Woolfe, 2019). From the inception of Project Booyah, the developers sought guidance from other agencies who were delivering their own resilience programs and adapted them to the needs of Project Booyah. These programs included Social Emotional Training (SET) for Life and Aggression Replacement Training (ART). There were positive outcomes associated with the delivery of these programs, however further research was conducted to develop a custom-fit program for Project Booyah through the learnings of the early years. Project Booyah analysed a multitude of research relative to youth development, youth justice, crime intervention, risk factors, protective factors, youth needs, and community needs when developing a program based on best practice to ensure positive outcomes.

In 2017, Project Booyah created and implemented a new resilience program titled 'RESPECT' that focused on the building of skills essential to succession in everyday life and skills that youth who are at risk often lacked. This program provided an alternative intervention response, incorporating methods of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), positive psychology and interpersonal skills training. The evidence-based skills that RESPECT focus on include behavioural strategies and modifications, cognitive interventions, relaxation strategies, problem-solving skills, anger management skills, social skills training, and communication training. The young people are taught to apply these skills to common problems young people experience and everyday situations including stress at home, school or work; pressure from peers, family, school and work; body image; self-esteem; peer, family or relationship problems; alcohol or drug use; life changes; bullying; physical health; domestic and family violence; and online personal safety. With a total of nine

sessions, RESPECT incorporates differing activities including but not limited to, strengthening moral reasoning, anger management, conflict management, self-control, positive social behaviour and problem-solving. The aim of the collaboration between RESPECT programs and education-based vocational programs, is to promote multifaceted skills within participants, assisting young people with education and employment opportunities yet simultaneously highlighting the responsibility of the individual and the consequences of their decision making.

Vocational Program

Furthermore, consultation with key stakeholders and Project Booyah management culminated in the inclusion of a Certificate II hospitality vocational course that gives young people the best opportunity to gain employment and/or further training outcomes. This qualification allows students to enter the workforce with the skills and knowledge required to secure an entry-level position in a hospitality or service establishment. For those young people who are not interested pursuing employment in hospitality, the training provides these young people with the experience of learning in a different environment with a structure that will allow them to determine whether further education is of interest to them. They are provided with the opportunity to learn in a different environment with individualised assistance in a small group. This can assist in the development of healthy self-esteem. Through practical experience in real-life environments, which include community enterprise created by Project Booyah titled ‘Booyah Bean Team Café’ that includes several cafes and mobile vans across Queensland, they further develop team-building, problem-solving skills, social skills and communication skills that were discussed in RESPECT in a realistic setting.

Adventure Based Learning

In addition, the RESPECT program uses ABL in its delivery and extends to the numerous adventure-based activities of Project Booyah, including a 3-day bush experience camp, applying the principles of adventure-based therapy. The bush experience is led by qualified and experienced outdoor education facilitators who provide structured experiences to challenge young people in a supportive environment. These adventure-based activities are designed to reinforce the learnings obtained during the RESPECT program and challenge the young people to utilise the skills they have learnt theoretically and through simulated activities. Russell (1999) has extensively studied the qualities of these programs and has created program

guidelines and processes which will assist in the development of a successful program, ensuring change in the participants. There has been ongoing research on adventure based learning that continues to support the use of adventure based activities for youth who are at risk (Gass, et al., 2012; Thomson & Burr, 2015) It has been important for Project Booyah to be developed with these components in mind to ensure a quality therapeutic approach has been accomplished. The modes of therapy and theories that have been considered in the development of the Project Booyah bush experience include adventure therapy, wilderness therapy, experiential theory, disequilibrium theory, systems theory, rite of passage and cognitive behavioural therapy. Police mentors assist the participants to learn through skill development and basic therapeutic techniques. This includes decision-making skills, problem-solving, goal setting, cognitive behavioural skills, communication skills, conflict management, impulse control, anger management and self-esteem. Project Booyah combines the skills learnt in the RESPECT program with adventure-based learning activities to enhance the learning opportunities and provide positive physical, social and emotional outcomes for the young people in the program.

Rite of Passage

Additionally, Project Booyah adopts elements of 'Rite of Passage' (RoP) throughout the program. Project Booyah employs an adventure-based learning instructor who is extensively trained in the RoP process by Dr Arne Rubinstein, an internationally recognised expert in the field. Project Booyah police mentors and other staff have also undertaken Dr Rubinstein's RoP training to assist in these processes. Project Booyah program contains many of the components of a RoP experience as recounted in the learnings of Rubinstein (2013). These components include the process of bringing the young people away from their families and regular communities to their program hub each contact day; physical, mental and emotional challenges; space and time to allow for contemplation and reflection of the young person's focus in their day to day lives; personal, cultural and group storytelling; honouring the positives the police mentors and other staff see in each participant; recognising, naming and confronting aspects of the young person's life which is holding them back; and reintegrating the young person back into their family and community, with preparation and ongoing support through Framing the Future (FTF) post-program pathways.

Framing the Future

At the end of the program, a graduation day and ceremony are held for participants involving all family members and significant others. Police officers remain a constant mentor throughout the program, assisting the young people. Whilst graduation represents the end of the intensive, formalised aspect of the program, the youth support focused approach continues with FTF. FTF is the QPS mentoring post-program initiative focusing on a tailored case management approach to review and monitor risk and protective factors of Project Booyah graduates. FTF provides post-program mentoring for at least two years and support to Project Booyah graduates regularly to prevent recidivism by facilitating engagement with education and/or employment and providing further tailored interventions. This aspect of Project Booyah is in the pilot stage and is a focus area of the analysis conducted by Griffith University (Bartlett et al., 2020), to determine whether FTF is a viable entity in Project Booyah.

Summary

This chapter has outlined each aspect of the Project Booyah conceptual model (Figure 1), the importance of each factor and how they relate to each other as well as how the model is operationalised. The description of Project Booyah has focused on the two primary stakeholders, Project Booyah and youth who are at risk with the police mentoring component being a vital piece of the model. It has also highlighted the importance of other stakeholder relationships between Project Booyah and the QPS, youth workers, family, community and other strategic partnerships. It has also been deemed important by management to remain cognisant of the importance of government policy, so it directs the outcomes of Project Booyah appropriately into the future.

The next chapter will outline the Griffith University evaluation of Project Booyah (Bartlett et al., 2020), who investigate the various elements of the program and determine the impact police mentors have on the lives of youth who are at risk, during and beyond the program. It will also assist in directing Project Booyah in how these findings can further inform the Project Booyah concept on police mentoring.

This evaluation study investigated the various elements of Project Booyah and determined the impact police mentors have on the lives of youth who are at risk, during and beyond the program. It will also assist in directing Project Booyah in how these findings can further inform the Project Booyah concept on police mentoring.

But most importantly for this research study, the Griffith University data, coupled with other elements of a methodology described in the next chapter, which was used to develop a new conceptual model, will serve as one source of core program information and evaluation outcomes.

Chapter 4 – Griffith University Evaluation

Introduction

In 2014, Griffith University, in consultation with the author, developed several tools that were subsequently introduced into Project Booyah to support greater monitoring and evaluation of the program. This included a pre- and post-intake assessment battery that was applied to all program participants. The intake assessment battery is directly linked to the program's goals and provides measures of participants' school and work status, attitudes to school, self-esteem, quality of relationship with parents/care-givers, drug and alcohol use, self-harming behaviours, aggression, influence of anti-social peers and criminogenic attitudes. The key deliverables from this collaboration with Griffith University has been the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework that incorporates improved program management, improved monitoring of participant outcomes via development of a post-program survey instrument which aligns with the pre-commencement survey to measure participants' change and improved stakeholder reporting through templates which report consolidated outcome data at the cohort and whole of program level.

In 2015, Griffith University established the Griffith Criminology Institute (GCI) to provide a dedicated unit of criminology, crime and justice scholars from across the University to become recognised as a high-performing criminology community in the world. The GCI research model is dedicated to conducting extensive research to help to create safe, well governed and equitable societies (Griffith University, n.d.). GCI published a formal evaluation report canvassing the first four graduating cohorts of Project Booyah between 2012 and 2013 involving 51 young people, at an average age of 14.9 years, consisting of 82.3% males and 17.7% female participants (Bartlett, 2015).

A mixed-methods approach was adopted within a broader impact evaluation framework. Firstly, young people who participated in Project Booyah were invited to participate in a survey and/or a qualitative interview. The reliance upon self-report survey data was necessitated by the absence of pre- and post-intervention measures. Secondly, parents/caregivers of young people who participated in Project Booyah were invited to participate in a survey. The purpose of the parent/caregiver survey was to strengthen conclusions drawn from the participants' survey and also elicit parent/caregiver perspectives on the program. Thirdly, de-identified police data was

analysed to ascertain pre- and post-program criminogenic patterns. The participant survey was administered electronically and was comprised of 140 questions. The survey incorporated measures of employment and re-engagement with school, self-esteem, relationship with parents/caregivers, influence of anti-social peers, self-harm, criminogenic attitudes, effects of police mentoring and overall satisfaction with the program.

Employment and Re-engagement with School was measured using 11 questions regarding participation in school and work 6 months before commencing Project Booyah and 6 months after the program. Questions were also asked about current participation in both school and employment. *Self-esteem* changes attributable to participation in Project Booyah were measured using a modified version of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) (Rosenberg, 1965). *Improved relationship with parents and caregivers* was measured using an adapted version of the 'satisfaction', 'conflict' and 'emotional support' scales of the Network of Relationships Inventory (Relationship Qualities Version) (Buhrmester & Furman, 2008). *Influence of antisocial peers* was measured in a manner similar to that undertaken in the Communities that Care Youth Survey (Communities that Care, 2010). *Effect of police mentoring* was measured through questions tapping the frequency of contact and quality of the mentoring relationship. Quality of the mentoring relationship was measured through six items to which participants responded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'very little' to 'quite a lot'. The survey also included three questions regarding overall impact and satisfaction. The first question required respondents to rate on a scale of 1 (no impact) to 10 (extremely positive) how much of a positive impact Project Booyah had upon them. The second question was similarly rated from 1 (no impact) to 10 (extremely negative) and asked how much of a negative impact their participation had upon them. Finally, participants were asked to rate on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from 'extremely unlikely' to 'extremely likely', how likely they would be to recommend participation in Project Booyah to a young person who was in a similar situation to them. A total of 14 young people completed the survey, representing a response rate of 49.3% (being 27.5% of all young people who participated in cohorts 1 to 4 of the program).

Overall, the report highlighted that Project Booyah had delivered tangible benefits and demonstrated promise in terms of addressing the criminogenic needs of young people within the target group. For survey participants, results showed

participation in Project Booyah had a significant impact upon their self-esteem, reengagement with school, employment, and relationship quality with parents/caregivers. Key results of this evaluation included:

- Young people who completed the program were more likely to be regularly attending school after participating in Project Booyah. Almost two-thirds (64.3%) of participants indicated they were studying at school, with a private training provider, or undertaking some other form of study.
- Program participants were more likely to be in paid employment after completing Project Booyah. Almost two-thirds (64.3%) of participants reported not being in any form of paid employment prior to commencing Project Booyah. More than half (57.1%) of participants reported having a paid job after completing Project Booyah, with the majority (87.5%) reporting they commenced employment within three months of completing Project Booyah.
- Program participants reported positive changes in their self-esteem, which they attributed to participation in Project Booyah. The proportion of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing with individual self-esteem items ranged from 57.1% ('helped me feel more a person of worth') through to 92.8% ('helped me feel better about myself'). Overall, females were more likely than males to agree or strongly agree with all statements.
- Both participants and their parents/caregivers reported their relationship quality with each other improved after completion of the program. For mother figures, 85.7% of participants reported they were assessing their relationship with their biological mother, with the remainder being a foster carer (7.1%) or other female (7.1%). Almost two thirds (64.3%) of participants reported assessing their father figure relationship with their biological father, 21.4% with a step-father or mother's partner, and 14.3% with another male. Parents/caregivers' happiness with their relationship with the young person and liking the way things were between them and their young were statistically significant at the 90% confidence level (p=0.59).
- Indications are that program participants were less likely to associate with anti-social peers after completing the program. The majority (61.5%) of participants reported having changes in their friendship network from prior to

commencing Project Booyah to now. Nearly four out of every five participants provided data on their four closest friends. Of those participants, only 38.5% of participants have the same four closest friends now as they did prior to completing Project Booyah.

- Overall, participants indicated that receiving mentoring from police officers in the program had a positive effect upon them. Ninety-two percent of participants reported that officers treated them with respect, with the majority (83.3%) stating the police treated them with 'quite a lot' of respect. Eighty-three percent of participants also reported that they believed the police mentors cared about them. Ninety-two percent of participants reported their police mentors had taught them things they did not know.

Both participants and their parents/caregivers reported high levels of satisfaction with the program. Participant scores for Project Booyah having a positive impact on their life ranged from 4 to 10 (M=8, SD=2). Over one-third (38.5%) rated Project Booyah as having an 'extremely positive impact' upon their life. Eighty-five percent of participants rated Project Booyah's positive impact on their life at seven or higher out of 10. Half the parents/caregivers rated the program as having an 'extremely positive impact', while all rated the program an eight or higher out of 10. Furthermore, the participants' offending behaviour 12 months prior to participation in Project Booyah and 12 months post-completion of Project Booyah were compared. Participants were found to have fewer offending episodes in the 12 months post-program compared to 12 months prior to commencing the program (Bartlett, 2015).

