

STRENGTH-BASED PROGRAMMING FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS

by

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ABSTRACT

Strength-based assessment and intervention directs professionals to identify and build on the strengths and competencies of youth and their families. Although this strength-based approach has been used and evaluated within the educational system, there is little research to date on the impact of strength-based planning within the youth criminal justice system. An agency providing detention, custody, and community support services to young offenders in Ontario has recently adopted a strength-based approach to programming for youth within their organization. This implementation offered a unique opportunity to study the impact of strength-based programming on juvenile offenders. The current study examined whether youths' strengths and difficulties change over the course of their incarceration and the variables hypothesized to be associated with this change. These variables include self-efficacy for prosocial behaviours, aggression, and the inhibition of aggression; motivation for change; and attachment to a significant staff worker. Parental attachment status was also examined to assess its relationship to strength-based interventions.

Overall, higher levels of strength were associated with lower levels of difficulty. Predictors generally associated with higher levels of strength included lower self-efficacy for aggression, higher self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression, fewer feelings of alienation from ones worker and decreased motivation for change. Higher levels of difficulty were significantly and particularly correlated with higher self-efficacy for aggression, lower self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression and for prosocial behaviour, and greater motivation for change. Maternal attachment was also related to strength and difficulty levels. Youth in the current sample did not significantly change in their levels of strength and levels of difficulty over a two-

month period, however, open custody youth decreased in their level of difficulty whereas secure custody youth increased. Youth who experienced an increase in their level of strength reported fewer feelings of alienation from their significant worker, had lower self-efficacy for aggression, and higher self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression. Self-efficacy for prosocial behaviours increased from Time 1 to Time 2, whereas attachment to a significant worker variables decreased. Limitations and directions for future research are discussed.

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Strength-based programming for juvenile offenders

INTRODUCTION

In the past 15 years, there has been an increased emphasis on the identification and use of strengths in mental health services for children, adolescents, and their families (Lyons, Uziel-Miller, Reyes, & Sokol, 2000). This has been partially in response to the concerns raised by mental health, social service, and educational initiatives around the unconditional acceptance of the deficit-based approach to assessment (Epstein, Dakan, Oswald, and Yoe, 2001). Treatment plans that are based on youths' deficits, problems or pathologies direct the professionals' attention to only one side of the individual. Kral (1989, as cited in Epstein, Rudolph, & Epstein, 2000) stated that "If we ask people to look for deficits, they will usually find them, and their view of the situation will be colored by this. If we ask people to look for success, they will usually find it, and their view of the situation will be colored by this" (p.32). Instead of focusing on the youths' deficits, problems and pathologies, strength-based assessment directs professionals to identify and build on the behavioural and emotional strengths and competencies that are already present in youths and their families. A behavioural strength may be, for example, that the youth considers the consequences of his/her own behaviour. Emotional strengths may include being self-confident or enthusiastic about life (Epstein, 2000). When the concentration is primarily on the adolescents' problem areas, negative feelings the youths have about themselves may be reinforced. However, the assessment of adolescents' strengths may help create a sense of personal accomplishment, contribute to the youths' satisfying relationships with others, enhance their ability to deal with adversity and stress, and promote their personal, social, and academic development (Epstein & Sharma, 1998).

The introduction to this thesis will primarily discuss the literature on strength-based assessment and how strengths are defined in relation to risks. Next, the role of self-efficacy, motivation for change, and attachment relationships will be examined in relation to strength-based programming for incarcerated youth. Finally, the strength-based programming used by W.W. Creighton Youth Services will be described in detail.

According to Epstein et al. (2000), strength-based assessment is based on a set of core beliefs: (a) All children have strengths; (b) A child's motivation is enhanced when the adults in his/her life point out his/her strengths; (c) A child's failure to acquire a skill does not mean a deficit, but that the child has not been given the experiences and instruction to master the specific skill. Although Epstein et al. (2000) describes these core beliefs in relation to children, these concepts are not restricted to children, but may apply to adolescents as well.

The assessment of strengths may be conducted formally or informally. Informal strength-based assessment is generally employed by family service coordinators or direct service providers, particularly in planning wraparound services for youths and their families (VanDenBerg & Grealish, 1996). The wraparound process will be described in detail later. The family service coordinator identifies the strengths and resources possessed by the youths and their families from various sources. Informal discussion with the youths, families, professionals familiar with the youths or families, and other informal supports such as relatives and friends help gain such information. The assessment also helps to articulate the families' hopes and goals for the future and the steps required in order to achieve their goals. The specific questions and assessment format, for example, will vary from family to family because there is no one specific model for informal strength-based assessment (Epstein et al., 2001).

Although informal strength-based assessments provide the service providers with valuable information about the strengths and resources of children, adolescents, and their families, they have not yet received the same psychometric scrutiny as deficit-based assessment (Epstein et al., 2001). For strength-based assessment to have meaningful clinical and research value, questions around its implementation, reliability and validity must be addressed. Informal strength-based assessment is limited; therefore, standardized, norm-referenced strength-based instruments have been developed and published to evaluate strengths in a more formal manner (Epstein et al., 2001). Two of these instruments will be described in detail in the Methods section since they will be used in the current study.

Strength-based assessment may be used to identify the adolescent's "strengths, competencies, and resources to help direct interventions in a more positive direction" (Epstein, 2000). To date, it has been employed largely with youths within the educational system to identify their emotional and behavioural strengths and to identify those youth who are more at risk of experiencing problems because of less developed strengths. In addition, strength-based assessment is used to help develop goals for individualized education programs (IEP) or treatment and to assess treatment outcome (Epstein et al., 2000).

Although there is a general agreement in the literature that the focus be redirected from youths' problems and deficits to their strengths and competencies, there is inconsistency in how "strengths" are defined. Strengths are generally defined as the activities and sports in which one excels, hobbies one prefers, and other positive aspects of one's life (Epstein, 2000). However, the term "strength" is often used interchangeably with other terms such as "protective factor"

and “competency”. The following section will discuss some of this literature in an attempt to define and clarify strength-based planning.

Strengths and Protective Factors in Relation to Risk Factors

The terms “strengths” and “protective factors” are often used together. Protective factors are broadly defined as those factors that buffer an individual in the face of risk. Protective factors may include, for example, positive peer relations, good school achievement, secure parental attachment relationships, and effective use of leisure time. Risk factors are generally defined as the characteristics or variables which make an individual more likely than someone in the general population to develop a disorder (Pollard, Hawkins, & Arthur, 1999). For juvenile offenders, these factors may also refer to the “personal attributes and circumstances that are assessable prior to service and are predictive of future criminal behaviour” (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990). Risk factors may include poor relationships between the parent (s) and the youth or parental problems such as mental health, criminal history, or substance use.

Hoge, Andrews, and Leschied (1996) investigated the relationship between a set of potential risk and protective factors and two outcome measures, one based on re-offending rates and the second based on a rating of the young offender’s compliance with the terms of their disposition. The three risk factors focussed on family functioning and included family relationship problems (e.g., poor family communication), family structuring problems (e.g., low supervision), and parental problems (e.g., criminal history of mother or father). Protective variables under investigation included positive peer relations, good school achievement, effective use of leisure time, and positive response to authority. Significant correlations were found between two of the risk factors and both outcome measures. Higher levels of problems in

family relationships and family structuring were related to higher levels of re-offending and lower compliance ratings. Furthermore, the presence of each of the four potential protective variables was associated with lower levels of re-offending and more positive adjustment. There was no overall evidence of an interaction between risk and protective factors, that is, the effects found for protective factors were positive at both high and low levels of risk.

Based on these results, Hoge et al. (1996) suggested that assessments of juvenile offenders should “focus not only on the presence of risk factors, but should also consider potential areas of strength” (Hoge et al., 1996, p.423). Additionally, interventions for young offenders should give “due consideration to the enhancement of factors which will help the young person deal with negative forces, particularly where those negative forces are not themselves very amenable to change” (Hoge et al., 1996). Similarly, in their investigation of factors that predict recidivism among juvenile delinquents, Myner, Santman, Cappelletty, and Perlmutter (1998, p. 78) suggested that future research should identify “factors that prevent recidivism”, although did not identify what factors should be investigated.

The identification of the strengths, competencies, and resources of a youths and their families may be critical in the development of interventions for delinquent youth. Strength-based assessment and interventions may help reduce the chance of recidivism, control antisocial behaviours, and aid in effective reintegration into the community post-release. It may be possible to create interventions that help develop areas of strength in youth without such resources in attempts to reduce recidivism.

A youth’s protective factors are similar to their strengths. For example, good school achievement may be seen as a protective factor. An individual may also have strengths in school

functioning, the youth's competence on school and classroom tasks (Epstein, 1998). This strength may be demonstrated by the youth's regular school attendance, attention in class, or the demonstration of competence in math skills (Epstein, 1998).

In summary, the strength-based approach to assessment and programming is relatively new. Although some authors have theorized about the variables that may decrease a youth's chance of recidivism, few of these variables have been empirically examined. Literature on the evaluation of strength-based programming is limited. There is support for the effectiveness of strength-based interventions; however, the mechanisms responsible for the change have yet to be examined. Therefore, the current study sought to determine (a) whether a set of theoretical variables are related to changes in a youth's overall levels of strength and difficulty, and (b) whether these variables change significantly over a 2-month period of incarceration.

Weise, Blehar, Maser, and Akiskal (1996) posit that protective factors may, at some level, be simply the reverse of risk factors. For example, a youth's self-efficacy for aggression, the motivation the youth has to change, and insecure attachment relationships in the youth's life may place the youth at greater risk for delinquent behaviours. However, these same dynamic variables may become strengths or protective factors when the focus of interventions are strength-based. By increasing a youth's overall level of strength and protective factors, theoretically, the youth's level of risk and problem behaviours should decrease.

According to Andrews, et al. (1990), effective rehabilitation of offenders requires the appropriate classification of their risks and needs. This classification may be performed with the use of a risk/need instrument such as the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (Hoge & Andrews, 1996), which will be described in detail later. Criminogenic needs are

defined as dynamic risk factors. Changes in these attributes of offenders and their circumstances are associated with changes in the chances of recidivism. According to Andrews et al., services that target the reduction of criminogenic need (s) will be most effective when reducing the chances of recidivism is the goal. Strength and competency-based interventions focus on the strengths, competencies, and resources of the individual rather than on their risk factors and deficits. However, strength-based interventions do focus indirectly on the individual's needs and risks through identifying and building on those factors that may prevent recidivism. Enhancing the youths' strengths may aid in dealing with negative forces. The following sections will review the literature on self-efficacy, readiness for change, and attachment and discuss how these variables may be related to a youth's risk for delinquent behaviours and his/her level of strengths.

Self-efficacy, Motivation for Change, and Attachment

Self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1986) as the belief that one's behaviour will produce desired outcomes. One's behaviour choices are then formed by these expectations based on people's judgements of their abilities. Self-efficacy is, therefore, related to decision making and problem behaviours. Ludwig and Pittman (1999) reason that adolescents who perceive themselves as likely to succeed at prosocial behaviours will be less likely to be involved in anti-social behaviours and be more likely to make decisions that result in positive outcomes. Conversely, youth who engage in more anti-social, problematic behaviours may do so, in part, because they feel they will be successful in performing behaviours that are socially defined as problematic and seek consequences they believe to be associated with these actions. When a youth's expectations regarding the consequences of these behaviours are met, they may continue

to engage in this manner. Ludwig and Pittman (1999) examined the relationship between prosocial values and self-efficacy as predictors for three problem behaviours: delinquency, risky sex, and drug use in a sample of 2,146 adolescents aged 12 to 19 years. Results indicated that adolescents with strong prosocial values and self-efficacy reported fewer problem behaviours.

Strength-based programming has been linked to self-efficacy. Cox (2002) conducted a strength-based empowerment training with custodial grandparents to enable these individuals to develop self-efficacy and problem-solving skills with their grandchildren. The results of this qualitative study indicated that the use of empowerment training helped grandparents to build on existing strengths to not only deal with their own immediate problems and advocate for themselves, but also to become peer educators for other custodial grandparents. Through increasing their self-efficacy for parenting their grandchildren, these grandparents began to take control of their lives and become important role models both in their families and in their community.

O'Hara Pepi (1997), discusses a theoretical framework where a strength and competency-based support system offers young female offenders a safety net of people and communities working together with the youths to help them achieve their goals. In this strength-based approach to care, youths learn how to access the network of services within their support system and become empowered to pro-actively identify and utilize intervention strategies. The treatment goal then, becomes more than controlling the maladaptive behaviour, but assists the offender in recognizing her privileges and responsibilities in the greater society (O'Hara Pepi, 1997). Strength-based programming focusses on the competencies and strengths of the youth instead of on their deficits. A goal of this programming would be for the youth to change their thoughts

about themselves and see themselves as feeling capable of performing more socially competent behaviours. Offenders for whom the programming is effective may feel themselves more capable of performing socially appropriate, non-aggressive behaviours.

One of the core beliefs of strength-based assessment is that youths' motivation is enhanced when the adults in their lives point out their strengths. When significant individuals focus on youths' positive aspects and strengths rather than on their deficits, the youths' motivation may be enhanced, in part, by how others respond to them (Epstein et al., 2000). For delinquent adolescents, having adults point out their personal strengths may be the motivation that they need to change antisocial behaviours to more socially appropriate ones.

Prochaska, Norcross, and Diclemente (1994) describe a framework which conceptualizes readiness for change in treatment-resistant individuals. This theoretical model of change includes six stages of change: Precontemplation (deny having a problem and have not intention of changing problem behaviours), Contemplation (thinking about changing behaviours), Preparation (having the intention to change soon), Action (in the process of changing), Maintenance (working to prevent relapse), and Termination (problem no longer presents any temptation or threat).

Individuals in the Precontemplation stage generally deny having a problem and have no intention of changing their behaviours. Although those around them see their problem clearly, the precontemplator typically cannot. These individuals tend to place responsibility for their problems on factors which they feel are out of their control such as genetic makeup, addiction, family, or society (Prochaska et al., 1994). Typical characteristics of those in the Contemplation stage of change include a lack of understanding of the nature of their problem, its causes and

possible solutions. These individuals typically know where they need to go and how to get there, but are not yet ready to go (Prochaska, et al.). The Action stage is where individuals most overtly attempt to modify their behaviour. Changes in this stage are more evident to others than changes in any of the previous stages and, therefore, may bring the greatest recognition. However, there is a danger in equating action with change— support for following stages may be scarce and the individual risks relapse. Those in the Maintenance stage of change struggle to prevent relapse and must work to keep the gains they have attained in the previous stages (Prochaska et al.). The Preparation and Termination stages were not originally considered to be distinct stages (Prochaska et al.) and are, therefore, not included in the questionnaire used in the current study.

Strength-based programming may help individuals move from one stage to another. Competency-based programming includes the formation of short-term goals and long-range strategic planning (O'Hara Pepi, 1997). Through strength-based programming, delinquent youths may finally believe their goals to be attainable. Youths may, for example, come to realize that their anti-social behaviours are not helping them to achieve their life goals and dreams. They may move from the Precontemplation stage to the Contemplation stage— from denying their problems, to thinking about their problems and how to change their behaviours get where they want to go.

Finally, a youth's attachment relationships may help determine whether or not strength based planning is effective for particular youth. Attachment is defined as "a way of conceptualizing the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others and of explaining the many forms of emotional distress and personality disturbance,

including anxiety, anger, depression, and emotional detachment, to which unwilling separation and loss give rise” (Bowlby, 1978, p. 5).

Attachment relationships have been linked to the development of antisocial behaviour. Van IJzendoorn (1997) explored the possible relationship between children’s attachment relationships, moral development and aggressive, anti-social and criminal behaviour. Van IJzendoorn (1997) presented socio-emotional models of the developmental antecedents for both mild and serious antisocial behaviour and suggested that early attachment relationships may affect later antisocial behaviour when attachment relationships remain stable across time.

In his model that outlines the developmental antecedents for mild antisocial behaviour, van IJzendoorn (1997) asserts that hostile and rejecting parenting may lead to the development of insecure-avoidant attachment styles in children; in attempts to avoid rejection by their parents, the children may exhibit negative emotions. This may lead to a lack of trust in themselves and in others. Having learned to monitor attachment figures closely, the youths become absorbed in unfulfilling attachment relationships and do not learn how to trust others or how to show empathy. Hostile or rejecting parents often model aggression instead of altruism through insensitive behaviours. Children do not, therefore, learn how to regulate their own feelings of anger and frustration. A lack of emotional regulation, trust and empathetic concern may lead to lower moral reasoning and, in turn, to mild antisocial behaviour.

In van IJzendoorn's (1997) model for severe antisocial behaviour, insecure attachment is seen as a risk factor for the development of serious antisocial behaviour. Disorganized attachment, stemming from abuse or loss of attachment figures, may lead to a profound lack of confidence in self and in others. In the absence of a stable, secure attachment relationship, the

combination of a lack of trust in self and in others and a lack of moral internalization may lead to serious antisocial and criminal behaviour.

In support of van IJzendoorn's model of severe antisocial behaviour, research suggests that the disorganized pattern of attachment is a risk factor for later aggressive behaviour. Lyons-Ruth, Alpern, and Repacholi (1993) examined the relationship between disorganization in infancy and aggression in preschool and found that an attachment relationship characterized as disorganized in infancy was the strongest predictor of aggressive behaviour toward peers in pre-school: 71% of aggressive preschoolers were classified as disorganized in infancy. Shaw, Owens, Vondra, Keenan and Windslow (1996) examined risk factors from infancy that were associated with the development of disruptive behaviour in pre-school. They found that a disorganized attachment classification at 12 months was consistently associated with disruptive behaviour at age five years.

Relatively little research has been done specifically with young offenders in the area of attachment. However, attachment has been linked to delinquency. Hirschi (1969 as cited in Anderson, Holmes, & Ostresh, 1999) theorized that youth with greater parental attachment relationships are less likely to become delinquent. When youth are securely attached to their parents, the internalization of societal norms is facilitated and youth are able to more easily develop respect for peers and authority figures. Adolescents who have strong parental attachment relationships may care about their parents' responses and, therefore, may consider their parents' reactions before engaging in a delinquent act. In an examination of attachment relationships and delinquency as a function of gender, Anderson et al. (1999) found that parental attachment reduced the severity of delinquency for males, but attachment to school and peers

reduced the severity of delinquency for females. It appears that if males, in particular, have a positive attachment relationship with their parents, they are less likely to seek acceptance from other sources such as a deviant peer group. Parental attachment has also been found to predict adolescents' self-reported strengths. Williams and McGee (1991) found that in a sample of 960 15-year old youth, strengths were predicted by parental attachment for both males and females.

In a preliminary study examining the individual differences in the socio-emotional status of incarcerated male adolescents, Cartwright et al. (2000) found that total maternal attachment was associated with the young offenders' self-reported anger experiences. Those who reported feeling more attached to their mothers reported brooding less about their anger. Further, those who reported more feelings of alienation towards their fathers also reported lower empathy.

Although there is evidence to suggest that adolescents with insecure parental relationships may develop anti-social behaviours, this is not necessarily the case. Positive attachment relationships with caregivers other than parents (e.g., coaches, teachers) may offset negative parental attachment relationships. Experiences with such individuals may help children and adolescents who feel unloved and worthless to develop self-confidence and trust others enough to risk showing affection again. Exposure to positive life events may help insecurely attached individuals develop secure attachments later in life (Marshall, 1993). The introduction of positive influences into the lives of youths who are at risk for antisocial behaviour may help claim boys before they are lost and help reclaim boys who are already incarcerated for committing violent crimes (Garbarino, 1999).

The association between attachment representations and relationships with mentors was examined for institutionalized behaviourally disturbed and delinquent adolescents (Schuengel,

van IJzendoorn, Jansma, Metze, & Venmans, 1998). None of the adolescents were classified as having a secure attachment representation on the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan & Main, 1986 as cited in Schuengel et al., 1998). An important finding was that the more coherent the discussion of previous attachment experiences during the administration of the AAI, the more the adolescents reported that they relied on their mentors for support. This is an important implication for treatment in correctional facilities and corresponds well with strength-based planning. Staff, who are encouraged to focus more on youths' strengths instead of their deficits, may become a secure base for certain types of offenders. The reinforcement of an offender's insecure internal working model for relationships through uncaring or unsupportive attitudes may be unhelpful in terms of treatment.

Attachment relationships in the current study were examined in two ways. Parental attachment status was examined to assess its relationship to strength-based planning as there is evidence to support both the influence of family on delinquency and the impact of parental attachment on self-reported strengths in adolescents from the general population. For example, youths who do not trust their parents, do not communicate with them and feel alienated by them may have difficulty trusting and communicating with other adults who enter their lives, such as institutional workers and probation officers. Attachment to a significant institutional worker was similarly measured. In strength-based programming, staff focus primarily on youths' strengths and competencies. Through this process, youths may come to view their workers as a secure base.

It is also important to note that whether a youth is in an open or a secure facility may also influence the degree of change in strengths and difficulties over a 2-month period of

incarceration. Strength-based programming may be more flexible for youths in open custody than for those in secure. Youths with open custody dispositions are much more involved in the community and may more easily build on their strengths and competencies. For example, youths who enjoy caring for animals may benefit from volunteering at the local humane society. Youths with developed wood working skills may find a sense of purpose in helping to build affordable housing for individuals with a limited income. These differences may influence the effectiveness of strength-based programming with youth in secure and open custody facilities.

Evaluation of Strength-Based Approaches

There is emerging evidence regarding the connection between strengths and difficulties, and the impact of strength-based interventions. Lyons, Uziel-Miller, Reyes, and Sokol (2000) assessed the relationship between strengths and clinical and functional characteristics for youth ranging in age from 5 to 19 years old (mean = 13.7 years) at sixteen residential sites. Clinical and functional characteristics were assessed using the Childhood Severity of Psychiatric Illness (CSPI, Lyons, 1998, as cited in Lyons et al., 2000). The CSPI included assessments of symptoms, risk behaviours, functioning, comorbid mental health conditions, and caregiver capacity.

Strengths were measured using the Child and Adolescent Strengths Assessment (CASA, Lyons, Kisiel, & West, 1997 as cited in Lyons et al., 2000), a 30-item inventory completed by the youth's house parents, primary therapist or caseworker. Domains measured on the CASA include Family (e.g., "has a strong positive relation with at least one parent"), School/Vocational (e.g., "excels in at least one subject"), Peer (e.g., "has close friends"), Psychological (e.g., "has a sense of humor"), Moral/Spiritual (e.g., "has developed values/morals"), and Extracurricular

(e.g., “has artistic/creative talent). Raters are asked to consider the identified strengths in each of the six domains and choose from among three responses that indicate the presence or absence of the strength and its potential for development. The most common strength found in this study was having a sense of humour, which was evident in over one third of the children and adolescents. The least common strengths involved participation in church and community groups. Moreover, results indicated that the youths’ total strength score on the CASA was negatively correlated with all the CSPI scores. That is, higher levels of strength were associated with lower symptoms, risks and functional impairment. Additionally, when predicting improvement from admission to current status, results indicated those cases with higher levels of strength had reduced level of risk when admission risk levels were controlled.