Since the 2012 to 2013 evaluation was completed, the program has undergone a range of changes including expansion throughout both Queensland and interstate, a refinement of the program logic, a strengthened intake and assessment processes and the development of the post-program component, Framing the Future (FTF). The author acknowledged the importance of further analysis and review in improving the governance, and developing continuous monitoring and evaluation structures, systems and process. This involved a procurement process to conduct a more robust comprehensive evaluation of the current program which includes an implementation and process evaluation, impact evaluation and cost-benefit analysis.

Method

In 2019-2020, GCI completed an extensive evaluation of Project Booyah and FTF that involved a process evaluation, impact/outcome evaluation and economic evaluation in the form of a social cost-benefit analysis and investment case. It examined the processes and outcomes for five cohorts of 454 young people who completed the program over 11 individual locations. Of the participants, 63% were male, 34.8% Indigenous, with an average age of 15 years and 8 months (*SD*=0.63). Participants ranged from 14 to 17.5 years of age at commencement. The following statistical methods were used by GCI during this evaluation for each of the data presented, including specifics of the instruments used to collect the data and reason why these methods were considered reliable and valid.

Each stage of the evaluation is outlined below:

Process Evaluation

Project Booyah. The implementation component focused on evaluating the expansion of the program to new sites, in order to identify key learnings for future expansion. Additionally, the process evaluation component examined the key processes employed throughout the program from referral pathways through to intake assessment, program induction and delivery, participant graduation and follow-up. To undertake this component a mixed methods approach was adopted which drew upon staff and stakeholder surveys, qualitative data, and program administrative data.

FTF. To evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of processes employed in FTF, a mapping process was conducted to understand the flow of participants throughout the program. The processes of FTF were examined against existing performance indicators and those identified from program logic for the program as a whole and on a site-by-site basis. The capacity of staff to deliver the program in line with program requirements was also examined. After the mapping process, a mixed methods approach was adopted that relied upon Infoxchange administrative data and the staff and stakeholder survey.

Outcome Evaluation

Project Booyah. This stage of the evaluation examined the impact of the program upon participants, their families, staff and stakeholders. The focus included assessing the extent to which participating young people experience attitudinal and behavioural changes consistent with the intended outcomes of the program,

including: school attendance, employment, self-esteem, self-control, aggression, health behaviours, drug and alcohol use, self-harm, criminal attitudes, offending behaviour, and changes in family relationship quality. A mixed methods approach was adopted drawing upon administrative data from Infoxchange case management system, the QPS database called QPRIME, qualitative data from staff and stakeholder surveys and interviews conducted with multiple participants from Queensland.

FTF. The outcome evaluation of FTF focused on the outcomes for participants who were engaged with FTF, participants who were referred but were not engaged in FTF and waitlisted/unsuitable young people who were referred to FTF. An examination of the different trajectories for the four factors of education, employment, post-program prosocial attitudes and beliefs and changes in offending frequency, seriousness and victimisation was conducted for those who indicated they needed little assistance, those that had high engagement with FTF and those that demonstrated low engagement with FTF. A mixed methods approach was employed drawing upon Infoxchange data, QPRIME offending data, staff and stakeholder surveys, qualitative data and interviews with previous program participants.

Data Sources

GCI used a variety of data sources. These comprised individual interview data, document analysis, observational data, data extracted from the QPS database, QPRIME, data extracted from Infoxchange case management system, surveys of staff and stakeholders and pre- and post-questionnaire data. Data were de-identified by Project Booyah prior to being provided to the GCI evaluation team.

The Infoxchange case management system was developed in collaboration between Project Booyah and the Infoxchange company to develop a Service Record System (SRS) for Project Booyah. Data was entered into the system by Project Booyah staff and includes information pertaining to participants demographics, education and work experience, BAT data, YSP, case notes, and pre- and post-program self-report questionnaire data.

The pre-commencement questionnaire was a comprehensive questionnaire comprising of 160 questions. The post-completion questionnaire contained the same questions as the pre-commencement questionnaire with additional questions that measured the participants' experiences and perceptions of the program. The battery of measures of which the pre- and post-evaluation questionnaires comprise included:

- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Rosenberg, 1965) to measure self-esteem. The RSES is a self-report measure of global self-worth which measures perceptions of both positive and negative feelings about oneself. The measure consists of 10 items responded to using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a widely used instrument for measuring self-esteem and has strong construct validity and convergent validity (Robins et al., 2001). It has previously been used in several studies to measure self-esteem in Australian teenagers, including in the assessment of self-esteem and its relationship with delinquency (Rigby & Cox, 1996), and been found to have strong internal consistency (Tait et al., 2003). The scale has also been previously used to assess change in self-esteem over time (Liang et al., 2016).
- Brief Self-Control Scale (Tangney et al., 2004) to measure self-control. This instrument is a 13-item measure where participants rate on a five-point scale (1 = Not at All and 5 = Very Much) the extent to which each of the items is like them. Nine items are reverse scored, with the higher the sum of all 13 scores, the higher the person's self-control. The Brief Self-Control Scale has been used in several studies of adolescent populations, including delinquent Australian youth (Curcio et al., 2017), and been found to be a valid measure of self-control. The scale has also previously been used as part of an assessment battery for an adolescent violence prevention program and been found to reliably predict change over time (Zhou et al., 2017).
- Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992) to measure overall aggression. This instrument is a 28-item measure with subscales for physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility. Participants respond to the 28 statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = extremely unlike me, 5 = extremely like me). Two items are reverse scored, with the higher the sum within scales and the total instrument the greater the aggression.
- Criminal Sentiments Scale – Modified (CSS-M) (Shields & Simourd, 1991) to measure criminal attitudes including three of the subscales of Police (7 items), Tolerance of Law Violation (10 items) and Identification with Criminal Others (6 items). Participants respond to each statement on a three-point scale (Agree-Undecided-Disagree). Across the scales fifteen items are

reverse scored, with higher scores indicating higher criminal sentiments. Researchers have previously used the CSS-M across a range of settings. With incarcerated populations the instrument displays good validity (Martinez & Andres-Pueyo, 2015). It has also been previously used with adolescents involved with youth justice with the scales in question largely have sound validity (Skilling & Sorge, 2014).

- Australian Self-Reported Delinquency Scale - Revised (ASRDS-R) (Curcio et al., 2014) to measure delinquency. This is a 37 item instrument with subscales for driving/vehicle, alcohol, theft, cheating, disturbances, fighting, drugs and media. Participants answer yes or no to whether they have engaged in each of 37 behaviours in the past six months. Items are summed with higher scores indicating higher delinquency. The validity and reliability of the ASRPD-R has been used in several delinquency studies with Australian adolescents, with two specifically assessing the psychometric properties of the instrument (Newton et al.; 2016; Curcio et al., 2016). Both studies reported the instrument to have good psychometric properties.
- Cyber-bullying was measured using two items specifically developed for Project Booyah by GCI.
- Health Behaviours were measured using 10 items specifically developed for Project Booyah by GCI across two domains; health knowledge and health behaviours. Each item is responded to on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Four items are reverse scored, with higher scores indicative of higher health knowledge and health behaviours. The scale has face validity.
- Network of Relationship Inventory – Relationship Quality Version (Furman & Buhrmeister, 1985) to measure relationships with their mother figure and father figure. This 17 item instrument includes six subscales for satisfaction with mother figure, conflict with mother figure, emotional support from mother figure, satisfaction with father figure, conflict with father figure, emotional support from father figure. Participants respond to items on a 5-point scale from 0 = never to 5 = always. Three items are reverse scored in this measure. Higher scores indicate better relationship quality. A limited number of studies have applied this instrument with high risk children. However, those that have, indicate very good reliability. For example, Cavell

et al. (2009) used the instrument in an intervention for high risk aggressive children and found the tool to have sound psychometric properties.

- Self-harm was measured using one item specifically developed for Project Booyah by GCI.
- Mentoring relationships with police officers and youth workers was measured using seven items specifically developed for Project Booyah by GCI.
- Relationship with teachers was measured using three items specifically developed for Project Booyah by GCI.
- Recommendation of Project Booyah to others was measured using one item specifically developed for Project Booyah by GCI.

The QPRIME data of offending and victimisation statistics was extracted by the QPS statistical services unit. The data was provided to Project Booyah State Management Team who de-identified each participant by name and inserted the participant's Infoxchange identifier. Bartlett et al. (2020) also compiled a comparison sample of 229 young people, who were referred to the program and waitlisted for possible future involvement. The evaluation team compiled financial data from both the QPS and Police Citizen Youth Welfare Association (PCYC) to examine program expenditure state-wide.

GCI study furthermore developed a staff survey for their evaluation consisting of 195 questions, plus an additional 18 questions from the Queensland Public Service's Working for Queensland Survey, that was requested to be completed by current and former staff to measure their views and experiences of working within each stage of Project Booyah. In response to the survey being sent to 35 current and 15 former staff members via email, 28 current staff members and seven former staff members completed the survey. A stakeholder survey was also compiled, and 52 current and former stakeholders were invited to participate in the anonymous survey. A total of 27 Stakeholders completed the survey.

Interviews were conducted with former Project Booyah participants by the GCI research team. There was a total of 23 interviews conducted, including 12 females and 11 males. Most interviews were conducted face to face by the research team, whilst some were conducted over the phone. The interview questions focused on their experience within the program, aspects of the program that were most

helpful, changes they would make to the program, employment, physical health, crime prevention, community engagement, views of themselves and self-esteem.

Documentary analysis included documents obtained from Project Booyah State Management Team which consisted of the Booyah Staff Manual 2018, six appendices from the manual, copies of participant questionnaires and PowerPoint presentations on various aspects of the program.

Observational information was additionally obtained whilst GCI researchers attended Project Booyah meetings with senior management and through the attendance at six Project Booyah program sites.

Program evaluation in the 2019-2020 study also included a cost-benefit analysis, but as this is not a focus of the present research, it has not been presented here.

Results

GCI completed the extensive evaluation of Project Booyah across 11 program sites operating across South East and Regional Queensland during the period 2016 to 2018. Between the 2016 and 2018 evaluation period, data involving 454 young people consisted of 63% male participants, 35% were Indigenous, and 41% were from Regional Queensland.

Project Booyah Evaluation Results

Process Evaluation. Young people are referred to Project Booyah from different sources including schools, police, the Project Booyah website, family members and other stakeholders. The young people referred to the program are screened for suitability, which includes pre-assessment interviews using the BAT. Noting this step, staff were surveyed on their views of the referral and assessment process before and after the introduction of the BAT. The BAT was introduced in semester two, 2017. The general consensus of staff was that referral pathways are appropriate and mostly result in the right people being referred. The pre-BAT assessment process was compared with the BAT assessment process with staff who were in the program for both processes, by using a paired sample t-test. The results found a statistically significant positive change in moving from the old assessment process to the BAT.

Staff were also surveyed on their views on program delivery and the program induction session. The majority of staff identified the importance of conducting an induction session to gauge a young person’s interest in the program, for building a

relationship with the young person and to reduce the likelihood of problems later in the program. In regard to program delivery, multiple components deemed to be integral to program delivery were examined through staff and stakeholder surveys. The components that may have an effect on the relationship between the police mentors and youth who are at risk are the focus of this thesis and include program resourcing, program integrity, staff capability and mentoring skills, staff satisfaction and well-being, stakeholder and community support, as well as the program completion or graduation.

Overall, staff believe the program has a stable resourcing model and the reduced staff turnover has a positive effect. Over 70% of current and former staff believe there are sufficient staff and resources, whilst 63% of stakeholders believed resources were adequate to enable effective delivery of the program. In relation to program integrity, 80% of current staff deliver all aspects of the program that are required to be delivered. Over 60% of staff report a well-documented manual covering policies and procedures. Of this figure 75% of police officers believe the program is manualised appropriately, with only 54.5% of youth support officers (YSO) believing the same. The staff reported there can be poor communication, with a lack of reporting between staff and the State Management team when there is inconsistency in delivery of the program or when a partner organisation delivers program content poorly.

GCI conducted a staff survey whereby specific questions were asked relating to staff capability and mentoring. A nine item self-report measure was constructed to assess staff views on their skills and mentoring capability. Questions on the measure assessed staff views on whether they thought they had the skills to be a good mentor, along with key aspects of quality mentoring identified in the literature including rapport building, appropriate self-disclosure and maintain professional boundaries. Questions were developed by academics with experience in psychology and research methodology and had face validity. Analysis was limited to descriptive statistics. Most staff believe they possess the skills to competently perform their role in the program. When they believed they did not possess the skills, with only 50% reported receiving appropriate training in those areas. Current staff indicated they possessed the desired mentoring attributes and skills. Current staff includes police officers and youth support officers. Table 1 outlines these results.

Table 1

Staff views on skills and mentoring capability.

	Current Staff				Former Staff			
	N	% +ve	Mean	SD	N	% +ve	Mean	SD
I have the skills to competently perform my role in program delivery	26	92.2	5.85	1.047	7	100	6.00	.816
When I require new skills to enable me to competently perform my role in program delivery, I received appropriate training	26	50	4.04	2.088	7	57.1	5.00	1.732
I know what it means to be a mentor to young people	24	100	6.63	.495	7	100	6.43	.535
I have the skills to be a good mentor to the young people	24	100	6.50	.511	7	100	6.43	.535
As part of the rapport building and mentoring process I am comfortable in appropriately disclosing information about myself to young people in the program	24	87.6	5.42	1.018	7	42.8	4.43	1.512
I maintain professional boundaries with young people and their families	24	95.8	6.54	.721	7	100	6.43	.535
I develop strong bonds with the young people on the program	24	70.8	3.00	1.615	7	85.7	3.22	1.826
Sometimes I treat young people in the program like they are my own children	24	12.5	2.46	1.668	7	28.6	3.43	1.618
Sometimes I treat young people in the program like they are friends	24	29.1	3.29	1.574	7	28.6	3.14	1.676

Notes: Responses made on a 7-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree = 0 to Strongly Agree = 7
%+ve is percentage who Strongly Agree, Agree, or Somewhat Agree

Data derived from Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 92.