Although Lyons et al. (2000) did not evaluate a strength-based program per se, their results support the need for greater emphasis on the assessment of strengths in clinical practice. According to Lyons et al. (2000), the understanding of a youth’s strengths and competencies has implications for both their functioning and the likelihood of high-risk behaviours. They suggest that professionals may help build a youth’s strengths. For example, for a youth who struggles with depression, a professional may help the youth develop strengths such as positive coping skills and a sense of humour to help combat the depressive symptoms.

Epstein et al. (2001) described a study where strength-based data was used to evaluate children’s mental health programs. The Central Nebraska Initiative for Families and Youth is a centre that provides wraparound services for youth with serious emotional challenges and their families. Descriptive information (previous placements, presenting problems) clinical and functional outcomes (Child Behaviour Checklist, CBCL, Achenbach, 1991a; Youth Self Report,

Achenbach, 1991b, Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale, CAFAS, Hodges, 1994), child and family strengths (BERS, Epstein & Sharma, 1998), and living situations was collected at intake and at six month intervals for all families. This information was used to write the initial plan of care for the child-family team as well as monitor clinical and functional outcomes. Data from 80 children and families collected at intake and 6 months was analysed. Over this 6-month period, the overall BERS strength quotient improved, on average, from 99.4 to 111.5. Additionally, the CAFAS scores that measured functional impairments decreased significantly from 99.9 to 58.4 over the six months.

Strength-Based Programming for Young Offenders

Approximately 3 years ago, William W. Creighton Youth Services, an agency mandated by the Child and Family Services Act (Ontario) to provide detention, custody, and community support services to young offenders in the Thunder Bay, Ontario region, adopted an informal strength-based approach to programming for juvenile offenders within their organization. The strength-based programming used with Creighton youth is related to Wraparound Thunder Bay, an organization that provides strength-based programming for high risk kids and implements support networking plans using the strengths of the families and youths. As the W.W. Creighton Youth Services programming has wraparound origins, it may be helpful to briefly discuss the elements of the wraparound process.

The wraparound has been defined as “a specific set of policies, practices and steps which are used to develop individualized services and supports of children and families who are experiencing ongoing emotional problems” (VanDenBerg & Grealish, 1996, p.8). This process is generally employed with individuals whose needs are complex and, if not met, may have

dramatic negative effects on the family's quality of life. As with strength-based assessment, the wraparound process is based on a set of core elements: (a) wraparound efforts must be based in the community; (b) services and supports must be individualized to meet the needs of the children and families; (c) must be culturally competent and build on the unique values, strengths, and social and racial make-up of children and families; (d) parents must be included in every level of development of the process; (e) agencies must have access to flexible, non-categorized funding; (f) must be implemented on an inter-agency basis and be owned by the larger community; (g) services must be unconditional in that if the needs of the child and family change, the services must be changed; (h) outcomes must be measured.

Within W.W. Creighton Youth Services, the wraparound strength-based programming is implemented in the following manner. Each youth in custody is assigned two individual workers while in custody who are integral in the planning of services for the particular youths in their caseload. There are six steps in informal strength-based planning at W.W. Creighton Youth Services that are outlined below:

1. Hear the youths' histories and get to know them as a people.
 - Who is their family?
 - Describe their community.
 - What is their typical day/week like?

2. Discover the youths' strengths and support networks.
 - What are they good at?
 - What do they like to do?

- How do they spend their free time?

- Who has been helpful in the past?

-Who would they and have they turned to in their community during a crisis?

3. Identify the areas in which youths require help to have a better life (e.g., family, behavioural, psychological, spiritual, cultural, etc.)

-Magic wand questions: If the youths could wave a magic wand, where would they currently be? Where do they want to be in 5 or 10 years? How may they use their strengths to achieve their hopes and dreams? What kinds of barriers exist for them?

4. Clearly identify which areas are a priority and define the top needs in each area.

-Which three needs, if met, would most improve their lives?

5. Develop strategies and supports to meet the needs in each area.

-What strategies and supports are available over time in their community?

-What is the back-up strategy for each need?

6. Determine how the youths will measure up if the needs are met and their lives are improving .

-Describe what life will be like for them when each need is met.

-How will they know that their needs are being met and that they are improving?

A Plan of Care (POC) is conducted for each youth every 30 days, facilitated by the youth's social worker assigned by CST, or primary case worker if no social worker has been assigned. Within W.W. Creighton Youth Services, a social worker is generally only assigned to youth with sentences greater than 30 days. The youth's probation officer, primary case worker, social worker (if applicable), and the youth each attend and contribute to the POC. Significant others in youth's life (e.g., pastor, elder, etc.) and other professionals from the community (e.g., psychologist, teacher) may also be asked to contribute. Family members are strongly encouraged to attend. Family involvement, especially while the youth is in custody is viewed as imperative as the family plays an integral role in the youth's transition from custody to the community. The POC focusses on the strengths of the family and the youth and attempts to develop plan for the family that moves beyond custody. The youth's social worker as well as the youth's case manager (probation officer) work with the families and youth post-release to successfully reintegrate the child into the community, something which is especially important for youth at high-risk to reoffend.

Programming for Creighton youth in custody is conducted both in groups and individually and attempts to incorporate youths' individual strengths. For example, during cognitive group programming, youths may be asked to identify their individual goals, dreams and strengths and then think about how their strengths will help them achieve what they want in life. Group programs include cognitive programming and anger management. Additionally, individual counselling is done by social workers and informally by the youth's case workers. Youths with substance abuse issues are referred to a treatment program in a local clinic and those with sex-related crimes are referred to the Adolescent Sex Offender Program (ASOP)

offered in the community with involvement from several different agencies.

The Current Study

The program implemented by Creighton Youth Services provided a unique opportunity to examine whether youths' strengths and difficulties change over the course of their incarceration when the focus is on their strengths rather than their deficits and pathologies. Additionally, several variables hypothesized to contribute to the change were studied within this population. These variables included their level of risk/need, whether they are secure or open custody, self-efficacy for prosocial and anti-social behaviours, their motivation for change, and their attachment relationships to parental figures and to significant staff workers. The current study sought to determine the following:

Question 1: Is there a significant change in level of strength and level of difficulty during incarceration?

Hypothesis 1: Hoge et al. (1996) investigated the relationship between a set of potential risk and protective factors and rates of re-offense and found no overall evidence of an interaction between risk and protective factors, that is, the effects found for protective factors were positive at both high and low levels of risk. Consequently, we hypothesize that changes in levels of strength and difficulty will not be significantly different for youth classified as being high risk on the YLS/CMI compared to those at moderate or low risk. Additionally, it is hypothesized that youth in open custody will experience greater change than those in secure custody. Youths in open custody are given more opportunities in the community

and may more easily build on their strengths and competencies. Finally, given the results of Lyons et al. (2000) and similar studies, it is hypothesized that there will be a negative correlations between youths' levels of strength and levels of difficulty.

Question 2: Are self-efficacy, readiness for change, and attachment relationship to a significant staff worker associated with change in strength and difficulty levels? Do these variables change over a two-month period of incarceration when a strength-based intervention is employed?

Hypothesis 2: We hypothesize that those youth with higher self-efficacy for prosocial behaviour and for the inhibition of aggression, lower self-efficacy for aggression, who show more motivation for change and have a higher total attachment to their significant worker will experience greater change in strength and difficulty levels. In addition, it is hypothesized that youth will have greater self-efficacy for prosocial behaviour and for the inhibition of aggression, decreased self-efficacy for aggression, greater total attachment to their significant worker, and increase in their readiness for change from Time 1 to Time 2.

Question 3: Is parental attachment related to change in strength and difficulty levels over the course of incarceration?

Hypothesis 3: It is hypothesized that youth with greater total parental attachment, fewer feelings of parental alienation, more communication and greater trust with their parents will report increased strengths and fewer antisocial

behaviours.

METHOD

Participants

Participants in the current study included 22 young offenders (16 male, 6 female) between the ages of 12 and 17 years of age (mean = 15.0 years) in the care of W.W. Creighton Youth Services. Of the 22 participants, 16 had at least one Native parent. There are several service locations under the umbrella of W. W. Creighton Youth Services, one of which is the McKittrick Centre. This is an eight-bed open custody facility housing largely moderate risk youth. Jack's Place is a seven-bed facility for moderate to low risk youth. At this facility, the youth have the most involvement in the community and are given the most freedom. The secure detention and custody facility in Thunder Bay is the J. J. Kelso Centre, an eighteen-bed institution. Ten youth from the secure facility and 12 from the open facilities participated in the current study. Twenty-two youth completed the Time 1 questionnaire packages, 19 of who also completed Time 2 packages. One youth declined to participate in the second portion of the study, the second youth was transferred to another facility outside of Creighton Youth Services, and the third youth was released from custody early. These youth were all female, one from secure custody, and two from open custody.

Materials

Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI, Hoge & Andrews, 1996)

Instruments such as the Ministry Risk/Need Assessment Form (MRNAF, Hoge, Andrews, & Leschied, 1994), also known as the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI, Hoge & Andrews, 1996) have been used to assess risk/need levels of

young offenders between the ages of 12 and 15 years in the province of Ontario since 1994.

This instrument is completed by the probation officer who is assigned to the youth.

For the current study, two of the six sections of the YLS/CMI (Appendix A) were employed. The first section assesses the youth's risks and needs and consists of eight sub-sections: prior and current offenses/dispositions (5 items), family circumstances/parenting (6 items), education/employment (7 items), peer relations (4 items), substance abuse (5 items), leisure/recreation (3 items), personality/behaviour (7 items), and attitudes/orientation (5 items). Each item is rated by a trained informant as either 1 or 0 where 1 indicates that the item definitely applies to the youth and 0 indicates that the item may or does not apply to the youth. The second part of the inventory provides an overall summary by summing the unweighted sub-scores from each sub-section. Items are totalled to produce a total risk/need score ranging from 0 to 42. Offenders may be classified into one of four risk groups. Low risk scores range from 0 to 8, moderate risk scores from 9 to 22, high risk scores from 23 to 34, and very high risk scores are 35 and above.

The MRNAF has been shown to predict recidivism in young offenders. Jung and Rawana (1999) used the MRNAF to discriminate between recidivists and non-recidivists in a sample of 263 young offenders in Northwestern Ontario. Results showed that the total risk/need score and each of the eight risk/need factors discriminated between recidivists and non-recidivists. Additionally, results supported the MRNAF as a robust risk/need instrument to ethnicity and gender, useful for predicting recidivism of both male and female and Native and non-Native youth.

Similarly, Ilacqua, Coulson, Lombardo, and Nutbrown (1999) examined the predictive

validity of the YLS/CMI for recidivism of 164 male and female young offenders in the province of Ontario. Findings showed that the YLS/CMI differentiated between higher risk and lower risk offenders. As scores on the inventory increased, the percentage of recidivism also increased for both male and female offenders. Consistent with Jung and Rawana (1999), Ilacqua et al. (1999) found that gender did not influence the one-year rate of recidivism.

The Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS, Epstein & Sharma, 1998)

The BERS (Appendix A) is a 52-item strength-based instrument which assesses areas of strength for individuals aged 5-0 to 18-11 years across five different domains. The first of these domains is interpersonal strength (14 items), a child/adolescent's ability to interact with others in social situations (e.g., respects the rights of others). Family involvement (10 items), the second domain, assesses a child/adolescent's relationship and /or commitment to his/her family (e.g., complies with rules at home). Thirdly, intrapersonal strength (11 items) measures how a child/adolescent perceives his/her own level of functioning (e.g., takes pride in accomplishments). School functioning (9 items) taps into a child/adolescent's areas of school-related performance and competence (e.g., attends school regularly). Finally, affective strength (7 items) measures a child/adolescent's ability to give and receive affection (e.g., accepts the closeness and intimacy of others).