Project Booyah staff overall find their work role rewarding and observe young people positively change during the program. This provides a high degree of satisfaction in working in Project Booyah. With these positive results, comes reports that some staff do find dealing with the young people stressful and emotionally draining. Project Booyah staff believe stakeholders and the community understand and strongly support the program. All stakeholders were overwhelmingly positive in their responses, with many offering glowing endorsements of the program. All stakeholders agreed that their local Project Booyah team were dedicated to the goals and processes of the program and there is a shared understanding between Project Booyah staff and partner organisations about program goals. They furthermore reported that at their location there is a strong connection between their organisation and Project Booyah, and there is open and effective communication. All staff see the importance of the graduation ceremony at the completion of program. The majority of staff also reported the young people were diligently followed up post-program. This will be discussed further in the FTF section.

Outcome Evaluation. The results of Project Booyah were drawn from the participants' self-report data from their pre- and post-program questionnaires. At the completion of the program young people reported having higher self-esteem and self-control, and improved health behaviour and knowledge. These changes were statistically significant. Young people reported lower levels of aggression and strong improvements in delinquency, which were also statistically significant. There were no changes in the criminal sentiments scale which measures delinquent attitude. There was a relatively high improvement in relationships with their mother and father figure of 60%, however for the other 40%, their relationships deteriorated. There were no statistically significant changes found in the measure regarding feelings towards police. Table 2 represents these findings. Data reported in this table was taken from the participant self-report pre- and post- program assessment battery as detailed in the data sources section above. For this table the mean pre- and post-program score on each scale was calculated and a t-test performed to ascertain whether the pre- to post-program change was statistically significant. In addition to the means, t-statistic and p-values, descriptive statistics of percentage change between pre- and post- measures and difference in mean score pre- and post are included in the table.

Table 2

Overall changes from pre- to post-program (N=297).

Measure	% changed in expected direction	Pre-program mean	Post-program mean	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Self-esteem	77.52%	0.54	0.63	0.09	7.56	<.001***
Self-control	69.13%	0.43	0.50	0.07	5.60	<.001***
Aggression						
Physical	55.70%	0.58	0.49	-0.1	-5.39	<.001***
Verbal	45.97%	0.53	0.48	-0.04	-2.59	0.01**
Anger	55.37%	0.36	0.32	-0.04	-3.70	<.001***
Hostility	51.68%	0.48	0.44	0.04	-2.74	0.006**
ASRDSR	62.42%	0.40	0.31	-0.09	-5.17	<.001***
Polydrug (ASRDSR)	32.89%	0.42	0.38	-0.04	-1.80	0.072
CSS-M	51.01%	0.41	0.39	-0.02	-1.75	0.081
CSS-M Police	43.29%	0.37	0.34	-0.03	-1.58	0.116
CSS-M TLV	48.99%	0.46	0.43	-0.03	-1.83	0.068
CSS-M ICO	42.62%	0.40	0.39	-0.01	-0.71	0.479
Booyah Health	65.10%	0.64	0.66	0.03	2.62	0.009**
Health behaviours	63.09%	0.57	0.6	0.02	2.14	0.033*
Health knowledge	68.46%	0.72	0.74	0.03	2.28	0.023*
Inventory of Relationships						
Mother figure*	60.40%	0.57	0.57	0	0.10	0.918
Father figure*	69.46%	0.49	0.49	0	0.16	0.875

Note: scores scaled to run from zero to 1.
* statistically significant at .05; ** statistically significant at .01; ***statistically significant at .001.
#Mother and father figures may not be the same person in both time periods

Data derived from Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 116.

Young people commenced Project Booyah at 14, 15, 16 or 17 years of age. All age groups reported changes in the anticipated direction, with all age groups recording increases in self-esteem, self-control, and health behaviour, and reductions in aggression, delinquency, pro-criminal attitudes and drug use. The relationship quality with police and YSO's was strong. These changes are evident in Table 3. The data in this table uses the measures and statistical tests outlined for the above table but presents data for participants in each of four age groups (14 years, 15 years, 16 years and 17 years). Whilst there is no statistical significance in the change reported by the 17-year old age group, this is possibly due to the small sample size for this age group.

Table 3

Change in psycho-social measures by age (N=297).

	Age 14			Age 15			Age 16			Age 17		
Measure	Pre	Post	% change	Pre	Post	% change	Pre	Post	% change	Pre	Post	% change
Self-esteem	0.56	0.67	19%***	0.54	0.62	16%***	0.55	0.63	14%**	0.45	0.59	33%*
Self-control	0.40	0.50	27%*	0.43	0.49	16%***	0.45	0.51	14%*	0.45	0.54	20%
Aggression	0.51	0.42	-18%	0.53	0.47	-11%**	0.53	0.46	-12%*	0.50	0.41	-18%
Physical	0.60	0.47	-23%*	0.59	0.49	-16%***	0.58	0.50	-13%*	0.48	0.38	-20%
Verbal	0.51	0.48	-6%	0.54	0.49	-9%*	0.52	0.47	-10%	0.46	0.45	-2%
Anger	0.35	0.27	-23%*	0.37	0.33	-10%**	0.37	0.33	-11%	0.36	0.29	-19%
Hostility	0.42	0.38	-11%	0.48	0.45	-6%	0.49	0.42	-14%*	0.54	0.43	-20%
ASRDSR	0.41	0.34	-17%	0.40	0.30	-26%***	0.39	0.32	-16%	0.36	0.26	-26%
Polydrug (ASRDSR)	0.44	0.40	-9%	0.41	0.35	-15%*	0.44	0.44	-1%	0.45	0.36	-19%
CSS-M	0.43	0.38	-10%	0.43	0.40	-5%	0.39	0.37	-6%	0.34	0.32	-5%
CSS-M Police	0.40	0.32	-20%	0.37	0.35	-7%	0.34	0.33	-3%	0.32	0.26	-18%
CSS-M TLV	0.46	0.41	-10%	0.48	0.45	-6%	0.43	0.40	-7%	0.37	0.35	-5%
CSS-M ICO	0.41	0.41	2%	0.41	0.40	-2%	0.39	0.36	-8%	0.32	0.30	-6%
Booyah Health	0.64	0.69	8%	0.64	0.65	2%	0.64	0.68	6%*	0.58	0.66	13%
Health behaviours	0.57	0.61	7%	0.58	0.59	3%	0.58	0.61	5%	0.51	0.61	18%*
Health knowledge	0.72	0.79	10%*	0.72	0.73	1%	0.71	0.78	10%**	0.67	0.72	8%
Inventory of Relationships												
Mother figure#	0.55	0.59	7%	0.56	0.57	1%	0.58	0.56	-4%	0.55	0.53	-4%
Father figure#	0.52	0.46	-10%	0.48	0.50	4%	0.47	0.51	8%	0.55	0.37	-33%
Police officer	-	0.84	-	-	0.79	-	-	0.80	-	-	0.83	-
Youth Support Officer	-	0.89	-	-	0.84	-	-	0.84	-	-	0.89	-
Booyah teacher	-	0.19	-	-	0.17	-	-	0.18	-	-	0.20	-

Note: scores scaled to run from zero to 1.
* statistically significant at .05; ** statistically significant at .01; ***statistically significant at .001.
#Mother and father figures may not be the same person in both time periods

Data derived from Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 116.

When examining the changes for gender and Indigenous identity, results showed that almost all groups had changes in the anticipated direction. There were statistically significant increases in self-esteem in all groups, whilst females had greater gains than males across the majority of measures. The changes in females were more likely to be statistically significant. For Indigenous females the immediate effect of the program upon these characteristics is striking with substantial gains. When making comparisons over time, 6 months post program, the majority of measures showed young people continued to make further gains in the anticipated direction. The data in table 4 utilises the measures outlined above and presents the mean pre-program, immediately post-program and 6 months post-program scores on each measure, and percentage change for participants according to gender and

Indigenous status. The purpose of the table is to show the direction and extent of change in mean score over time. The changes are represented by red and green colouring, where red represents a change not in the anticipated direction, whilst green represents a change in the anticipated direction. One of the areas where the observed change was not in the expected direction included Indigenous females, where high level gains across key areas previously mentioned were initially reported post program, however these decreased at the six month post program mark. It is important to note that these scores are still better than the pre-program scores.

Table 4

Change in psycho-social measures from pre-program to immediately post-program and 6 months post-program, by gender and indigenous status (N=123).

		Non-Indigenous									
		Male					Female				
Measure	Total N	Pre	Post	% change	6 month	% change	Pre	Post	% change	6 month	% change
Self-esteem	123	0.59	0.65	11%	0.66	2%	0.48	0.57	20%	0.61	6%
Self-control	123	0.43	0.49	14%	0.53	9%	0.41	0.49	20%	0.53	8%
Aggression	120	0.50	0.48	-3%	0.44	-9%	0.57	0.47	-17%	0.41	-14%
Physical	122	0.57	0.54	-4%	0.51	-5%	0.58	0.45	-22%	0.35	-22%
Verbal	123	0.50	0.50	-2%	0.47	-6%	0.56	0.48	-15%	0.43	-10%
Anger	121	0.34	0.33	-2%	0.29	-12%	0.40	0.33	-18%	0.31	-6%
Hostility	122	0.44	0.43	-2%	0.37	-13%	0.59	0.51	-14%	0.43	-16%
ASRDSR	123	0.41	0.36	-12%	0.23	-37%	0.39	0.22	-42%	0.16	-29%
Polydrug (ASRDSR)	123	0.41	0.39	-5%	0.33	-16%	0.48	0.36	-25%	0.32	-12%
CSS-M	123	0.44	0.44	1%	0.36	-19%	0.39	0.34	-14%	0.25	-26%
CSS-M Police	123	0.38	0.36	-4%	0.28	-22%	0.32	0.31	-5%	0.22	-27%
CSS-M TLV	123	0.50	0.49	-1%	0.41	-16%	0.43	0.36	-16%	0.26	-28%
CSS-M ICO	123	0.41	0.45	8%	0.35	-21%	0.41	0.34	-17%	0.25	-26%
Booyah Health	121	0.64	0.65	1%	0.68	5%	0.68	0.70	3%	0.71	2%
Health behaviours	121	0.58	0.59	2%	0.60	2%	0.60	0.61	1%	0.63	3%
Health knowledge	122	0.72	0.72	-1%	0.78	9%	0.77	0.81	5%	0.82	1%
Inventory of Relationships											
Mother figure*	119	0.61	0.59	-3%	0.63	6%	0.49	0.51	2%	0.53	5%
Father figure*	115	0.52	0.54	5%	0.55	1%	0.41	0.45	8%	0.52	18%
Police officer	119	-	0.79	-	0.82	3%	-	0.79	-	0.79	-1%
Youth Support Officer	119	-	0.83	-	0.81	-2%	-	0.86	-	0.86	0%
Booyah teacher	114	-	0.18	-	0.20	12%	-	0.13	-	0.20	48%

Note: scores scaled to run from zero to 1; *Mother and father figures may not be the same person in both time periods

		Indigenous									
		Male					Female				
Measure	Total N	Pre	Post	% change	6 month	% change	Pre	Post	% change	6 month	% change
Self-esteem	123	0.62	0.66	7%	0.65	-2%	0.47	0.66	41%	0.59	-10%
Self-control	123	0.46	0.51	13%	0.48	-6%	0.40	0.60	50%	0.53	-11%
Aggression	120	0.48	0.47	-3%	0.46	-3%	0.55	0.38	-32%	0.47	23%
Physical	122	0.63	0.57	-10%	0.56	-2%	0.54	0.33	-39%	0.41	24%
Verbal	123	0.46	0.49	6%	0.45	-10%	0.56	0.41	-27%	0.52	27%
Anger	121	0.30	0.31	4%	0.29	-8%	0.39	0.29	-27%	0.32	12%
Hostility	122	0.42	0.39	-5%	0.41	5%	0.57	0.40	-29%	0.51	27%
ASRDSR	123	0.44	0.35	-19%	0.32	-10%	0.39	0.17	-56%	0.21	19%
Polydrug (ASRDSR)	123	0.32	0.35	9%	0.44	25%	0.48	0.29	-39%	0.32	8%
CSS-M	123	0.45	0.48	5%	0.44	-9%	0.36	0.23	-37%	0.31	38%
CSS-M Police	123	0.42	0.42	0%	0.39	-8%	0.40	0.22	-44%	0.27	19%
CSS-M TLV	123	0.54	0.54	0%	0.51	-6%	0.37	0.25	-34%	0.35	41%
CSS-M ICO	123	0.37	0.45	22%	0.39	-14%	0.31	0.20	-36%	0.31	56%
Booyah Health	121	0.66	0.67	2%	0.65	-3%	0.58	0.69	19%	0.69	-1%
Health behaviours	121	0.63	0.60	-5%	0.58	-2%	0.52	0.64	24%	0.61	-5%
Health knowledge	122	0.68	0.77	13%	0.75	-4%	0.66	0.75	14%	0.79	5%
Inventory of Relationships											
Mother figure*	119	0.64	0.61	-4%	0.58	-4%	0.47	0.50	6%	0.61	22%
Father figure*	115	0.52	0.44	-15%	0.49	11%	0.49	0.47	-3%	0.52	10%
Police officer	119	-	0.81	-	0.83	2%	-	0.89	-	0.81	-9%
Youth Support Officer	119	-	0.85	-	0.85	-1%	-	0.92	-	0.85	-8%
Booyah teacher	114	-	0.19	-	0.22	13%	-	0.19	-	0.23	25%

Note: scores scaled to run from zero to 1; *Mother and father figures may not be the same person in both time periods

Data derived from Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 120-121.