The BERS is completed by any adult familiar with the child/adolescent. Each of the 52 statements are rated on a 4-point scale (0= not at all like the child; 1 = not much like the child; 2 = like the child; 3 = very much like the child). Additionally, eight open-ended questions are included to collect supplementary information on the child/adolescent's competencies, interests, preferences, and resources.

The BERS appears to be a psychometrically strong assessment tool with moderate to high convergent validity (Harniss, Epstein, Ryser, & Pearson, 1999). Moderate to high correlations were found when the subscales of the BERS and overall strength quotient, were correlated with the five subscales and total score from the Walker-McConnell Scale of Social Competence and School Adjustment– Adolescent Version (Walker & McConnell, 1995, as cited in Harniss et al., 1999). When the BERS was correlated with Achenbach’s Teacher Report Form (Achenbach, 1991, as cited in Harniss et al.) correlations were moderate to high for the competence scales and externalizing behaviours, but not for internalizing behaviours. In terms of the internal consistency of the subscales and overall strength quotient of the BERS, coefficient alphas range from .79 to .99. The test-retest reliability of the sub-scales of the BERS range from .86 to .99. For the overall strength quotient, the test-retest reliability is reported as .99 (Epstein & Sharma, 1998). Interrater reliability for the sub-scales of the BERS range from .83 to .96. The interrater reliability for the strength quotient is reported as .98 (Epstein & Sharma, 1998).

Because the participants in the current study were in custody, it was not feasible to have parents or teachers complete the BERS for the youths, therefore, the youths’ primary care workers were asked to complete the BERS. Additionally, a modified, self-report version of the BERS was employed in the current study. This 82-item self-report measure was obtained from the primary author of the BERS, but has unknown psychometric properties.

The Strength Identification Inventory (SII) (Appendix A)

The SII is a measure that was developed by Rawana, Cryderman, and Thompson (2000) assesses the youths’ strengths in the context of a risk/needs inventory. The psychometric properties of this instrument have not yet been determined.

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ, Goodman, 1997)

The SDQ (Appendix A) is a 25-item screening device which divides positive and negative items into five domains of five items each. These domains include: conduct problems (e.g., “I get very angry and often lose my temper”, “I usually do as I am told”), hyperactivity (e.g., “I am restless. I cannot stay still for long”, “I think before I do things”), emotional symptoms (e.g., “I worry a lot”, “I am nervous in new situations”), peer problems (e.g., “I am usually on my own”, “I have one good friend or more”) and prosocial behaviours (e.g., “I usually share with others”, “I often volunteer to help others”). The questionnaire may be completed by teachers and/or parents with a separate version which may be completed as a self-report for youth aged 11 to 16 years. Each item is rated as “not true”, “somewhat true”, or “certainly true”. The SDQ is highly correlated with the Rutter questionnaires (as cited in Goodman, 1997) and has comparable predictive validity (Goodman, 1997). In addition, the parent-version of the SDQ is highly correlated with the Child Behaviour Checklist (Achenbach, 1991, as cited in Goodman & Scott, 1999) (Goodman & Scott, 1999). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the parent-completed SDQ scales range from .51 (peer-problems) to .76 (total score). Test-retest reliabilities for the parent-version of the SDQ were examined. When parents completed the SDQ on two occasions between three and four weeks apart, intraclass correlations ranged from .70 (emotional symptoms) to .85 (total score) (Goodman & Scott, 1999). Little psychometric data is given for the youth version specifically.

Self-efficacy Questionnaire (SEQ, Perry, Perry & Rasmussen, 1986)

This 46-item questionnaire asks participants to pretend that what is being described in the item is happening to them and they are to indicate how easy it would be for them to perform the

specified behaviour by circling either, “HARD!”, “hard”, “easy”, or “EASY!”. The current study employed only 3 of the SEQ’s scales. These scales include an 8-item scale measuring perceived self-efficacy for aggression (e.g., “On the school grounds, another teen bumps into you. Calling the teen bad names is _____ for you”), an 8-item scale which assesses perceived self-efficacy for inhibition of aggression (e.g., “In class, a teen is passing out party invitations and you are not invited. You really feel like yelling something mean at the teen, but you decide not to. Not yelling at the teen is _____ for you.”) and an 8-item scale measuring perceived efficacy for prosocial behaviour (e.g., “A new teen comes to school and doesn’t have any friends yet. Talking to the new teen so that the teen doesn’t feel lonely is _____ for you”). This instrument has adequate psychometric properties (Perry et al., 1986) and is included in Appendix A.

Stages of Change Questionnaire (SCQ, McConaughy, Prochaska, & Velicer, 1983)

The SCQ (Appendix A) is a 32-item self-report measures four of the theoretical stages of change (Precontemplation, Contemplation, Action, and Maintenance) in the transtheoretical model of change. Participants rate each of the statements on a 5-point likert scale where 1 equals strong disagreement and 5 indicates strong agreement. Although the psychometric properties of this tool are well established in the smoking literature (McConaughy et al., 1983), it has also been used to measure change in individuals with eating disorders (Geller, Cockell, & Drab, 2001). Additionally, Prochaska et al. (1994) found strong support for the generalizability of the transtheoretical model of change across a variety of populations and across 12 different problem behaviours which spanned various dimensions such as addictive (e.g., smoking) and non-addictive (e.g., sunscreen use), frequent (e.g., smoking) and infrequent (e.g., mammography

screening), legal (e.g., condom use) and illegal (e.g., cocaine use), public (e.g., physicians' preventative practices with smokers) and private (e.g., safer sex), and socially acceptable (e.g., exercise acquisition) and non-socially acceptable (e.g., adolescent delinquent behaviours). All the behaviours examined have important health or mental health consequences and require long-term attention. In addition, all of the behaviours are relevant to a large number of people and are representative of many major health behaviour challenges. Prochaska et al. (1994) found that there were clear commonalities across the 12 problem behaviours on the pattern of change across the stages.

Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA, Armsden & Greenberg, 1987)

The IPPA (Appendix A) assesses adolescents' perceptions of positive and negative emotional and cognitive dimensions of relationships with both parents and peers. The degree of mutual trust, quality of communication and extent of anger and alienation are assessed using this instrument. The current study used a modified version of the scale (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987) where participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire in relation to their mother/step-mother and to their father/step-father separately. Although the original version of the scale contains 28 parent and 25 peer items, the modified scale uses 25 items in each of the mother, father and peer sections. Youth were asked to rate each statement on a five-point likert-scale. Scores for the sub-scales of the IPPA mother and the IPPA father were obtained using the method outlined by Armsden and Greenberg (1987), where the raw scores of the items included in each of the sub-scales are added together. The alienation variable was re-coded before the total attachment score was calculated. The reliability and validity of the IPPA are supported empirically (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). The internal reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) are .87

for mother attachment and .89 for father attachment. In late adolescence, parental attachment scores are moderately to highly related to Family and Social Self scores from the Tennessee Self Concept Scale and to most of the sub-scales on the Family Environmental Scale (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987).

To measure the youth's attachment relationship with the worker who the youth felt knew him/her the best, the IPPA was modified by replacing "mother" or "father" with "worker".

Design

A traditional design for outcome evaluation is a pretest-posttest experimental design with randomly assigned treatment and control groups. However, in natural settings such as in the current study, the researcher is unable to assign participants to treatment or no-treatment conditions. Quasi-experimental designs such as the nonequivalent control group design (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1994) do not require randomization, but do require a group similar to the treatment group to serve as a comparison group. In the current study, however, it was not feasible to use a comparison group. All young offenders in custody with W.W. Creighton Youth Services are involved in the strength-based planning process at some level. Additionally, youth on probation in Thunder Bay are offered strength-based planning through the Community Support Team. The current study, therefore, employed a one-group pretest-posttest design. Although this particular design is frequently used in psychological research, it has very little internal validity (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1994). For example, this design does not control for many factors that may threaten the internal validity of the study such as maturation or history. Consequently, the results from this evaluation may be suggestive of program success, but without a comparison group, making stronger conclusions is inappropriate.

Procedure

Prior to the commencement of the study, the three custody facilities were visited by the primary researcher on both day and evening shifts. By spending time at the institutions and speaking with both youth and staff, the researcher was able to better understand the strength-based assessment and programming used within the agency. After ethical approval from both Lakehead University and Creighton Youth Services was obtained, the custody facilities were contacted regarding eligible youth who may be interested in participating in the current study. Eligibility was determined by two factors; how long youth had been in custody prior to the study, and the length of their sentence that remained after they first entered the study. As the current study included questionnaires to be completed by staff members about the youth, youth had to have been in custody for a minimum of 3 weeks or have previously been in custody in Thunder Bay. This helped ensure that staff would be able to answer questions about the youth knowledgeably. Secondly, only youth who were in custody for at 6 weeks from the time they entered the study were included to accommodate the repeated measures design.

The researcher met with eligible youth in a common area of the facility. Although staff were available if required, they were not present when the study was explained, or when the youth were asked to either consent or decline their participation in the study. The researcher explained to youth that in the study they would be asked questions about their strengths, areas of difficulty, and information about their thoughts, feelings, and relationships. Youth were informed that the researcher would need to meet with them once at the beginning of their sentence, and then again approximately 2 months later. Additionally, the youth were informed that as part of the research, information would need to be obtained from their files, as well as

from the Creighton Youth Services worker who they felt knew them best. Issues of confidentiality and anonymity were discussed with the youths. Youths were told the names of those who agreed to participate in both portions of the study would be entered into a draw for a \$50.00 gift certificate for the local mall or a music store. The consent form was reviewed with the youth and those who chose to participate in the study were asked to sign the bottom of the form to indicate their understanding of what had been discussed and to give their consent to participate. W.W. Creighton Youth Services did not require parental consent for the current study as it was determined that procedures followed for the study were similar to regular programs conducted at the agency.

Mutually convenient appointment times were arranged between the researcher and W.W. Creighton Youth Services to administer the questionnaire package to those young offenders interested in participating. Questionnaire packages and consent forms were numerically coded to ensure the youths' anonymity. Consent forms and completed questionnaires are stored separately. A copy of the consent forms and letter to participants for the current study are included in Appendix B.

Demographic information and risk level on the YLS/CMI was obtained from the participant's file. At Time 1, participants were asked to complete the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale-Self Report (BERS-SR), the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) for mother, father, and significant worker, The Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SEQ), and Stages of Change Questionnaire (SCQ). Additionally, one worker who the youths felt knew them best was asked to complete the BERS and the SII for

the youth. Time 1 questionnaires were completed shortly after the youth consented to participate in the current study.

At Time 2, measures included the BERS-SR, SDQ, IPPA for a significant worker, SEQ, and SCQ. The same worker was asked to complete the BERS and the SII for the youth a second time. Time 2 measures were completed approximately 2 months after the administration of the Time 1 questionnaire packages. Before the administration of the questionnaire packages, youth were told that some youth wanted the questions read aloud to them, while others preferred to work on their own. Youth were given the choice of working independently, or having one or more instruments read aloud. Even when youths wanted items read aloud, the youths themselves circled the appropriate response to maintain confidentiality of responses.