Participants report an overwhelmingly strong relationship with the police officer's in Project Booyah, with 82% of participants reporting a strong relationship with the Project Booyah police officer post-program. The data on general attitudes towards police as analysed by the CSS-M Police subscale as shown in Table 2, showed a non-significant trend with only 43.3% of participants reporting change in the expected direction with general attitudes towards police improving. The statistical analysis by GCI showed an unexpected difference in the reporting of attitudes towards police when comparing these two different measures. The interviews which the GCI team conducted with former program participants in their evaluation included a series of questions pertaining to their views of police. These views were based on their experiences as well as those of their friends and family members. Some mentioned that they previously thought that police were aggressive or intimidating, harassed young people, were 'out to get people' in the community or treated people badly. However, through their involvement in the program, young people's views of police were said to have improved. Even those who indicated that they held neutral or positive views of police also indicated that they saw another side of police officers through their experience in the program. Below are representative comments provided by participants during the interview process:

> It was kind of uncomfortable at the start, but within the first week or two of being there, and I started to get used to it. Like always walking into the classroom, there'd be a police officer sitting there. Wouldn't be telling me to get on the ground or stuff like that, he'd be telling – talking, like a normal person. That's kind of what taught me that just because they wear the uniform, doesn't make them different people. Doesn't make them any different from anyone else in the world. It was good. It kind of taught a lot of the people there not to judge a book by its cover. It just brought trust (Male graduate, Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 155).

> I used to have this thing where police were horrible, I hated them. Fair enough, they're doing their job. But then when I did the Coffee for a Cop, I met the Commissioner, all these others – I'm like, you're not too bad...I see them as they're people doing their job, and that's what it is...You can't help that they've got to be on you, they're just normal human beings working a paid job (Female graduate, Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 155).

> Before Project Booyah, I didn't even think there was any good police officers, I thought they were all just jokes, to be honest, like all real big, I can do whatever I want, arseholes. But then after I did Booyah, my perspective of police changed. I realised what they're doing, they're doing their best to help us, help us in the community and stuff... (Male graduate, Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 155).

> Working with Booyah made me realise police are there to help and keep people safe, not turn against the community (Female graduate, Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 155).

A case example of a female participant herein referred to as 'Rachel', provides further insight to the benefits Project Booyah has on graduates that is a representation of countless other graduates of the program:

Rachel is an 18-year-old Indigenous woman from the Bundjalung & Wakka Wakka people and is one of six siblings. At the age of five years, her mother was incarcerated for four years and whilst serving this custodial sentence, her father

tragically died in a motor vehicle accident. This resulted in Rachel and her siblings being separated and placed with extended family members. Unfortunately, Rachel's first exposure to domestic violence, excessive drug and alcohol abuse, was at the age of 7 years. After Rachel's mother (Kelly) was released from her correctional facility, Rachel and her siblings returned to her care. Kelly confirms that her subsequent relationship involved severe domestic violence that were frequently witnessed by Rachel and her siblings.

Moving into her primary school years, Rachel was regularly suspended due to violent and aggressive outbursts. It ultimately resulted in her being expelled and eventually banned from attending any public school in Queensland. In 2014, she started high school however her disengagement continued to culminate in non-attendance and regular suspensions from numerous schools. The constant causation of her removal from the educational system, was her aggressive and violent episodes, often unprovoked. Rachel was failing to meet minimum standards required to be awarded a pass mark in most core subjects.

Rachel commenced association with a negative peer group and before too long, was subject to several police interventions due to her propensity to engage in violent related incidents. During one such intervention, it became obvious to her school guidance officer that if an intervention strategy wasn't introduced immediately, Rachel's current behavioural issues would culminate in a trajectory towards a custodial sentence. Rachel was referred to Project Booyah, a police mentor early intervention program and although reticent to engage in the first instance, found a safe environment to accept responsibility for her decision-making processes. Rachel graduated dux of her program in 2017 and underwent an amazing transformation that culminated in an increase in her self-esteem, self-worth and ability to develop self-efficacy skills.

Since graduating from Project Booyah, Rachel has taken control of her life and fully engaged with her local high school. This culminated in her gaining an appreciation of her culture and representing her school in a public speaking competition that challenged her to research and provide insight into her understanding of the subject 'Treaty'. Rachel's passionate and professional presentation culminated in selection to attend Parliament House, Canberra, and present her speech to selected high level politicians in October 2018. During her grade 12 studies, she was an active member of her school community, joining the

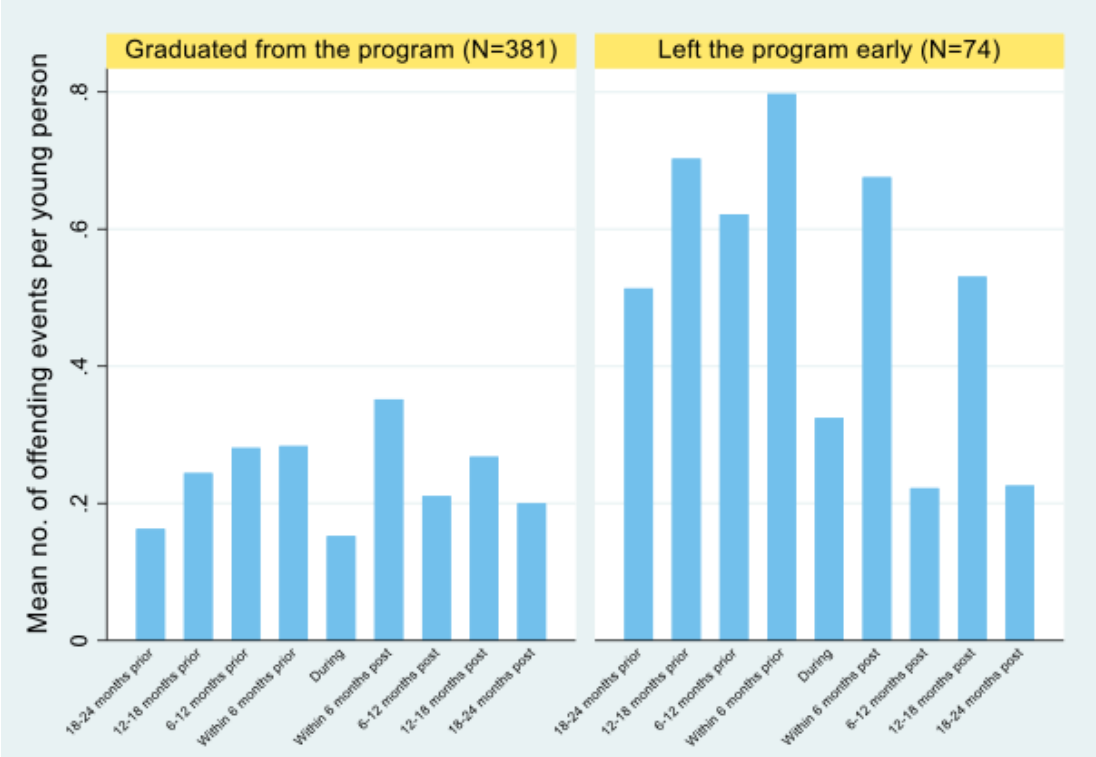
Indigenous Council, leading other youth who are at risk youth at Indigenous camps for foster care children and performing regular community work, including mentoring other Project Booyah participants. Rachel then made history of her own, being the first member of her immediate family to successfully obtain her grade 12 certificate. Along the journey, her marks improved so much that she also was awarded three academic achievements.

Since graduating high school, Rachel has secured full time employment with the charity 'Share the Dignity' organisation. Her role includes helping to support women who are homeless and victims of Domestic Violence. The executives of this organisation are that inspired by Rachel's story, they have asked her to prepare and deliver a speech in front of 800 guests at their upcoming conference at the Brisbane City Hall. Rachel's story is one worth sharing as she continues to inspire her family, friends and indeed Project Booyah, to encourage others to reach their full potential!

The changes in frequency and seriousness in offending was examined. There were 136, or 29.9%, young people out of 455 participants who had offended in the two years prior to Project Booyah. Of these 136 offenders, 74.3% did not re-offend during Project Booyah and 54.4% did not re-offend post-program. Of the non-offending participants pre-program, 93.4% continued to avoid offending during Project Booyah, whilst 86.8% avoided offending post-program. There were 74 participants who began the program, who withdrew before graduation, leaving a total of 381 participants who completed the program. The 74 participants who withdrew early were higher offenders than those that completed the program, 46% to 40.4% respectively. Those young people that withdrew from the program early had a comparable offending rate to graduates 18-24 months post-program, whilst the non-graduates offended at a higher rate pre-program and up to 18 months post-program. Figure 3 shows this comparison in offending between graduates and non-graduates. Those young people who did not graduate but offended post-program, offended in a shorter period of time. Graduates took an average of seven months and 10 days to offend post-program, whilst non-graduates took an average four months and three weeks to offend, which was statistically significant when analysed utilising a one-tailed test (t=1.86, $d.f.$=39.00, p=.036). The statistics show a difference between the graduates of Project Booyah and the young people that did not complete the program.

Figure 4

Mean number of offending events of graduates compared to early leavers.



Data derived from Bartlett et al., 2020, p. 130.

Regarding victimisation, for the 454 young people who undertook the Booyah intensive program during the evaluation period, there were records of 253 reported victimisation offences, with over 217 victimisation incidents experienced by 119 different young people (26% of the group). Over three quarters of the victimisation incidents (76.0%) took place before participation in Booyah, with almost half (45.2%) taking place more than two years prior. Differentiation by gender indicates that females experienced 65.0% of the victimisation incidents. Table 5 shows victimisation incidents in the period they occurred.

Victimisation data was extracted from QPrime for each young person. This data provides information on police recorded incidents where the young person was a victim of an offence against the person. For males, females and the total participants (both males and females combined) descriptive statistics of the number of young people victimised, percentage victimised and number of victimisation incidents are reported according to whether the victimisation occurred in one of four

time periods: greater than 2 years before participation, within 2 years of participation, during the program and after the program.

Table 5

Victimisation by time period in relation to program participants

	Overall			Male			Female		
	No. victimised	% victimised	No. victimisation incidents	No. victimised	% victimised	No. victimisation incidents	No. victimised	% victimised	No. victimisation incidents
> 2 years before	60	13%	98	27	9%	36	33	19%	62
Within 2 years before	48	11%	67	16	6%	17	32	19%	50
During	12	3%	13	3	1%	3	9	5%	10
After*	28	6%	39	14	5%	20	14	8%	19
Overall#	119	26%	217	55	19%	76	64	38%	141

*Time frames in which victimisation was possible post program completion range from 6 months to 2.5 years
#Not a total of the column, because some young people were victimised in multiple time periods

From *Evaluation of Project Booyah 2016 – 2018* (p. 138) by Bartlett et al., 2020, Griffith University.

A major component of the program is the participation in vocational training, where the young people have the opportunity to obtain a Certificate qualification to further their educational or employment outcomes. In the early days of the program, participants were offered a variety of vocational programs based upon desired career pathways. This approach became problematic at a programming level due to time restraints and cost disparity. In 2015, the author introduced certificate qualifications in hospitality that better aligned to program goals and increase of available entry employment opportunities due to the age of participants. Overall, 80% of the young people who attempted the qualification achieved its completion.

FTF Evaluation Results

Process Evaluation. The GCI research team met with the Project Booyah State Leadership team and established the program logic for FTF. A mapping process was conducted to determine the pathways into the FTF program which

included young people who had completed the Project Booyah program, those young people who had been deemed unsuitable for Project Booyah and those that had been waitlisted. The two main strategies within FTF are to provide a maintenance phase after the Project Booyah 17 week intensive program and as an alternative to the intensive program. An examination of young people who had graduated the program showed 82% had been contacted within six months of transitioning to FTF. The staff survey showed 80.7% of staff agreed that at their location they had sufficient staff and resources to deliver FTF.

Outcome Evaluation. The Project Booyah evaluation results outlined above includes outcome data relating to pro-social attitudes (Table 4), offending (Figure 3) and victimisation (Table 5). Further data was examined in the FTF outcome evaluation at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 18 month follow ups. There were 409 young people who completed the pre-program evaluation. Of these young people, 80% indicated they were enrolled in school, however there were two thirds who had missed at least one day in the previous two weeks and one third who had missed at least one week of the previous two weeks. These numbers indicate a proportion of these young people were disengaged from school. Of this same group 12% of young people indicated they were in paid employment. Nearly half of the young people contacted during the FTF phase had positive involvement in education in at least one follow up contact, and 52% were engaged in education or employment during FTF. Table 6 shows the number of young people who were contacted during FTF and the percentage of those positively engaged in education and/or employment. This table utilises participant self-report data on whether they were involved in education and employment during FTF. Data was extracted from the participant post-program survey.

Table 6

Participant involvement in education and employment during FTF

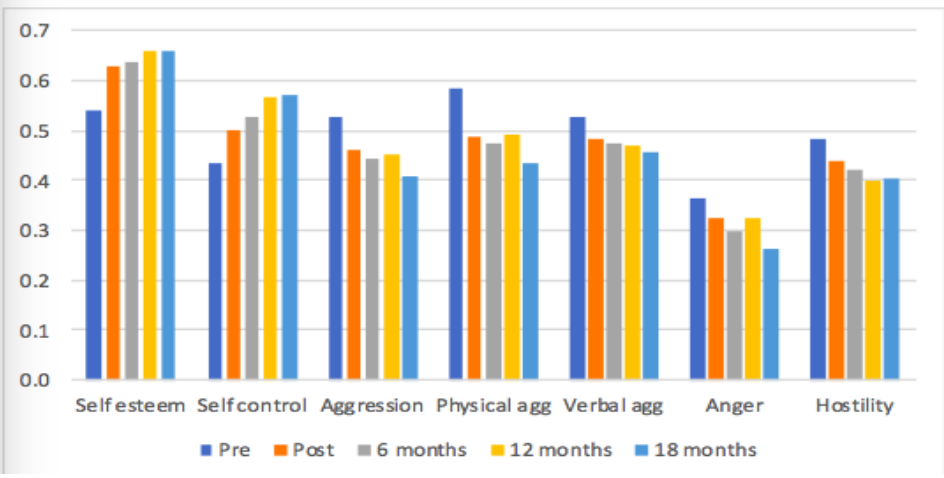
Time of follow-up	Number of young people successfully contacted	% of young people engaged in education	% of young people engaged in employment
3 months	277	71%	35%
6 months	246*	73%	40%
9 months	181*	71%	43%
12 months	142*	70%	44%
18 months	96*	65%#	45%

*Numbers of young people contacted reduces over time both through difficulties making contact as time progresses and less young people who have reached that stage post-graduation.
#Percentage in education reduces as percentage in employment increases, possibly an artefact of increases in age.
From *Evaluation of Project Booyah 2016 – 2018* (p. 195) by Bartlett et al., 2020, Griffith University.

The following figures (Figures 4 and 5) indicate the scores on various scales of young people pre-program, post program, at 6, 12 and 18 months after graduation. These figures indicate the changes in young people post-program continue to improve throughout FTF.

Figure 5

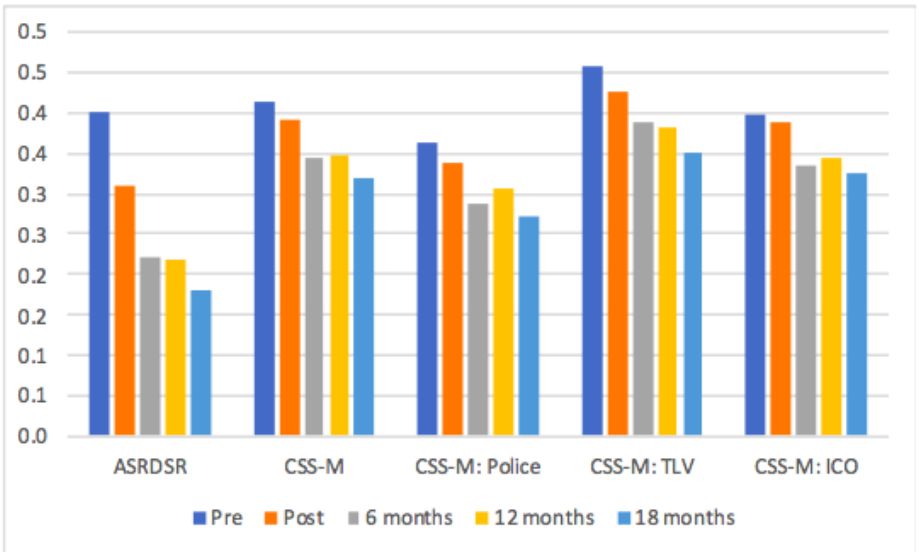
Participant change in attitudes and behaviours



From *Evaluation of Project Booyah 2016 – 2018* (p. 198) by Bartlett et al., 2020, Griffith University.

Figure 6

Participant change in delinquency and criminal sentiments



From *Evaluation of Project Booyah 2016 – 2018* (p. 198) by Bartlett et al., 2020, Griffith University.

Discussion

The aim of the GCI evaluation was to examine the processes of Project Booyah, the impact and outcomes of the program on its participants, and the financial impact. This present research project has focused on the first two components of the process and outcome evaluation, as this information has allowed the author to determine whether Project Booyah is an effective police mentor program for youth who are at risk. Overall, the GCI study has provided evidence that supports the research question and outlines positive findings in relation to the mentoring of youth who are at risk by police.

The conceptual model of Project Booyah introduced in Chapter 3, outlines the multiple components of the program which have been the focus of the GCI study. These aspects have been examined in the process and outcome evaluation. The process evaluation included the processes, resourcing and participation throughout each stage of the program. The initial assessment process, where the BAT is used to assess the suitability of young people for Project Booyah, was examined. This is an important aspect of the program, as this screening process provides pertinent information to determine where the young people are at a stage in life where the police mentoring program will be beneficial to them. The BAT assessment process is

also important in targeting young people that require a police mentoring intervention strategy. GCI research team found the development of the BAT was a rigorous screening process and the administration of the BAT may suggest the appropriate young people are being accepted into Project Booyah. Although Project Booyah were commended on the development of the BAT, the GCI research team recommended a further evaluation be conducted to determine if the young people being selected needed such an intervention strategy.

For program integrity, it is important the program is delivered consistently across all locations and cohorts. This also ensures the evaluation of outcomes is reliable and valid. The findings indicate a high percentage of staff, 80%, deliver the program in the way they are supposed to, providing a reasonable level of consistency across the program. As a further component of program integrity, Bartlett et al. (2020) state that having a well-documented, manualised program is often regarded as a hallmark of a good program. Project Booyah is a manualised program with a 96-page manual, in addition to the RESPECT program manual. Just under two thirds of staff believe the program is well documented, with YSO's representing just over 50% of this finding. This may suggest police officers may be better placed to interpret the manual and put it into practice more effectively. To assist in the disparity of YSO's believing the program is well documented, Project Booyah state management team may need to consider further training, to ensure all staff understand the key aspects of the program. Better communication and feedback from staff will assist in the delivery of program content consistently across sites, so that the State Management Team are better placed to address problem areas.

GCI research team concluded that police mentoring of young people is a key feature of the Project Booyah program. Although they acknowledged that this is a role which is not ordinarily considered to be part of a police officer's role or responsibility, all current and former staff reported that they believed they knew what it meant to be a good mentor and that they had the skills required. In the areas where staff believed they did not possess the skills, the staff reported they had received insufficient training. To further improve the skills of staff it is necessary the State Management Team identify the areas of training required and staff participate in the relevant training to feel competent in their role and provide the necessary mentoring.

Although a high percentage of staff finding their work at Project Booyah was rewarding, it has been identified that it can also be stressful. As a result, the GCI research team identify the importance of the State Management Team providing services as required to ensure staff have the skills to manage stress, develop self-help skills and ensure new staff have the appropriate skill set to meet the demands of working with young people.

Another key finding of the process evaluation included the strong community need for Project Booyah and the community support for the program in the locations where it operates. Given that the community is an important stakeholder in the program, this highlights the acceptance of Project Booyah in the community and the willingness for the community to be part of the program to assist the young people in achieving program goals.

The retention levels are relatively high for a program targeted to largely disengaged young people (83.9%). There could be different reasons for retention levels being relatively high including, a sound recruitment process ensuring suitable young people are accepted into the program at an optimal time in their lives, the consideration of individual traits in selection of the cohort is benefiting group dynamics, there are positive relationships with staff from an early onset including the police mentoring aspect of the program and the diversity in the components of the program making it interesting and attractive to young people.

The other important component of the GCI evaluation are the outcome findings which examined the changes in a young person's psycho-social behaviour, offending and victimisation. The self-report data provides promising results and indicates Project Booyah and the FTF program is having a positive impact on the young people who participate in these programs. The effect the program is having on the young people is progressive, where change is observed on an ongoing basis. The Indigenous female group was the only group that went against this trend, where findings showed an immediate effect of the program on these young women. A summary of the overall positive results as presented in Table 4 was:

- 77.5% increase in self-esteem;
- 69.13% increase in self-control;
- 65.1% increase in health knowledge and behaviours;

- 62.4% decrease in delinquency;
- 55.7% decrease in physical aggression; and
- 32.9% decrease in poly-drug use.

Of the young people who reported a pre-program disengagement from education, 56% demonstrated engagement with education and/or employment during FTF.

It is interesting to note there was no change in the delinquent attitude scale towards police. In contrast to this result, is the finding that 80% of participants report a strong relationship with the police officer in program. Given a key component of Project Booyah focuses on police mentoring, the report on the strong relationship with the police officer in program is positive.

The case example of Rachel's story provided a representation of the experiences of numerous graduates of the Project Booyah that were identified as requiring a police mentoring intervention strategy and the eventual outcomes that support the findings of the GCI evaluation. Rachel was identified by her school as requiring Project Booyah due to significant disengagement from education, involvement in the criminal justice system (as a victim and offender), generational history of welfare and health system dependency, exposure to severe domestic violence and substance misuse, and a highly dysfunctional family unit that included her mother's incarceration for serious criminal offences. Rachel graduated from Project Booyah at the age of 16 years as dux and showed significant improvement in her self-esteem, self-worth and self-efficacy. She has since gone on to be the first member of her family to obtain a Year 12 certificate, obtain full time sustainable employment with 'Share the Dignity' that supports domestic violence homeless women and has presented at countless national conferences as a proud Indigenous leader.

It appears that although the participants report this positive relationship with their police mentor, it does not seem to have an overwhelming impact on the young person's views of police on a whole given these views are generally unchanged. The young people also report positive relationships with YSO's. The strong relationship with both the police officers and youth support officers was maintained six months post-program.

Project Booyah had a positive effect on reducing offending. It may seem surprising that approximately 13% of participants who had not offended prior to Project Booyah, offended post-program. It is important to remember Project Booyah is aimed at youth who are at risk, meaning there is a higher likelihood these youth will offend and/or have previous undetected offending. A further positive finding was that even the young people who did not complete Project Booyah reported a reduction in offending.

A reduction in victimisation is not one of the expressed outcomes of program participation and does not form part of the program logic. However, there is a growing body of research which indicates that some young people who offend have themselves experienced crime victimisation (Hurren et al., 2017; Papalia et al., 2018). The aims of Project Booyah, for example improved self-esteem and re-engagement with education and employment, may serve to reduce participants' risks of victimisation and re-victimisation.

As a whole, the GCI research team found Project Booyah is comprehensive, has a well-articulated program logic, is consistent with best practice in that it is supported by an extensive program manual, and aligns with the Queensland Government's priorities of reducing youth crime, reducing crime victimisation, and having young people engaged in, training or work. Project Booyah has contributed to the Queensland Government *Advancing Queensland* targets:

> Of young people who had committed an offence in the two years prior to Project Booyah, 54.4% did not reoffend after the intensive program finished, exceeding the *Advancing Queensland* Target of a 5% reduction; and
>
> 56.0% of graduates with low engagement with school at the start of the intensive program demonstrated engagement with education and/or employment (either work or work experience) during Framing the Future, thereby contributing to the *Advancing Queensland* target of 91% of young Queenslanders engaged in education, training or work.

Conclusion

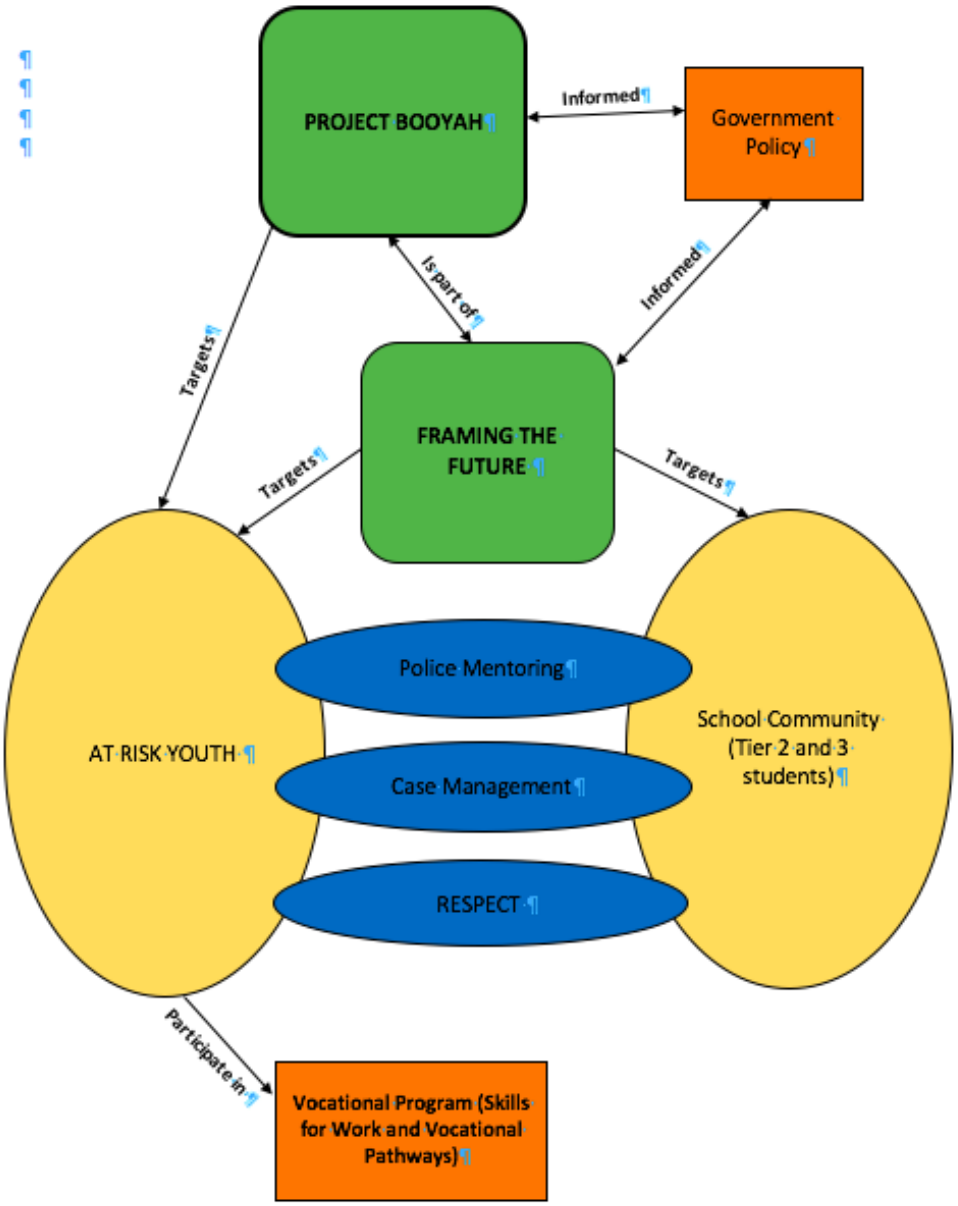
GCI examined the program delivery model and concluded there was a strong community need in the sites where Project Booyah has been established, and that the program has been well received and supported, with good program integrity. They furthermore concluded for a voluntary program that cohorts consist of largely disengaged youth, retention levels were high. The young people who graduated the program reported a strong relationship with the Project Booyah police officers, with an 80% satisfaction in relationship quality post-program. They did conclude that their view is that Project Booyah is providing an important service and contribution to the Queensland community. The GCI evaluation team made a number of recommendations for strengthening program delivery and service provisions. These recommendations, coupled with the author's analysis of the evaluation, has culminated in the development of an enhanced service delivery conceptual model that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 – New Conceptual Model and Methodological Stages of Development