Data Analysis

Staff workers familiar with the youths had been asked to complete the Behavioural and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS) as well as the Strength Identification Inventory (SII). However, of the 22 Time 1 packages dropped off at the respective institutions, only 14 were completed and left for the researcher to pick up. Two of these 14 contained too much missing data to compute a total strength quotient, leaving only 12 cases to use in analyses. For Time 2 packages, of the 20 left for individual workers, 16 were completed and left for the researcher, 15 of which contained sufficient data. Unfortunately, only ten of the twenty cases were appropriate (e.g., both Time 1 and Time 2 forms returned, sufficient number of items completed) for analysis, therefore, analyses will not include informant data.

Cronbach's alpha and the corrected item-total correlations were used to examine the internal consistency of the BERS-SR scale. The BERS-SR was found to have high internal

consistency with reliability coefficients of .93 and .97 for Time 1 and Time 2 respectively. Elimination of any of the items from the scale caused little change in the overall alpha coefficient.

Change scores for the BERS-SR and for the SDQ Total Difficulties Scale were created for use in later analyses. For the BERS-SR, higher scores indicate higher levels of strength. The change score was created, therefore, by subtracting the total strength score for Time 1 from the total strength score for Time 2 ($T2 - T1$), thus a positive score indicates increased level of strengths and a negative score reflects decreased levels of strength. For SDQ total difficulties scale, higher scores reflect higher levels of difficulty, therefore the change score was calculated as Time 1 total difficulties score minus the Time 2 total difficulties score. Positive scores indicate reduced levels of difficulty and negative scores reflect an increase in difficulties.

Of the 22 youth in the current study, risk levels were obtained for 20. Of these 20 youth, one had an overall risk score in the low range, 14 youth were in the moderate range, and five youth were classified as high risk according to data obtained from the YLS/CMI. Given the discrepancy in group sizes, analyses comparing high versus low/moderate youth would be meaningless. Therefore, analyses will include the overall risk score, which ranged from 13 to 30 in the current sample. Overall risk scores were available for 17 of the 22 youth.

RESULTS

To determine the relationship between the youths' levels of strength and levels of difficulty, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed between the total strength score obtained from the BERS-SR and the total difficulties score from the SDQ. As hypothesized, a negative correlation was found between the BERS-SR total strength score and

the SDQ total difficulties score at both Time 1 ($r = -.60, p < .003$) and Time 2 ($r = -.62, p < .005$). Youth with higher levels of strength reported lower levels of difficulty. Conversely, those with fewer reported strengths had more difficulties. However, there was no significant difference between total strength scores ($t = -0.41, n.s.$) and total difficulty scores ($t = -0.89, n.s.$) from Time 1 to Time 2.

A variety of factors were correlated with levels of strength and difficulty at both Time 1 (see Table 1) and Time 2 (see Table 2). These findings indicate that higher strengths were generally associated with lower self-efficacy for aggression, higher self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression, fewer feelings of alienation from ones worker (Time 1) and decreased motivation for change (Time 2). Higher levels of difficulty were significantly correlated with higher self-efficacy for aggression (Time 1), lower self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression and for prosocial behaviour, and greater motivation for change (Time 2).

Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here

One-way ANOVAs were performed to test the differences between open and secure custody youth on changes in levels of strength and levels of difficulty over a 2 month period. Significant differences were found between open and secure custody youth on the change in level of difficulty over the two-month period (see Table 3). Whereas youth in open custody decreased in their total difficulties, youth in secure custody reported increased difficulties from Time 1 to Time 2. To illustrate the significant difference in change in difficulty for the open and secure custody youth, numbers for each group are presented in Table 4. There was no

difference between open and secure custody youth on change in level of strength. Pearson product-moment correlations showed no significant relationship between overall risk score on the YLS/CMI and changes in level of strength ($r = .08$, n.s.) and difficulty ($r = -.17$, n.s.).

Insert Tables 3 and 4 about here

To determine whether self-efficacy, readiness for change, and attachment relationship to a staff worker significantly predict change in strength and difficulty levels, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed (see Table 5). Change in strength level was negatively correlated with feelings of alienation towards ones significant worker at Time 1. Youth who experienced an increase in their level of strength reported fewer feelings of alienation from their significant worker. Other variables associated with change in level of strength include self-efficacy for aggression and self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression. Youth who increased in their level of strength from Time 1 to Time 2 had lower self-efficacy for aggression and higher self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression at Time 2. Change in level of difficulty was not significantly correlated with any of the self-efficacy, motivation for change, or attachment to a significant worker variables.

Insert Table 5 about here

A series of paired t-tests compared Time 1 and Time 2 scores for self-efficacy and attachment to a significant worker variables, and motivation for change (see Table 6). The only

self-efficacy variable significantly different from Time 1 to Time 2 was self-efficacy for prosocial behaviour, which increased from Time 1 to Time 2. All attachment to worker variables, with the exception of alienation, were significantly different from Time 1 to Time 2. However, means for these sub-scales reflect decreased rather than increased trust, communication, and total attachment over the two month period. There was no significant difference between youths' motivation for change at Time 1 and Time 2.

Insert Table 6 about here

Finally, to address whether parental attachment is associated with change in strength and difficulty levels over the course of incarceration, Pearson product-moment correlations were computed between the change scores on the BERS-SR, the total difficulties score on the SDQ, and the attachment scales for both mother and father. There were no significant correlations between the change scores and the attachment variables. However, significant relationships were found between level of strength and difficulty at Time 1 and Time 2, and the parental attachment variables (see Table 7). Youth who reported higher levels of strength also reported a more trusting relationship with their mothers, a greater total attachment, fewer feelings of alienation, and increased communication with their mothers. These correlational results were consistent for both Time 1 and Time 2. There were no significant correlations between the strength and paternal attachment variables. Youth who reported fewer feelings of alienation from their mothers also had fewer difficulties at Time 1. Greater maternal trust, fewer feelings of alienation and greater total maternal attachment were associated with fewer self-reported

difficulties at Time 2. With respect to paternal attachment and difficulties, a negative correlation was found between level of difficulties and trust. Those with more self-reported difficulties feel less able to trust their fathers.

Insert Table 7 about here

DISCUSSION

Youth in the current sample did not change in their levels of strength and levels of difficulty over the two-month period between the administration of the Time 1 questionnaire package and the Time 2 package. Although there was a significant difference in the change in level of difficulty for secure versus open custody youth, this result was not replicated for change in level of strengths. Open custody youth decreased in their level of difficulty, whereas secure custody youth increased in their level of difficulty over a two-month period of incarceration. Although there was no difference between open and secure custody youth for change in overall level of strength, the decrease in level of difficulty for the open custody youth suggests that increased opportunity to build on strengths and competencies facilitates some change. As expected, changes in level of strength and difficulty were not associated with a youth's overall level of risk. In addition, levels of strength and difficulty were significant and negatively correlated for both Time 1 and Time 2.

Although few predictor variables were associated with changes in levels of strength and difficulty, feelings of alienation from significant workers were associated with change in levels of strength. Those who had experienced an increase in their level of strength felt fewer feelings

of alienation from their worker. Conversely, those who decreased in the level of strength felt more alienated by their worker. However, results from the current study showed that youth felt decreased trust, communication, and total attachment to their worker, and increased feelings of alienation from Time 1 to Time 2. Although youth may feel supported by workers, young offenders are often dismissing (Schuengel et al., 1998) in their attachments so as they get closer, they may actually start to dislike their workers to protect themselves from hurt. Additionally, even though youth may want to trust and talk to their workers about various issues, the fact that these individuals work within a correctional framework where there is limited confidentiality may keep youth from trusting workers completely.

Although parental attachment was not significantly related to changes in levels of strength and difficulty, parental attachment, especially maternal attachment, was related to strength and difficulty levels at Time 1 and Time 2. Overall, youth with greater attachment to their mothers show greater levels of strength. Youth with fewer difficulties also reported fewer feelings of alienation, more trust, and greater overall attachment to their mothers. Feelings of paternal trust were associated with decreased difficulties. Similarly, Marcus and Betzer (1996) found that for both adolescent males and females, paternal attachment was the strongest predictor of anti-social behaviour.

These overall parental attachment findings correspond with results found by Cartwright et al. (2000) who found that total maternal attachment was associated with the young offenders' self-reported anger experiences. In addition, these researchers found that feelings of paternal alienation were associated with lower empathy. The relationship between strengths and parental attachment is consistent with results reported by Williams and McGee (1991). However,

Williams and McGee did not measure paternal and maternal attachment separately.

Self-efficacy also emerged as a significant variable. In the overall sample, self-efficacy for prosocial behaviour increased from Time 1 to Time 2. Self-efficacy for the inhibition of aggression was associated with greater levels of strength and fewer difficulties, whereas youth with greater self-efficacy for aggression reported fewer strengths and more difficulties. Furthermore, those with higher self-efficacy for prosocial behaviour reported fewer overall difficulties. As youth are encouraged in their areas of strength and competency, they feel that they can act in more prosocial manners and inhibit their aggression in situations where they may have previously exhibited aggression. Given these findings, it may be interesting to examine the role of anger in increasing ones level of strength.

Motivation for change was not significantly correlated with changes in level of strength or difficulty in the current study. However, at Time 2, motivation for change was negatively correlated with total strengths, and positively correlated with total difficulties. Youth who reported greater strengths showed less motivation for change whereas those with more difficulties reported being more motivated to change. Perhaps those with greater difficulties realize their need to change, whereas those with greater strengths perceive that they have already changed and no further change is necessary. Five (26.32%) of the youth increased in their motivation for change over the two month period. One of the 11 youth who remained at the same level of change was at the Maintenance stage of change at Time 1 and Time 2 and, thus, further motivation for change could not be assessed on this measure. Of the 13 remaining youth, only three reported regressing to an earlier stage of change. According to Prochaska et al. (1994), it is not unusual for individuals to regress to earlier stages of change. However, given

the short time period between Time 1 and Time 2 and the difficulty associated with changing ones behaviours, the results from the current study are encouraging.

Interestingly, over half of the youth in the current sample decreased in their levels of strength from Time 1 to Time 2. This decrease was determined by scores on the self-reported Behavioural and Emotional Rating Scale, for which psychometric properties have yet to be established. However, four of the ten cases with valid Behavioural and Emotional Rating Scales, completed by institutional workers familiar with the youth also decreased from Time 1 to Time 2. Future research should further explore reasons why youth may decrease in their level of strength and what characterizes youth who decrease.

There are several limitations to the current study. Primarily, the small sample size decreased chances of finding significant results. In addition, there was a relatively short time period between the administration of Time 1 and Time 2 packages. Two months may not be sufficient time to see significant changes in adolescents, particularly young offenders who generally have more behavioural and emotional issues than adolescents in the general population. Future research should expand the amount of time between Time 1 and Time 2, or include additional administrations of the instruments. Analyses in the current study included only self-report data. It is unfortunate that the informant data could not be used as it may have added a significant piece to the current study. The researcher did not always meet the informant, which may have contributed to the number of forms not completed. In the future, it may be beneficial to meet with informants, personally explain the purposes of the study and discuss how formal strength-based assessment may facilitate the writing of their own treatment plans.

An additional limitation may be the use of the risk/need form. Although there is data to

support the use of actuarial tools such as the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory, as one helpful probation officer offered, it does not always capture an accurate representation of the youth at a particular time. In future research, the risk level, risk score, and the professional's clinical judgement of the youth's risk level should be incorporated. Finally, the strength-based programming used with young offenders in the care of W.W. Creighton Youth Services to date has been informal, which may make it difficult to see results within a short period of time.

In spite of limitations, the current study was novel in several ways. Primarily, although strength-based programs have been evaluated in the past, the current study was the first to examine the variables associated with changes in strength and difficulty levels. Next, the self-reported strength measure, obtained from the author of the Behavioural and Emotional Rating Scale, is still in its developmental stages. However, the use of this instrument enabled the measurement of self-reported strengths whereas research on strength-based assessment and programming to date has employed primarily instruments completed by parents, teachers, or other professionals.

Strength-based assessment may help children, families, and professionals to identify strengths, focus on positives, and write informed treatment plans. The use of a more formal strength-based assessment may be used as a tool to monitor youths' progress and provide the opportunity to document positive outcomes of wraparound services. The results from the current study provide some preliminary directions for future research in the area of strength-based programming with young offenders.

Table 1

Correlations of Time 1 Predictor Variables with Levels of Strength and Difficulty at Time 1

Variable	Total Strengths	Total Difficulties
Self-Efficacy for Aggression	-.62**	.72***
Self-Efficacy for Inhibition of Aggression	.47*	-.50*
Self-Efficacy for Prosocial Behaviour	0.34	-.53**
Trust (worker)	0.18	-0.19
Communication (worker)	0.07	-0.02
Alienation (worker)	-.45*	0.04
Total Attachment (worker)	0.24	-0.09
Motivation for Change	0.02	0.08

Note: N= 22; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 2

Correlations of Time 2 Predictor Variables with Levels of Strength and Difficulty at Time 2

Variable	Total Strengths	Total Difficulties
Self-Efficacy for Aggression	-.58**	0.39
Self-Efficacy for Inhibition of Aggression	.69***	-.74***
Self-Efficacy for Prosocial Behaviour	0.43	-.48*
Trust (worker)	-0.08	-0.19
Communication (worker)	-0.11	0
Alienation (worker)	-0.22	0.34
Total Attachment (worker)	0	-0.18
Motivation for Change	-.66**	.58**

Note: N= 22; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 3

Summary of One-way ANOVAs for Change in Strengths and Difficulties as a Function of Custody (Open versus Secure)

Variable	Mean		SD		F	p
	Open	Secure	Open	Secure		
BERS-Self Report Change Score	5.22	-1.53	19.81	24.01	0.45	0.51
SDQ Total Difficulties Change Score	1.61	-3.48	3.57	2.24	13.49	0.002

Note: N= 19 (10 open; 9 secure)

Table 4

Increases and Decreases in Level of Difficulty as a Function of Custody (Open versus Secure)

	# of Decreasers	# of Increases
Open Custody	6	4
Secure Custody	1	8

Table 5

Correlations of Predictor Variables with Changes in Levels of Strength and Difficulty from Time 1 to Time 2

Variable	Change in Strengths	Change in Difficulties
Time 1 Self-Efficacy. for Aggression	-0.4	-0.16
Time 1 Self-Efficacy for Inhibition of Aggression	0.36	0.27
Time 1 Self-Efficacy for Prosocial Behaviour	0.34	0.12
Time 1 Trust (worker)	0.17	0.13
Time 1 Communication (worker)	0.26	0
Time 1 Alienation (worker)	-.48*	-0.14
Time 1 Total Attachment (worker)	0.32	0.09
Time 1 Motivation for Change	-0.12	-0.09
Time 2 Self-Efficacy for Aggression	-.46*	-0.34
Time 2 Self-Efficacy for Inhibition of Aggression	.63*	0.43
Time 2 Self-Efficacy for Prosocial Behaviour	0.37	0.17
Time 2 Trust (worker)	-0.15	0.38
Time 2 Communication (worker)	-0.09	0.3
Time 2 Alienation (worker)	-0.21	-0.38
Time 2 Total Attachment (worker)	-0.01	0.39
Time 2 Motivation for Change	-0.23	-0.28

Note: N= 19-22; * p < .05

Table 6

Paired Sample T-tests for Predictor Variables at Time 1 and Time 2

Variables	Mean		SD		t	p
	Time1	Time 2	Time1	Time 2		
Trust (worker)	40.63	36.1	6.94	6.17	2.71	0.01
Communication (worker)	33.74	29.42	7.27	8.11	2.81	0.01
Alienation (worker)	12.71	15.11	5.06	6.09	-1.55	0.14
Total Attachment (worker)	97.64	86.42	17.41	18.31	2.57	0.02
Self-Efficacy for Aggression	22.53	22.05	5.61	7.02	0.31	0.76
Self-Efficacy for Inhibition of Aggression	19.47	20.21	6.13	6.46	-0.82	0.42
Self-Efficacy for Prosocial Behaviour	23.11	24.21	4.62	5.02	-2.07	0.05
Motivation for Change	2.21	2.47	0.79	1.12	-0.89	0.38

Note: N = 19, significant t-values in boldface

Table 7

Correlations of Maternal and Paternal Attachment with Levels of Strength and Difficulty at Time 1 and Time 2

	Time 1 Total Difficulties	Time 2 Total Difficulties	Time 1 Total Strength	Time 2 Total Strength
Maternal Trust	-0.39	-.54*	.60**	.51*
Maternal Communication	-0.27	-0.4	.55**	.55*
Maternal Alienation	.46*	.58**	-.69***	-.71***
Total Maternal Attachment	-0.4	-.55*	.67***	.64**
Paternal Trust	-.47*	-0.41	0.19	0.24
Paternal Communication	-0.31	-0.13	0.02	0.06
Paternal Alienation	0.12	0.09	-0.09	-0.17
Total Paternal Attachment	-0.41	-0.3	0.15	0.24

Note: N=16-22; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

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APPENDIX A
INSTRUMENTS

THE YOUTH LEVEL OF SERVICE/CASE MANAGEMENT INVENTORY⁽¹⁹⁹⁶⁾
ROBERT D. HOGE & D. A. ANDREWS, CARLETON UNIVERSITY
[Alternate Title: Ministry Risk/Need Assessment Form]

Name _____ **Date of Birth** _____

Part 1 - Assessment of Risk and Needs

1. Prior and Current Offenses/Dispositions **Comments (include mitigating and aggravating factors)**

a. Three or more prior convictions

b. Two or more failures to comply

c. Prior probation

d. Prior detention

e. Three or more current convictions

Total _____

Risk Level:

Low (0)

Moderate (1-2)

High (3-5)

Source(s) of information

2. Family Circumstances/Parenting **Comments**

a. Inadequate supervision

b. Difficulty in controlling behavior

c. Inappropriate discipline

d. Inconsistent parenting

e. Poor relations/father-child

f. Poor relations/mother-child

Total _____

Strength

Risk Level:

Low (0-2)

Moderate (3-4)

High (5-6)

Source(s) of information

3. Education/Employment **Comments**

a. Disruptive classroom behavior

b. Disruptive behavior on school property

c. Low achievement

d. Problems with peers

e. Problems with teachers

f. Truancy

g. Unemployed/not seeking employment

Total _____

Strength

Risk Level:

Low (0)

Moderate (1-3)

High (4-7)

Source(s) of information

THE YOUTH LEVEL OF SERVICE/CASE MANAGEMENT INVENTORY
ROBERT D. HOGE & D. A. ANDREWS, CARLETON UNIVERSITY
[ALTERNATE TITLE: MINISTRY RISK/NEED FORM]

Part I - Assessment of Risk and Needs (Continued)

7. Personality/Behavior

a. Inflated self-esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. Physically aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. Tantrums	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. Short attention span	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. Poor frustration tolerance	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
f. Inadequate guilt feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
g. Verbally aggressive, impudent	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Total	_____	_____
Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Risk Level:		<u>Source(s) of information</u>
Low (0)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Moderate (1-4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
High (5-7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

8. Attitudes/Orientation

a. Antisocial/procriminal attitudes	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. Not seeking help	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. Actively rejecting help	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. Defies Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. Callous, little concern for others	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Total	_____	_____
Strength	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Risk Level:		<u>Source(s) of information</u>
Low (0)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Moderate (1-3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
High (4-5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Part II - Summary of Risk/Need Factors (from pages 1 to 3)

	Prior and Current Offenses	Family	Education	Peers	Substance Abuse	Leisure and Recreation	Personality and Behavior	Attitudes and Orientation	Overall Total of Scores
Scores									
Low									
Moderate									
High									
Overall Total									
<input type="checkbox"/> Low (0-8)		<input type="checkbox"/> High (23-34)							
<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate (9-22)		<input type="checkbox"/> Very High (35-42)							

THE YOUTH LEVEL OF SERVICE/CASE MANAGEMENT INVENTORY
ROBERT D. HOGE & D. A. ANDREWS, CARLETON UNIVERSITY
[ALTERNATE TITLE: MINISTRY RISK/NEED FORM]

Part III - Assessment of Other Needs/Special Considerations

1. Family/Parents

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic History of Offenses | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial/Accommodation Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive Mother |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Distress/Psychiatric | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncooperative Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Significant Family Trauma |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug-Alcohol Abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural/Ethnic Issues | (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marital Conflict | <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Comments

2. Youth

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Peers Outside Age Range | <input type="checkbox"/> Third Party Threat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Depressed | <input type="checkbox"/> History of Sexual/Physical Assault |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Intelligence/Developmental Delay | <input type="checkbox"/> Low Self Esteem | <input type="checkbox"/> History of Assault on Authority Figures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate Sexual Activity | <input type="checkbox"/> History of Weapon Use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Underachievement | <input type="checkbox"/> Racist/Sexist Attitudes | <input type="checkbox"/> History of Fire Setting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Social Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> History of Escapes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Victim of Physical/Sexual Abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Engages in Denial | <input type="checkbox"/> Protection Issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Victim of Neglect | <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide Attempts | <input type="checkbox"/> Adverse Living Conditions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shy/Withdrawn | <input type="checkbox"/> Diagnosis of Psychosis | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Comments (Note any special responsivity considerations including the need for culturally specific services)

Part IV - Your Assessment of Juvenile's General Risk Need Level

- Low **Reasons:** _____
- Moderate _____
- High _____
- Very High _____
- _____
- _____

THE YOUTH LEVEL OF SERVICE/CASE MANAGEMENT INVENTORY
ROBERT D. HOGE & D. A. ANDREWS, CARLETON UNIVERSITY
[ALTERNATE TITLE: MINISTRY RISK/NEED FORM]

Part V - Contact Level

Comments (Note placement considerations and court expectations, if applicable)

Administrative/Paper

Minimum Supervision

Medium Supervision

Maximum Supervision

Probation Officer's Signature/Date

Supervisor's Signature/Date

Part VI - Case Management Plan

Goal One

Means of Achievement

Goal Two

Means of Achievement

Goal Three

Means of Achievement

Goal Four

Means of Achievement

Section V. Response Form

Directions: The *Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS)* contains a series of statements that are used to rate a child's behaviors and emotions in a positive way. Read each statement and circle the number that corresponds to the rating that best describes the child's status over the past 3 months. If the statement is *very much like* the child, circle the 3; if the statement is *like* the child, circle the 2; if the statement is *not much like* the child, circle the 1; if the statement is *not at all like* the child, circle the 0. Rate each statement to the best of your knowledge of the child.