An optimality conceptual model has been developed following observations of the progression of Project Booyah since its development by the author, feedback from staff and stakeholders and analysis of the GCI evaluation findings. An optimality model is described as the value of a trait that maximises fitness, given a certain set of constraints (Bokulich, 2010). Bokulich 2010 argues that optimality conceptual models are genuinely explanatory regardless of the idealisations that lead to their development. The author considered alterations to the original conceptual model that have the potential to value-add to the programs reach into the future. This conceptual model was built whilst considering all components of Project Booyah that have been developed since the program's inception, to make Project Booyah what it is today. The building of the model was systematically conducted and based on research to inform the program of best practices nationally and internationally on youth mentor programs. As well as undertaking research, the author developed the program and has gathered invaluable anecdotal evidence that has assisted in the formation of the Project Booyah optimality conceptual model. This evidence has been gathered by the author who has utilised decades of policing experience and taken on multiple roles in the program including a police co-ordinator, a police mentor, program and case management developer, operations manager and support services. Other sources that have affected the development of this new conceptual model have involved seeking feedback from the young people, staff, community, government leaders and other stakeholders. The future conceptual model that is proposed based upon this thorough analytical approach is illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7

New Project Booyah Optimality Conceptual Model



RESPECT Program

When considering a future conceptual model for Project Booyah, the resilience program RESPECT has the capability to increase the volume of youth who are at risk that could benefit from a police mentor program. The RESPECT program is based on a positive, interpersonal and CBT approach, with an ultimate aim to

enhance the resilience, self-esteem, self-control and other key protective factors for youth who are at risk. The RESPECT program was designed to be flexible in its delivery model to meet and support both the individual and stakeholder needs. The successful outcomes of the RESPECT program delivered internally to over 400 youth who are at risk challenged the author to conceptualise how the capability of the program could transition to a stand-alone program within mainstream schooling curriculum. GCI identified the main source of referrals to the program were from educational institutions. Historically, Project Booyah is oversubscribed with referrals from schools involving youth in the age bracket of 14-16 years due to behavioural issues and a sense of disengagement from education for a variety of reasons. The author determined that the RESPECT program could support the national curriculum framework and provide identified students with a measured early intervention strategy that includes police mentoring.

To strengthen the business case for this approach, the author reviewed a report published in 2018 by Major General (retd) Stuart Smith AO, DSC, titled 'Local Solutions to Address Youth Crime'. Part of this report included recommendations that involved investigating a coordinated approach to enhancing mentoring and employment pathways between youth service programs, including Project Booyah. Significantly, the theme of the report included greater inclusion of police in schools, the relevance of CBT, and the mentoring of young people, particularly Indigenous youth. Smith's recommendations supported the author's intention to consider the long-term benefits associated with the delivery of the CBT based RESPECT program in schools by police officers to mentor youth who are at risk with challenging behaviours. Further exploration identified the RESPECT program supports the Queensland Education Department's 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' and the three-tiered approach to student support particularly tier 2 and tier 3 (targeted support –which is approximately 20% of students).

To strengthen the credibility of the RESPECT program, the author and Psychology Unit of Project Booyah underwent a vigorous process through the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to have the program on the scope for delivery by QPS, as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth). The standards for accredited courses apply to the design of vocational programs that are based on established industry, enterprise, education, legislative or community need. The

community need for a course in Personal Awareness, Responsibility and Resilience (Project Booyah - RESPECT) was highlighted by the multifaceted response and rigour of the course curriculum. The assessment framework has been modified to adhere to specifications of the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* and conducted using a variety of methods to ensure a sufficient range of valid evidence is gathered to form a judgement of competence. The RESPECT program has been accredited by ASQA to be registered within the Australian Qualifications Framework. The Department of Education historically is supportive of vocational programs that meet the strict adherence to this framework and ensures best practice is implemented to support the desired impact upon the identified cohort of tier 2 and tier 3 students.

The author concluded that the current Project Booyah workforce is incapable of delivering the RESPECT program beyond the current service delivery model, therefore, has approached QPS senior executives regarding School-Based Police Officers (SBPO's) capability to be trained and facilitate this crime prevention program. The School-Based Policing Program (SBPP) is a joint initiative between the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Education. The main role of the program is to establish positive relationships between police and the secondary school community to contribute to a safe and supportive learning environment. There are currently 51 SBPO's positions which service 58 schools in Queensland. The concept of utilising SBPO's to deliver the RESPECT program in schools will present significant cost savings by using existing resources. The future conceptual model would encourage SPBOs to work with their schooling community to identify young people who are suitable for inclusion in the RESPECT program. This concept also allows the SBPO to establish a relationship with the young person so they can mentor, and case manage young people who undertake and/or complete the program throughout their schooling years.

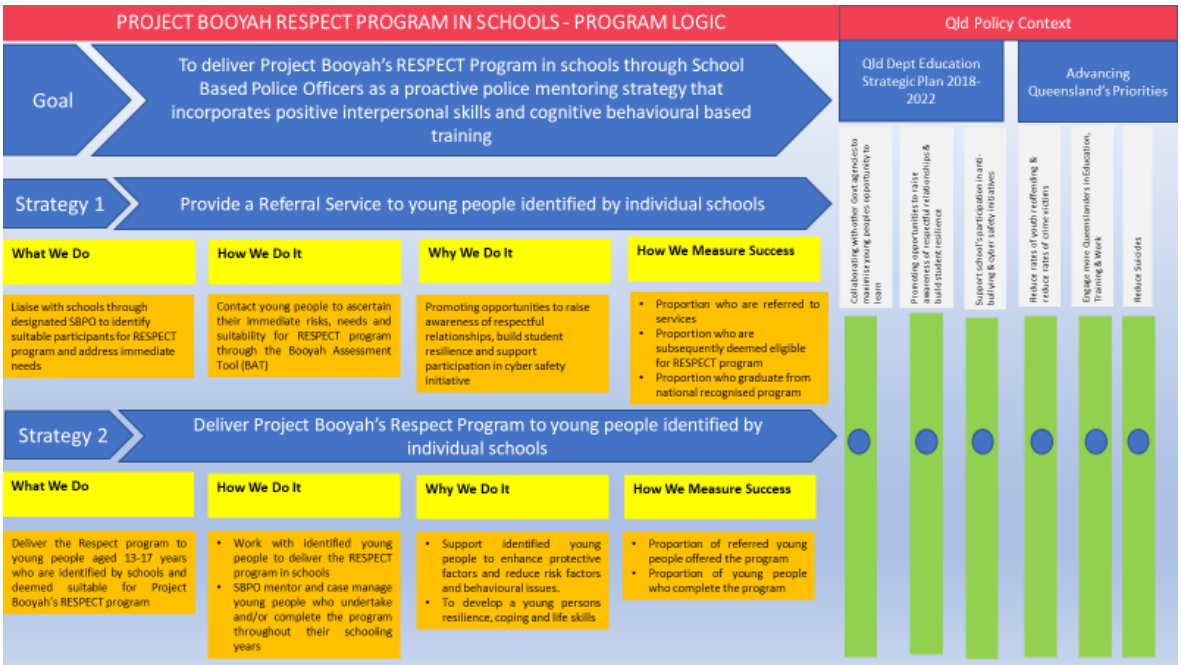
In addition, delivery of the RESPECT program in schools to identify youth who are at risk would support the Queensland Governments priority of Reducing Queensland's suicide rate under *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*. *Every life: The Queensland Suicide Prevention Plan 2019-2029* (Queensland Mental Health Commission, 2019). This is a whole-of-government plan that provides a renewed approach for suicide prevention in Queensland, as well as renewed drive and urgency to reduce suicide. The Queensland Mental Health

Commission (2019) notes suicide as a ‘complex interaction of individual, social and other factors, with no single factor solely responsible for suicidal behaviour’. The RESPECT program aims to provide exposure to vulnerable youth across the community and community leaders, including SBPO, School-Based Health Nurses and teachers, to learn skills and basic therapeutic techniques to arrest the prevalence of suicide. This includes skills training in decision making, problem-solving, goal setting, CBT, communication, conflict management, impulse control, anger management and self-esteem.

Under this conceptual model, SBPO’s will be trained, supported and overviewed with the delivery of the RESPECT program by a newly created business unit of experienced Project Booyah staff and psychologists to ensure quality control and information collation through the web-based case management system (Infoxchange) utilised by Project Booyah. The GCI evaluation showed the improvements in relationships between the police mentors and young people, throughout Project Booyah including RESPECT, vocational studies and FTF. Figure 8 depicts the program logic/rationale for this conceptual initiative, whilst figure 9 outlines the program delivery model.

Figure 8

Project Booyah Program Logic for RESPECT in Schools



Project Booyah's RESPECT program supports the Queensland Education Department's "Positive Behaviour for Learning" and the three-tiered approach to student support particularly tier 2 (targeted support – support for at-risk groups – approximately 15% of students).

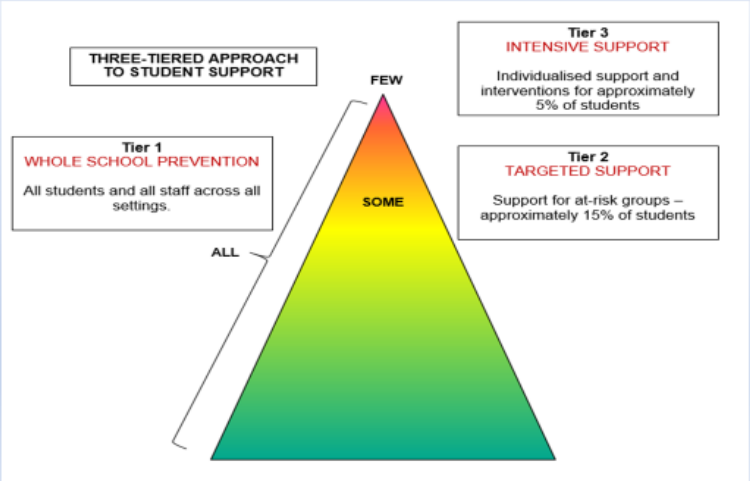
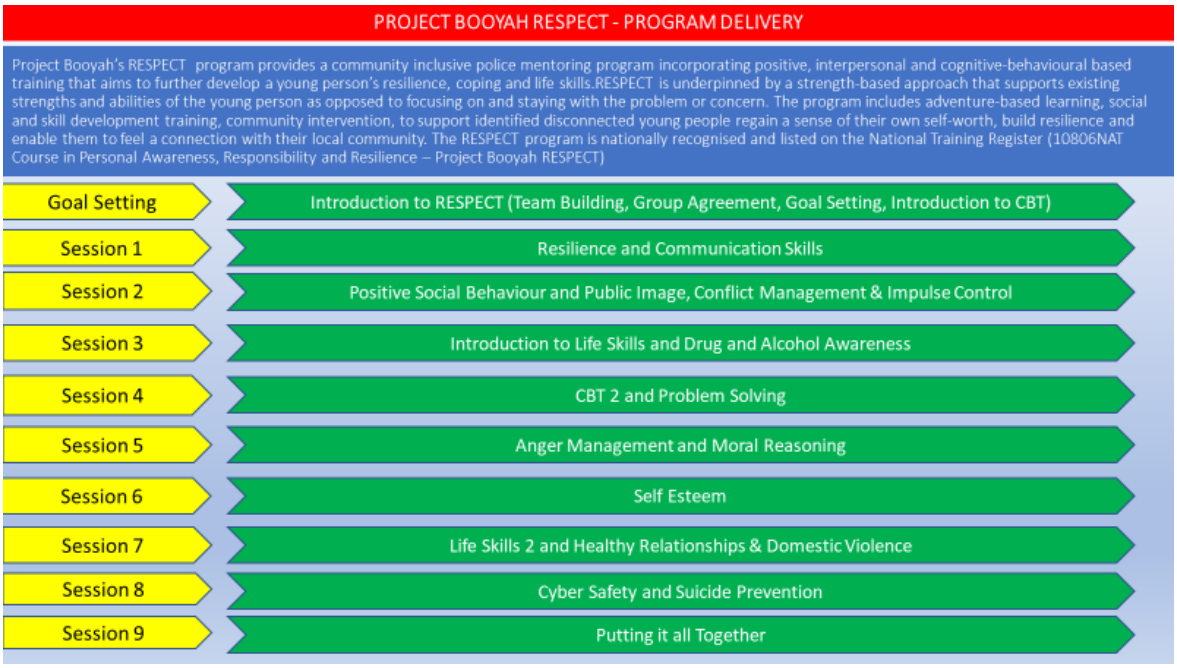


Figure 9

Project Booyah RESPECT Program Delivery Model in Schools



Post-Program

As discussed in Chapter 4, as part of the program expansion a suite of pre and post-program assessments were developed to track participant change over time. Participants are followed up at regular intervals from program completion until age 18 years. The purpose of the continued post-program follow-up is to:

• Provide on-going mentoring and support to the young person to address their dynamic risk and needs;

• Increase the likelihood that knowledge and skills learned as part of the intensive program will continue to be realised; and

• Provide a mechanism for the continued collection of data for evaluation purposes.