Statement					IS	FI	IaS	SF	AS
	<i>very much like the child</i>	<i>like the child</i>	<i>not much like the child</i>	<i>not at all like the child</i>					
1. Demonstrates a sense of belonging to family	3	2	1	0					
2. Trusts a significant person with his or her life	3	2	1	0					
3. Accepts a hug	3	2	1	0					
4. Participates in community activities	3	2	1	0					
5. Is self-confident	3	2	1	0					
6. Acknowledges painful feelings	3	2	1	0					
7. Maintains positive family relationships	3	2	1	0					
8. Demonstrates a sense of humor	3	2	1	0					
9. Asks for help	3	2	1	0					
10. Uses anger management skills	3	2	1	0					
11. Communicates with parents about behavior at home	3	2	1	0					
12. Expresses remorse for behavior that hurts or upsets others	3	2	1	0					
13. Shows concern for the feelings of others	3	2	1	0					
14. Completes a task on first request	3	2	1	0					
15. Interacts positively with parents	3	2	1	0					
16. Reacts to disappointments in a calm manner	3	2	1	0					
17. Considers consequences of own behavior	3	2	1	0					
18. Accepts criticism	3	2	1	0					
19. Participates in church activities	3	2	1	0					
20. Demonstrates age-appropriate hygiene skills	3	2	1	0					
21. Requests support from peers and friends	3	2	1	0					
22. Enjoys a hobby	3	2	1	0					
23. Discusses problems with others	3	2	1	0					
24. Completes school tasks on time	3	2	1	0					
Column subtotals									

Statement					IS	FI	IaS	SF	AS
	<i>very much like the child</i>	<i>like the child</i>	<i>not much like the child</i>	<i>not at all like the child</i>					
25. Accepts the closeness and intimacy of others	3	2	1	0					
26. Identifies own feelings	3	2	1	0					
27. Identifies personal strengths	3	2	1	0					
28. Accepts responsibility for own actions	3	2	1	0					
29. Interacts positively with siblings	3	2	1	0					
30. Loses a game gracefully	3	2	1	0					
31. Completes homework regularly	3	2	1	0					
32. Is popular with peers	3	2	1	0					
33. Listens to others	3	2	1	0					
34. Expresses affection for others	3	2	1	0					
35. Admits mistakes	3	2	1	0					
36. Participates in family activities	3	2	1	0					
37. Accepts "no" for an answer	3	2	1	0					
38. Smiles often	3	2	1	0					
39. Pays attention in class	3	2	1	0					
40. Computes math problems at or above grade level	3	2	1	0					
41. Reads at or above grade level	3	2	1	0					
42. Is enthusiastic about life	3	2	1	0					
43. Respects the rights of others	3	2	1	0					
44. Shares with others	3	2	1	0					
45. Complies with rules at home	3	2	1	0					
46. Apologizes to others when wrong	3	2	1	0					
47. Studies for tests	3	2	1	0					
48. Talks about the positive aspects of life	3	2	1	0					
49. Is kind toward others	3	2	1	0					
50. Uses appropriate language	3	2	1	0					
51. Attends school regularly	3	2	1	0					
52. Uses note-taking and listening skills in school	3	2	1	0					
Column subtotals									
Previous page column subtotals									
Total Raw Score									

Name _____ Date _____

Below is a list of items that describe youth in a positive way. Some of the items will describe you very well. Other items will not describe you at all.

Read each item and circle the number that corresponds to the rating that best describes you now or in the past 3 months. **If the item is very much like you, circle the 3; if the item is like you, circle the 2; if the statement is not like you, circle the 1; or if the item is not at all like you, circle 0.** You must answer **all 82 items**.

If you do not know the meaning of some of the words, ask the person who is giving you this form.

	Very Much Like Me	Like Me	Not Like Me	Not At All Like Me
1. My family makes me feel wanted.	3	2	1	0
2. I trust at least one person very much.	3	2	1	0
3. It's okay when people hug me.	3	2	1	0
4. I join in community activities.	3	2	1	0
5. I believe in myself.	3	2	1	0
6. I let someone know when my feelings are hurt.	3	2	1	0
7. I get along well with my family.	3	2	1	0
8. I have a sense of humor.	3	2	1	0
9. I ask for help when I need it.	3	2	1	0
10. I can express my anger in the right way.	3	2	1	0
11. My parents and I talk about how I act at home.	3	2	1	0
12. If I hurt or upset others, I tell them I am sorry.	3	2	1	0
13. I care about how others feel.	3	2	1	0
14. I complete tasks when asked.	3	2	1	0
15. I get along well with my parents.	3	2	1	0
16. When my feelings are hurt, I stay calm.	3	2	1	0
17. I think about what could happen before I decide to do something.	3	2	1	0

	Very Much Like Me	Like Me	Not Like Me	Not At All Like Me
18. I accept criticism.	3	2	1	0
19. I go to religious activities.	3	2	1	0
20. I keep myself clean.	3	2	1	0
21. I ask my friends for help.	3	2	1	0
22. I have a hobby I enjoy.	3	2	1	0
23. When I have a problem, I talk with others about it.	3	2	1	0
24. I do my school work on time.	3	2	1	0
25. I feel close to others.	3	2	1	0
26. I know when I am happy and when I am sad.	3	2	1	0
27. I know what I do well.	3	2	1	0
28. I accept responsibility for my actions.	3	2	1	0
29. I get along with my brothers/sisters	3	2	1	0
30. When I lose a game I accept it.	3	2	1	0
31. I complete my homework.	3	2	1	0
32. I am liked by others my age.	3	2	1	0
33. I am a good listener.	3	2	1	0
34. I let people know when I like them.	3	2	1	0
35. When I make a mistake, I admit it.	3	2	1	0
36. I do things with my family.	3	2	1	0
37. I can deal with being told "no."	3	2	1	0
38. I smile a lot.	3	2	1	0
39. I pay attention in class.	3	2	1	0
40. I am good at math.	3	2	1	0

	Very Much Like Me	Like Me	Not Like Me	Not At All Like Me
41. I am good at reading.	3	2	1	0
42. I enjoy many of the things I do.	3	2	1	0
43. I respect the rights of others.	3	2	1	0
44. I share things with others.	3	2	1	0
45. I follow rules at home.	3	2	1	0
46. When I do something wrong, I say I am sorry.	3	2	1	0
47. I study for tests.	3	2	1	0
48. When good things happen to me, I tell others.	3	2	1	0
49. I am nice to others.	3	2	1	0
50. I use appropriate language.	3	2	1	0
51. I attend school daily.	3	2	1	0
52. I listen during class and write things down to help me remember later.	3	2	1	0
53. I can name at least one thing that I want to do in my life.	3	2	1	0
54. I tell my parents where I am going.	3	2	1	0
55. My best friends act appropriately	3	2	1	0
56. My future looks good	3	2	1	0
57. I belong to a sports team.	3	2	1	0
58. I am good at making friends.	3	2	1	0
59. I join in after school events.	3	2	1	0
60. I get along with my co-workers	3	2	1	0
61. I like to help other people.	3	2	1	0
62. I have a plan for my future career.	3	2	1	0

	Very Much Like Me	Like Me	Not Like Me	Not At All Like Me
63. I do volunteer work.	3	2	1	0
64. I stay away from negative (bad) peers.	3	2	1	0
65. I have artistic and creative talents	3	2	1	0
66. I am well liked by my peers	3	2	1	0
67. I belong to a club.	3	2	1	0
68. I have jobs to do at home.	3	2	1	0
69. I say what I think.	3	2	1	0
70. I do volunteer work in the community.	3	2	1	0
71. I help out around the house without being told.	3	2	1	0
72. I have a skill that will help me in a job.	3	2	1	0
73. I start conversations with other	3	2	1	0
74. I plan ahead and make good decisions.	3	2	1	0
75. I am a hard worker.	3	2	1	0
76. I get along with my supervisor	3	2	1	0
77. I know what I want to do for a career.	3	2	1	0
78. I am comfortable with people of the opposite sex	3	2	1	0
79. I ask permission before leaving the house.	3	2	1	0
80. I can disagree with my family in a calm manner.	3	2	1	0
81. I ask peers to join in social events.	3	2	1	0
82. I care about animals/pets.	3	2	1	0

STRENGTH ASSESSMENT

The following are guidelines for strength identification within the context of the Risk/Need Assessment. These suggestions will not exhaust the possibilities of strengths in significant areas of functioning. The Probation Officer will likely add to this list in one or more areas.

➤ With respect to **Family Circumstances/Parenting** does the following exist for the youth?

- Demonstrates a sense of belonging to family Yes _____ No _____
- Trusts a family member with important information Yes _____ No _____
- Interacts positively with some siblings Yes _____ No _____
- Interacts positively with some family members Yes _____ No _____
- Complies with rules at home Yes _____ No _____
- Is particularly close with one member of the family Yes _____ No _____
- Feels that his criminal behaviour will upset the family Yes _____ No _____
- Takes responsibility for his behaviour within the family Yes _____ No _____
- Is respectful of some family members Yes _____ No _____
- Others _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____

➤ With respect to **Education/Employment** does the following exist for the youth?

- Studies for some tests Yes _____ No _____
- Uses note-taking and listening skills in school in some subject areas Yes _____ No _____
- Pays attention in class in some subject areas Yes _____ No _____
- Is at or above grade level in reading Yes _____ No _____
- Completes assignments on time for some subjects Yes _____ No _____
- Has a positive relationship with some school staff Yes _____ No _____
- Others _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____

➤ With respect to **Peer Relations** does the following exist for the youth?

- Actively seeks positive peer relationships Yes _____ No _____
- Experiences affection for these peers Yes _____ No _____
- Is modeling some of these peer's behaviours Yes _____ No _____
- Is accepted by these peers Yes _____ No _____
- Engages in positive group behaviours with these peers Yes _____ No _____
- Others _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____



➤ With respect to **Leisure/Recreation** does the following exist for the youth?

- Enjoys a hobby Yes _____ No _____
- Likes to watch non-violent sports on t.v. Yes _____ No _____
- Likes to watch soap operas, etc. Yes _____ No _____
- Is a fan of a sports team Yes _____ No _____
- Enjoys an educational t.v. show Yes _____ No _____
- Works out regularly Yes _____ No _____
- Is good at a particular sport Yes _____ No _____
- Enjoys listening to a particular type of music or band Yes _____ No _____
- Plays a musical instrument Yes _____ No _____
- Likes to read Yes _____ No _____
- Likes to use the computer Yes _____ No _____
- Likes to play video games for educational purposes Yes _____ No _____
- Enjoys arts and crafts Yes _____ No _____
- Likes babysitting Yes _____ No _____
- Others _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____

➤ With respect to **Attitudes/Orientation** does the following exist for the youth?

- Active member of a community organization that promotes healthy lifestyle, e.g. Cadets, Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc. Yes _____ No _____
- Participates in church or spiritual activities Yes _____ No _____
- Participates in cultural activities, eg. dance, sweats, etc. Yes _____ No _____
- Attends/volunteers in some community events Yes _____ No _____
- Helps neighbours when requested Yes _____ No _____
- Feels part of the community Yes _____ No _____
- Others _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____

➤ In addition to the areas of life that are progressing reasonably well for the youth, there are also some **Personality/Behaviour Characteristics** that are representative of strengths for the adolescent.

- Demonstrates a sense of humour Yes _____ No _____
- Is enthusiastic about life Yes _____ No _____
- Talks about the positive aspects of life Yes _____ No _____
- Uses anger management skills Yes _____ No _____
- Can identify his own feelings and their appropriateness Yes _____ No _____
- Can identify his personal strengths Yes _____ No _____
- Is appropriately confident Yes _____ No _____
- Can accept disappointments gracefully Yes _____ No _____
- Is willing to work hard to achieve something in the next six months Yes _____ No _____
- Tries to compensate for his weaknesses Yes _____ No _____
- Others _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____
- _____ Yes _____

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

S11-16

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems daft! Please give your answers on the basis of how things have been for you over the last six months.