Framing the Future

The post-intensive program delivery component Framing the Future (FTF), formally commenced in January 2017 with non-recurrent funding of $0.780M provided through the federal government's Safer Streets Grant Funding program. That funding principally enabled recruitment of Youth Support Officers (YSOs) and enabled FTF to be piloted at selected Project Booyah sites across Queensland. The author subsequently secured further non-recurrent funding from the Queensland

Government of $1.349M over 2018/19 & 2019/20 to continue the FTF program across all sites within Queensland. This provided continued staffing and some non-labour expenditure across all Booyah locations, to trial the impact the intensive post-program follow up had on graduating participants as they transitioned back into their local communities.

The post-program FTF initiative was initially designed to engage further with government agencies, non-government organizations', and community groups to maximise community safety and improved policing. This included a desire to improve stakeholder engagement and develop sustainable supportive collaborative partnerships across the community for Project Booyah. FTF staff are empowered to develop strategic partnerships and promote program successes with current government, non-government and business/community partners. To increase the employment opportunities of the participants, the program has strong corporate partnerships, who have pledged their support to help Project Booyah graduates by providing work experience and ultimately, employment and training opportunities. This key feature of the program sets Booyah apart from other programs and is a recommendation made by Jobs Australia's research report on Youth Transitions (2014) and the Uniting Care (2011), Re-engaging Disengaged Youth: A Research and Program Design Project. Ongoing coordination of agencies and mentoring of young people during transitions into employment and training enhances long term success (Brooker, 2011). Furthering this, the QPS conduct the community inclusive program in partnership with Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association (QPCYWA), The Department of Education & Training (DET) and Queensland Health. All participating agencies share responsibility for assisting young people throughout the program and beyond. This multifaceted approach has been recognised as best practice by the Victorian Government Initiative Policy Framework to Support Vulnerable Youth (2010) and Hemphill & Smith (2010).

The GCI evaluation supported the importance of the FTF model. The findings highlighted the change that continued to occur for participants at 6, 12 and 18 months post-program. There are improvements in self-esteem, self-control, delinquent behaviour, levels of victimisation, aggression and substance use. There is also a significant engagement in education and/or employment. This time period encompasses the FTF model where Project Booyah police officers, YSO's and stakeholders continue to guide and support the young people's transition to

independence and community integration. These findings indicated the need for FTF to continue and the importance this model holds in Project Booyah.

As part of this future conceptual model, further enhancements to the FTF post-program model are required to support the transition of young people to a community-based youth support mentorship that encourages a sense of community, whilst continuing to provide police mentoring. It is envisaged this will invariably ensure ongoing contact with disconnected youth by the community and strategic partners to prevent their regression to anti-social or criminal activity, by facilitating their continued engagement with education and/or employment. FTF staff and police mentors continue to monitor the progress of the young person to ensure protective factors are nurtured whilst addressing identified risk factors promptly, however, a more robust framework is required to minimise any negative impacts encountered. After reviewing all research on the effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth, the author acknowledged that long term transitional mentoring would provide additional support for disconnected youth and result in improvements in motivation, connections with school and the community and a decrease in criminogenic behaviours (Anton & Temple, 2007; Greenwood, 2010).

FTF is an integral component of Project Booyah as it provides dedicated post-program support to Project graduates with the intention to maintain ongoing contact with the young person to prevent regression into anti-social and criminal behaviour by facilitating their continued engagement with education and/or employment and implementing tailored interventions for those that regress. Through a tailored case management approach, FTF staff review and monitor risk and protective factors of graduates and diffuse benefits to other youth who are at risk. FTF adopts a youth support focused approach that ensures ongoing mentoring and support is available within and beyond the program. Staff also work closely with the young person's family, in recognition of the complex interplay of individual, structural and social factors that contribute to a young person's life trajectory. FTF staff are entrusted to form strategic local partnerships with highly regarded businesses and community groups to ensure that young people have real opportunities to gain work experience and/or employment.

The author argues the implementation of a targeted vocational program into the FTF model would add further value to a future model of Project Booyah to improve employment outcomes. Enhancing the foundation skills of youth who are at risk to

enter the workforce via the inclusion of reading, writing, numeracy, oral communication, digital technology and learning through a Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways, will support the FTF program logic. Selected Booyah graduates would complete the modules aforementioned however will also understand principles of workplace health and safety, career planning and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. This vocational course is aimed at increasing employment prospects, enriching cultural knowledge and enhancing transferable workplace skills to improve the connection with community. FTF staff already deliver job readiness skills, and complete Individual Pathway Plans (IPP), to support young people in setting goals and gaining clarity around the action and commitment required to achieve these set goals. The IPP is structured around the learning style, abilities and interests of the young person to provide a platform for the young person and key influencers including extended family, teachers and peers, to communicate about future ambitions and plans. It is envisaged the inclusion of this vocational course will value add to pre-existing mainstream Project Booyah programming and provide another skillset to graduates to assist their transition into long term education and employment.

Importance of the RESPECT Program and FTF

The program rationale and objectives of the enhanced FTF and the RESPECT program in schools are directly linked to Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities (Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 2018) –

- Create jobs in a strong economy
  - Engage more young Queenslanders in education, training and work
- Keeping communities safe
  - Reduce rates of youth re-offending
  - Reduce the rate of Queenslanders who are victims of crime
- Keeping Queenslanders healthy
  - Reduce suicides

Project Booyah's FTF and RESPECT program also has broader social benefits. The positive educational and employment outcomes can help reduce youth unemployment and has provided participants with opportunities and meaningful pathways for their future. Project Booyah has also positively impacted participants' self-esteem and self-control, relationship quality with parents/caregivers, and

association with anti-social peers (Bartlett et al., 2020). As these are all important predictors of longer-term criminality and social engagement (Tolan et al., 2014), addressing these issues better equips youth who are at risk to make positive choices and become productive members of their communities.

The author has completed a detailed submission in consultation with The Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Queensland Treasury to pursue this future conceptual model with the allocation of a recurrent funding model. The main points of this submission to highlight the strength of this business case include:

- Project Booyah has assisted the QPS to build strategic relationships across the community to enhance community safety and client service
- Effective professional mentoring can result in increased motivation, increased connections with young people and the school environment, improved academic performance, increased confidence, increased self-efficacy, improved attitudes and a decrease in juvenile delinquency (Anton & Temple, 2007; Greenwood, 2010)
- Transition of young people from the police mentoring program into their community
- Identify stakeholders capable of supporting a young person's transition (vocational pathways, employment, social services)
- FTF staff empowered to develop strategic partnerships and promote program successes with current government, non-government and business partners
- Monitor progress of young person to ensure protective factors are nurtured whilst addressing identified risk factors in a timely manner
- Gaining and maintaining outcomes for past participants
- Working closely with young people who are referred to and graduated the program, to find and maintain outcomes. These outcomes can include the return to school/education, enrollment in a vocational institution, referral to support networks
- Creating, maintaining and reviewing case notes
- Ensure case notes are completed and updated after each interaction with a young person and stakeholder
- Case notes should include information regarding time spent working with young person, time spent contacting, time spent communicating with stakeholders regarding young person and time spent with stakeholders.

- Case notes are an integral component of the Youth Support Officer role, as it ensures the work conducted with each young person and stakeholder is recorded. This justifies the outcomes that are obtained to senior management and external auditors.

• Delivery of job readiness

- Facilitating job readiness activities and providing support for such programs within the current cohort.

• Post-program questionnaires 6, 12 and 18 months

- Post Questionnaires are an integral part of the program and the FTF role. Without these questionnaires, the program is unable to justify the outcomes that are maintained post-program. This is also important for government reporting purposes and ensuring the longevity of the program as a whole.

Funding Outcome

The author has completed a Cabinet Budget Review Committee submission seeking additional funding of $4.136M over four years and ongoing to continue Project Booyah's post-program FTF and expand Project Booyah's RESPECT program into schools. In July 2020, the author was notified that Queensland Treasury approved this conceptual model with the allocation of recurrent funding that will support the delivery of the RESPECT program across targeted schooling communities in Queensland and increasing the capability framework of FTF to support youth who are at risk into the future. FTF and the RESPECT program aim is to ensure Project Booyah is not viewed as just a short-term demonstrational project, but one that can deliver ongoing sustainable long-term change for participants.

This study uses an emergent theoretical approach to conceptual modelling. This approach is not entirely inconsistent with ground theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), but differs in several key forms. The methodological approach used in this study is consistent with grounded theory in that it inductively generates general themes from specific observational and empirical data (i.e., the Griffith University evaluation data), including first-person insider data, and like grounded theory "enables not only the documentation of change within social groups, but understanding of the core processes central to that change" (Morse et al., 2009, p. 13). Moreover, grounded theory enables "the identification and description of phenomena, their main attributes, and the core social and social psychological processes, as well as their interactions in the trajectory of change. In other words, it

allows us to explicate what is going on and what is happening (or has happened) within a setting or around a particular event (Morse et al., 2009, pp. 13-14). However, unlike grounded theory this study uses an "emergent theory" design of conceptualisation which identifies key themes and articulates them into an optimality conceptual model. In this sense, the current modelling does not draw on a "theoretical framework" as would typically be the case with grounded theory (i.e., such as that proposed by Thompson and Stonebridge, 2005), but uses specific data and insider experiences to preliminarily conceptualise what the future of Project Booyah might look like and consider important elements of the Project through inductive reasoning to Framing the Future through post-program pathways.

Chapter 6 – Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

The aim of this project was to examine the conceptual model of Project Booyah and determine whether through a literature review, the author's expert opinion and an evaluation of the program, Project Booyah is successful at altering youth who are at risk outcomes through police mentoring. Project Booyah has sound evidence-based academia supporting the initial concept of providing an intervention service via a police-led program to have a positive impact on the lives of youth who are at risk. The key features of Project Booyah as outlined in Chapter 3 were presented in the original conceptual model and include:

- robust selection process with the aid of psychologists;
- police mentorship;
- police officers working in collaboration with youth workers;
- delivery of the RESPECT resilience program;
- participation in adventure-based learning activities;
- incorporation of the RoP process;
- participation in a vocational scholarship;
- ongoing case management of the young person through their youth support plan in program;
- collation of information through Infoxchange database;
- community/stakeholder involvement;
- linkages to further education and employment through strong strategic partnerships in program and through FTF; and
- ongoing support and monitoring of risk/protective factors through post-program FTF (pilot program).

While the combination of all the features are innovative, do all the features have a place in Project Booyah by having a positive impact upon the lives of youth who are at risk? It was important to review the findings of the GCI evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020), the literature that has been paramount in the development of Project Booyah and the author's extensive experience. The review resulted in the original conceptual model being analysed to ensure the model was capturing the important components of Project Booyah and further develop this model to an

optimised conceptual model from these findings. In summary, the findings of the GCI evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020) show that Project Booyah has positively impacted the participants' self-esteem, self-control, aggression, health behaviours, substance use, relationship quality with parents/caregivers, delinquent behaviour and general attitudes to life post-program. These factors have been identified in the initial conceptual model as features that can contribute to youth being classified as youth who are at risk. As these are all important predictors of longer-term criminality, substance use, mental health, and social engagement (de Vries et al., 2018), the outcomes demonstrate that Project Booyah possesses the key elements of a program that provides an effective intervention for youth who are at risk.

An at risk feature of young people that can see them referred to Project Booyah is their prior criminal history. The conceptual model depicts the importance of focusing on these problematic behaviours by listing criminogenic behaviours as a risk factor. The findings of the evaluation showed Project Booyah had a positive effect on reducing criminal offending. In conjunction with this finding, the participants of Project Booyah had a much higher engagement with education and/or employment post-program. Project Booyah includes vocational studies as shown in the conceptual model, it is envisaged that by furthering a young person's skill base and improving skills in other risky areas, Project Booyah will have an effect on increasing the likelihood that young people will engage in further education, training or employment at the conclusion of the program. It is known through literature that criminal activity affects education and employment and is costly to both the young person and society (de Vries et al., 2018). It can be inferred from these outcomes that Project Booyah offers a tested solution that is well suited to working with youth who are at risk to reduce their recidivism and help them make meaningful connections with education, vocation, and health services so they can transition out of future contact with the criminal justice system.

The Project Booyah model and outcomes are directly aligned to the QPS Strategic Plan 2019-2023 (QPS, 2019) and are fulfilling the vision of "delivering safe and secure communities through collaboration, innovation and best practice" (p. 1) and contains performance indicators of "reduce rates of youth reoffending" (p. 1) and "reduce rate of crime victims" (p. 1). The objectives outlined in the QPS Strategic Plan 2019-2023 align with the Queensland Government's (2018) *Advancing Queensland Priorities* statement which includes a target of: By 2020–21,

a 5% reduction (from 2015–16) of young offenders who have another charged offence within 12 months of an initial finalisation for a proven offence. Project Booyah exceeded this target, whereby 54.4% of Project Booyah offenders pre-program, did not re-offend post-program (Bartlett et al., 2020). The program also aligns with and helps to support two other *Advancing Queensland Priorities*: By 2028, a 10% reduction in the rate of Queenslanders who were victims of personal and property crime and by 2022, 91% of young Queenslanders engaged in education, training or work. Project Booyah contributes to these targets. Of the 119 young people who reported being a victim from more than two years pre-program, only 28 young people reported being a victim of crime post-program. 56% of graduates who had low engagement pre-program were subsequently engaged with education and/or employment post-program.

As can be seen on the original conceptual model, victims of crime were not an area where Project Booyah was seeking an outcome. It could be assumed that having a trauma history may imply the young person has been a victim, but not necessarily. The trauma history was noted in the conceptual model as it was deemed important that Project Booyah staff practised trauma informed practice to ensure the potential of any further harm to the young person was reduced. The positive findings in relation to the reduction of victimisation was unexpected given it was not a targeted outcome but is likely a natural outcome given the participants in Project Booyah partake in RESPECT, the resilience and skills development program which enhances personal social development. Future research could focus on victimisation to determine if Project Booyah has a positive impact on victimisation.

The RESPECT program is an essential component in Project Booyah, as it is the cornerstone in the change process that occurs in the young people through participation in Project Booyah. Since Project Booyah was established, the inclusion of a resilience program was deemed important to develop the young person's skills and capabilities to manage themselves in challenging situations. The author originally sourced programs that already existed and trained staff to deliver these programs. Although components of these programs were meeting the required outcomes, it was determined Project Booyah necessitated a program that would explicitly target the proposed outcomes, and subsequently provide the young people with the skills required to develop resilience, self-awareness, self-management and other skills required to make effective decisions when faced with life challenges. As

a result, the author developed a working group in collaboration with a university to develop its own program. RESPECT was developed and was part of the original conceptual model. With the findings from the GCI evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020) of improvements in the areas of self-esteem, self-control, aggression, delinquent behaviour and attitudes, substance use, relationships and health behaviours, it can be inferred that the RESPECT program has had a significant contribution in these changes given the areas targeted in RESPECT. RESPECT is complemented with ABL, which is also seen as an important component in the change of young people in Project Booyah. Other stakeholders also assist with the delivery and reinforcement of RESPECT topics, highlighting the importance of stakeholders contributing to Project Booyah.

The strategic partnerships that have been formed with government, non-government and other organisations or groups are assisting the young people to engage in training and employment opportunities. Strategic partnerships have been an important component of Project Booyah since its inception, providing a wide range of services to assist the young people in Project Booyah. The stakeholders provide essential assistance in supporting Project Booyah staff and providing input into the well-being and future of the Project Booyah participants. The recognition of strategic partnerships being a vital component of Project Booyah has culminated in strategic partnerships being included in the original conceptual model. All stakeholders that participated in the GCI evaluation (Bartlett, et al., 2020) agreed there is a strong connection, a shared understanding and open, effective communication between Project Booyah staff and their organisation. The literature identifies the importance of strategic partnerships in assisting programs to achieve their desired outcomes (Hemphill & Smith, 2010; Johnson, et al., 2013; and Victoria Department of Human Services, 2008). These findings are indicative of the strong partnerships formed with other organisations and are assisting the young people of Project Booyah achieve positive outcomes in both Project Booyah and the FTF component of Project Booyah.

The literature on mentoring shows youth who participate in mentoring programs achieve significant outcomes when compared to youth who do not participate in mentoring programs in areas such as self-esteem, relationships, academic achievement and problematic behaviours (Eby et al., 2008; Grossman & Tierney, 1998; Maguire, et al., 2010). Through the use of a mentoring approach, an

effective mentoring framework which has been adopted through best practice research, guides police officers in ensuring they have a positive effect on youth who are at risk which leads to improved relationships, improved academic performance, increased confidence and improved behaviours (Anton & Temple, 2007; Greenwood, 2010; Tolan et al., 2014). Bartlett et al. (2020) finds these positive outcomes are present in Project Booyah, indicating the mentoring aspect of Project Booyah is a key element in achieving these positive results. The police mentoring feature is a unique aspect of the Project Booyah program and a key component in the Project Booyah conceptual model. These findings support the emphasis Project Booyah places on police mentoring in the conceptual model and additionally supports the literature on youth mentoring and police mentoring, utilised to build the conceptual model.

An outcome that was hoped to be achieved through police mentoring is improving the relationships between police and youth. The literature has shown youth can form negative attitudes towards police as a result of their interactions with police (Hasna et al., 2012; Sargeant & Bond, 2013). The findings showed the participants forged a strong positive relationship with their police mentors. Whilst this finding may possibly suggest this would subsequently improve the respect the young people have for police on a whole, this was not the case. There were no statistically significant changes found in the young persons' feelings towards police, which suggests Project Booyah may need to concentrate on working further towards a change in delinquent attitudes and further developing positive relationships with other police officers.

Youth workers are an important stakeholder in Project Booyah and as such were represented in the original conceptual model. The introduction of youth workers as case manager's initially, assisted police mentors in their role of providing a holistic approach to addressing the young person's risk and protective factors. As the program has evolved, youth workers are a key element of Project Booyah and provide appropriate support and case management to the police mentors and youth. The youth workers have been seen to have a positive effect on Project Booyah participants, as can be seen through the findings of the GCI evaluation where young people reported a strong satisfaction score with the quality of their relationship with youth workers (Bartlett, et al., 2020). This finding suggests the participants of Project Booyah are engaged in the case management approach in addressing their

risk and protective factors, and with such a positive relationship established between the youth worker and young people, it is evident they are a vital component of Project Booyah and complement the role of the police mentors.

The FTF component of Project Booyah officially commenced in 2017 as a pilot program. At Project Booyah's inception in 2011, the author had already determined through best practice research, that the longer a mentor remained in a young person's life the more likely positive outcomes would be achieved (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Grossman et al., 2012; Philip et al., 2004). As a result of the literature findings, Project Booyah determined it was important for police mentors to remain in the young person's life for as long as required to provide ongoing assistance to the young people through the life challenges they encountered. As a result of limited policing resources, due to operational demands, the police mentors had less capacity to continue the mentoring process with all young people as the alumni grew. As Project Booyah expanded and non-recurrent funding streams were obtained, Project Booyah was able to employ youth workers to assist with program components and police were able to provide more intensive mentoring services. The police mentor framework was formalised at the commencement of FTF and is presented in the original conceptual model as a pilot program that provided police mentoring, education and employment opportunities and linkages to other support services as required. The findings through the GCI evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020), showed that changes in the young person's self-esteem, self-control, delinquent behaviour, levels of victimisation, aggression, substance use and engagement in education and/or employment continued to occur at 6, 12 and 18 months post-program. This was an important finding when considering the development of the new optimised conceptual model.

Collectively, these findings suggest police mentors are a major contributor in the changes observed in youth who are at risk in Project Booyah. Whilst Project Booyah was initially viewed as a major shift from traditional policing, the results are changing police perceptions on the police role in assisting youth to change their life trajectory once they identify with risk factors. Although the original conceptual model has been supported through literature, the extensive experience of the author and the GCI evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020), the author sought to expand the original conceptual model to an optimality conceptual model to enhance the individual and community benefits Project Booyah has already produced. The author

considered the observations in the progression of the program over the years, feedback from staff and stakeholders and the findings of the GCI evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020) to build the optimality conceptual model.

In the optimality conceptual model, FTF is now part of Project Booyah due to the significant positive results that have been identified in the young people post-program. FTF has been expanded to include all participants of Project Booyah and identified students in schools who are at risk of disengagement. The decision to expand FTF was primarily based on the majority of referrals already originating from education, the benefits already found in youth participation of Project Booyah and the literature in support of programs in schools. The author and research have validated the advantages of police mentoring, RESPECT and case management of young people involved in Project Booyah. The optimised conceptual model now ensures a larger proportion of the young people in the community are targeted to reap the benefits of the core components of Project Booyah. In examining the logistics of including FTF in the school community, it was necessary to determine how the program would be implemented. The police officer allocation to Project Booyah is limited to the involvement in the Project Booyah program purely targeting youth who are at risk given the time restraints already imposed to work with youth who are at risk who require intense support. It was important the program maintain integrity and have police officers deliver the program in school to ensure the vital police mentoring component was preserved. It is also envisaged that by having more police officers engaging in a positive manner with a larger number of young people in the community, general attitudes of youth towards police will change. As such, the author applied to the government for additional recurrent funding for SBPO's to be trained to deliver RESPECT in schools and this has been granted. Over the coming 12 months, Project Booyah staff will train 51 SBPO's to deliver RESPECT, use the case management system and how to be an effective police mentor. The optimised conceptual model proposes that there will be a significant amount of young people in the community that will benefit from police mentoring, the RESPECT program and case management leading to healthy self-development, enhancement of cognitive and behavioural skills, more opportunities in education, training and employment and improved attitudes towards police.

Conclusion

Project Booyah is a unique program that has assisted the QPS to build strategic partnerships, enhancing community safety and client service. The program aspires to promote best practice, through improvisation and a commitment to ongoing improvement and accountability. The program has demonstrated that it is able to provide a true wrap around process for youth who are at risk to assist them in engaging with work or continued education and/or employability opportunities. Early intervention and improved relations with police and authority is an important step in helping to eliminate anti-social tendencies, improve health, education and employment opportunities and reduce crime and incarceration rates of young people, thereby reducing costs to Government and importantly the community.

From an organisational perspective, this conceptual paper was partially aimed towards enhancing the reputation of the QPS in delivering innovative crime prevention programs that supports the strategic direction of the service. Project Booyah was conceived with an emphasis on police not only being role models and mentors however acknowledging the 'human side' of police officers – enhancing approachability and respect. The mentoring and ongoing support provided by police and youth workers was identified as a key to the program longevity, as it offers young people an opportunity to build positive relationships. Through a well implemented performance framework which develops, manages and empower its staff, delivers quality services, problem solves, makes effective decisions and encourages an organic approach, the program could prove to break down a historic bureaucratic silo mentality.

This paper has highlighted the areas where future research could be conducted to further identify aspects of the program that are effective and to provide further evidence to the current literature on police mentoring. There are many areas that could be investigated further, however some ideas for future research include a comparison group; focus on particular aspects of mentoring to determine the most positive attributes of mentors; examine police mentoring further; examine the individualised components of Project Booyah, for example RESPECT, adventure-based learning, and RoP; examine the areas that may require further training or attention; further analysis into the recruitment, selection and assessment of applicants to ensure the most suitable young people are being selected; and further investigation into the outcomes for Indigenous youth. Indigenous youth are over-

represented in crime, substance abuse, unemployment, involved in the child safety system and experience negative health conditions (AIHW, 2011). When examining the findings of the GCI evaluation (Bartlett et al., 2020) the greatest gains were shown by indigenous females, however both indigenous and non-indigenous youth showed changes mostly in the anticipated direction. Indigenous youth are more likely to record gains and losses in the attributes measured over time. The results suggest the research Project Booyah conducted on indigenous youth, effective approaches and the adaptations required for programs working with indigenous youth are promising when examining the positive outcome indigenous youth have achieved by participating in Project Booyah. The case example of Rachel provides great insight into the impact Project Booyah has on an Indigenous female youth at risk and furthermore a representation of countless others that have graduated the program. Further examination of the impact Project Booyah has on Indigenous youth would be beneficial, however is beyond the scope of this paper.

Further research on police mentoring could focus on the reciprocal benefits that the police service receives from the interactions with youth who are at risk. An anecdotal observation of the interaction of police mentors with youth who are at risk is the reciprocal relationship improvements from the policing perspective. Police mentors report greater empathy and appreciation behind the decision making of youth who are at risk due to childhood traumas and risk factors, which has culminated in greater tolerance and proactivity to ensure their policing colleagues are aware of benefits of addressing these factors when intercepting and considering appropriate enforcement responses. Future research could also focus on the enhancement of the relationship gains, if any, of police officers being involved as mentors of youth who are at risk. Another area of research could explore the extent and in what ways does Project Booyah create and leverage public/private partnerships to assist youth who are at risk. This research could investigate what processes within Project Booyah are identified as best practice to create strong public/private partnerships and how do strong public/private partnerships through Project Booyah reduce offending by youth who are at risk. A final aspect of future research could be the benefits of introducing Project Booyah, or potentially components of Project Booyah, such as RESPECT, to other districts in other parts of our communities, e.g. schools.

The two conceptual models presented in this thesis paper capture the unique way in the manner Project Booyah approach intervention for youth who are at risk. Mentoring improves young people's behaviour, and perhaps police mentoring offers a modern approach that can focus on the negative attitude towards criminal activity and police. As presented throughout the paper and contained in the original conceptual model, there are many factors which have a negative impact on our youth. Through the key components proposed in the conceptual models, risk factors are being identified and managed through program components, which are exhibiting a positive result in program outcomes. It appears youth, families, communities and the wider society are benefiting from police mentoring.

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