Your Name

Male/Female

Date of Birth

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
I try to be nice to other people. I care about their feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am restless, I cannot stay still for long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get a lot of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I usually share with others (food, games, pens etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get very angry and often lose my temper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am usually on my own. I generally play alone or keep to myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I usually do as I am told	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I worry a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am constantly fidgeting or squirming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have one good friend or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I fight a lot. I can make other people do what I want	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other people my age generally like me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am easily distracted, I find it difficult to concentrate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am nervous in new situations. I easily lose confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am kind to younger children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am often accused of lying or cheating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other children or young people pick on me or bully me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often volunteer to help others (parents, teachers, children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think before I do things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I take things that are not mine from home, school or elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get on better with adults than with people my own age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have many fears, I am easily scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I finish the work I'm doing. My attention is good	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

Please turn over - there are a few more questions on the other side

Overall, do you think that you have difficulties in one or more of the following areas:
emotions, concentration, behaviour or being able to get on with other people?

	No	Yes - minor difficulties	Yes - definite difficulties	Yes - severe difficulties
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have answered "Yes", please answer the following questions about these difficulties:

- How long have these difficulties been present?

	Less than a month	1-5 months	6-12 months	Over a year
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do the difficulties upset or distress you?

	Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do the difficulties interfere with your everyday life in the following areas?

	Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
HOME LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FRIENDSHIPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CLASSROOM LEARNING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LEISURE ACTIVITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do the difficulties make it harder for those around you (family, friends, teachers, etc.)?

	Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your Signature

Today's Date

Thank you very much for your help

I PPA

This questionnaire asks about your relationships with important people in your life; your mother and your father. Please read the directions to each part carefully.

Some of the following questions are about your feelings about your ***FATHER*** or the person who has acted as your father. If you have more than one person acting as your father (e.g. a natural father and a step-father) answer the questions for the one you feel has most influenced you.

Please read each statement and circle **ONE** number that tells how true the statement is for you now.

- 1 = almost never or never true**
- 2 = not very often true**
- 3 = sometimes true**
- 4 = often true**
- 5 = almost always or always true**

- 1. My father respects my feelings
- 2. I feel my father does a good job as my father.
- 3. I wish I had a different father.
- 4. My father accepts me as I am.
- 5. I like to get father's point of view on things I'm concerned about.
- 6. I feel it's no use letting my feelings show around my father.
- 7. My father can tell when I'm upset about something.
- 8. Talking over my problems with my father makes me feel ashamed or foolish.
- 9. My father expects too much from me.
- 10. I get upset easily around my father.
- 11. I get upset a lot more than my father knows about.

- 12. When we discuss things, my father cares about my point of view.
- 13. My father trusts my judgement.
- 14. My father has his own problems, so I don't bother him with mine.
- 15. My father helps me to understand myself better.
- 16. I tell my father about my problems and troubles.
- 17. I feel angry with my father.
- 18. I don't get much attention from my father.
- 19. My father helps me to talk about my difficulties.
- 20. My father understands me.
- 21. When I am angry about something, my father tries to understand me.
- 22. I trust my father.
- 23. My father doesn't understand what I'm going through these days.
- 24. I can count on my father when I need to get something off my chest.
- 25. If my father knows something is bothering me, he asks me about it.

I PPA

This questionnaire asks about your relationships with important people in your life; your mother and your father. Please read the directions to each part carefully.

Some of the following questions are about your feelings about your ***MOTHER*** or the person who has acted as your mother. If you have more than one person acting as your mother (e.g. a natural mother and a step-mother) answer the questions for the one you feel has most influenced you.

Please read each statement and circle **ONE** number that tells how true the statement is for you now.

- 1 = almost never or never true**
- 2 = not very often true**
- 3 = sometimes true**
- 4 = often true**
- 5 = almost always or always true**

- 1. My mother respects my feelings
- 2. I feel my mother does a good job as my mother.
- 3. I wish I had a different mother.
- 4. My mother accepts me as I am.
- 5. I like to get mother's point of view on things I'm concerned about.
- 6. I feel it's no use letting my feelings show around my mother.
- 7. My mother can tell when I'm upset about something.
- 8. Talking over my problems with my mother makes me feel ashamed or foolish.
- 9. My mother expects too much from me.
- 10. I get upset easily around my mother.
- 11. I get upset a lot more than my mother knows about.

- ___ 12. When we discuss things, my mother cares about my point of view.
- ___ 13. My mother trusts my judgement.
- ___ 14. My mother has her own problems, so I don't bother her with mine.
- ___ 15. My mother helps me to understand myself better.
- ___ 16. I tell my mother about my problems and troubles.
- ___ 17. I feel angry with my mother.
- ___ 18. I don't get much attention from my mother.
- ___ 19. My mother helps me to talk about my difficulties.
- ___ 20. My mother understands me.
- ___ 21. When I am angry about something, my mother tries to understand me.
- ___ 22. I trust my mother.
- ___ 23. My mother doesn't understand what I'm going through these days.
- ___ 24. I can count on my mother when I need to get something off my chest.
- ___ 25. If my mother knows something is bothering me, she asks me about it.

IPPA

This questionnaire asks about your relationships with important people in your life. The following statements are about your feelings towards the Creighton Youth Services worker who you feel knows you the best. Please read each statement carefully and write the number beside each statement that tells how true the statement is for you now.

- 1= almost never or never true**
- 2= not very often true**
- 3= sometimes true**
- 4= often true**
- 5= almost always or always true**

- _____ 1. My worker respects my feelings.
- _____ 2. I feel my worker does a good job as my worker.
- _____ 3. I wish I had a different worker.
- _____ 4. My worker accepts me as I am.
- _____ 5. I like to get my worker's point of view on things I'm concerned about.
- _____ 6. I feel it's no use letting my feelings show around my worker.
- _____ 7. My worker can tell when I'm upset about something.
- _____ 8. Talking over my problems with my worker makes me feel ashamed or foolish.
- _____ 9. My worker expects too much from me.
- _____ 10. I get upset easily around my worker.
- _____ 11. I get upset a lot more than my worker knows about.
- _____ 12. When we discuss things, my worker cares about my point of view.
- _____ 13. My worker trusts my judgement.
- _____ 14. My worker has his/her own problems, so I don't bother him/her with mine.
- _____ 15. My worker helps me to understand myself better.

- _____ 16. I tell my worker about my problems and troubles.
- _____ 17. I feel angry with my worker.
- _____ 18. I don't get much attention from my worker.
- _____ 19. My worker helps me to talk about my difficulties.
- _____ 20. My worker understands me.
- _____ 21. When I am angry about something, my worker tries to understand me.
- _____ 22. I trust my worker.
- _____ 23. My worker doesn't understand what I'm going through these days.
- _____ 24. I can count on my worker when I need to get something off my chest.
- _____ 25. If my worker knows something is bothering me, he/she asks me about it.

SEQ

NUMBER _____

MALE ____ FEMALE ____

AGE _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

TODAY'S DATE _____

Read each question carefully and **PRETEND** what is says is happening to you. Then **CIRCLE** how easy it would be for you to do the things in each question. Some teenagers your age think these things are hard to do, other teenagers your age think these things are easy to do. We want you to circle the answer that is really true **for you**.

Remember, this is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. Be sure to circle that answer that is really true for you. Here is an example for you to try:

It is your turn to clean up. Asking your friends to help is _____
for you.

HARD! hard easy **EASY!**

1. One of the little neighborhood kids keeps tagging along while you are outside playing with your friends. You feel like hurting the kid's feelings to make the kid go away but decide not to. Not teasing the kid is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

2. While playing soccer, one of your teammates is not paying attention and lets the ball get stolen away by the other team. Shouting at your teammate and calling your teammate a crummy player is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

3. During a school break, some of your friends are teasing another teen. You feel like joining in the teasing with your friends, but decide not to. Not helping your friends tease the teen is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

4. On your way home from school a teen grabs your notebook and throws it in the dirt. You really feel like shoving the teen into a mud puddle nearby but decide not to. Not shoving the teen into the mud puddle is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

5. The neighborhood teens are playing a game that you don't like to play. You suggest a different game, but the teens say "no." Laughing and yelling at the teens so that they have trouble playing the game is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

6. While playing soccer, a teen prevents you from making a goal. You really want to get the teenager back by pushing the teen hard but you decide not to. Not pushing the teen back is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

7. At the end of break you run to the drinking fountain to get a drink of water. Another teen is also running to the drinking fountain. Pushing the other teen so that you can get there first is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

8. The class is working on large posters and you really want to use the big paint brush for your poster, but another teen takes the big brush just as you reach for it. You want to grab it away but decide not to. Not grabbing the brush is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

9. Getting on the bus for a field trip a teen bumps into you. Kicking the teen is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

10. Your class is playing a game in the school yard but one of the teens is not as good as the rest at the game. It takes some of the fun out of it. You feel like teasing the teen and calling the teen names, but decide not to. Not calling the teen names is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

11. In class, a teen is passing out party invitations and you are not invited. You really feel like yelling something mean at the teen, but you decide not to. Not yelling at the teen is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

12. On the school grounds, another teen bumps into you. Calling the teen bad names is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

13. A teen gets in your way when you're in a hurry to get all your stuff together and leave at the end of school. Shoving the teen out of your way is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** EASY!

14. A teen is playing with a game that you want. You ask the teen to give you the game but the teen says "no." Swearing at the teen is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** EASY!

15. Some teens get mad and start fighting on the school grounds. You are caught in the middle of it. Fighting is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** EASY!

16. In the cafeteria, a teen knocks your milk all over and really makes a mess. You really want to get the teen back by knocking the teen's drink all over, but decide not to do it. Not knocking over the teen's drink is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** EASY!

17. A new teen comes to school and doesn't have any friends yet. Talking to the new teen so that the teen doesn't feel lonely is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** EASY!

18. You see a bicycle coming towards a little kid. It looks like it might knock the little kid down. Running over and helping the kid get out of the way is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** EASY!

19. A group of teens want to play a game that takes five players. They need you to play it. It's a game that you hate to play, but you decided to go ahead and play it with them anyway. Playing the game with them is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

20. Some friends are over and it's time for your favourite T.V. program to start. Everybody wants to watch something different. You talk about it and then you agree to let them pick the program. Telling your friends that you will let them choose the program is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

21. A retarded teen who goes to your school comes up to you on the play-ground and asks you how to kick the soccer ball. You'd rather be playing soccer with your friends. Showing the teen how to kick the soccer ball is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

22. A teen comes to school with a new haircut and all the class laughs at the teen. You feel like laughing too, but you can tell that the kid feels bad. Saying something nice to the teen to make the teen feel better is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

23. A teen comes to school one day with a broken arm. Because of the broken arm, this teen is having a hard time carrying stuff. Going over and helping this teen is _____ for you.

HARD! **hard** **easy** **EASY!**

24. At recess you and your friends are playing baseball. You and another teen both want to play the same position. You decide to let the other teen play the position. Telling the other teen it's O.K. to play that position is _____ for you.

HARD!

hard

easy

EASY!

SCQ

Each of the statements below describes how a person might feel when approaching problems in their lives. Please indicate the extent to which you tend to agree or disagree with each statement. In each case, make your choice in terms of how you feel right now, not what you have felt in the past or would like to feel. "Here" refers to the place of treatment or the program. For you, it will be Creighton Youth Services.

		<u>Response Scale</u>				
		Strongly Disagree (SD)				Agree (A)
		Disagree (D)				Strongly Agree (SA)
		Undecided (U)				
1.	As far as I'm concerned, I don't have any problems that need changing.	SD	D	U	A	SA
2.	I think I might be ready for some self-improvement.	SD	D	U	A	SA
3.	I am doing something about the problems that had been bothering me.	SD	D	U	A	SA
4.	It might be worthwhile to work on my problem.	SD	D	U	A	SA
5.	I'm not the problem one. It doesn't make much sense for me to be here.	SD	D	U	A	SA
6.	It worries me that I might slip back on a problem I have already, so I am here to seek help.	SD	D	U	A	SA
7.	I am finally doing some work on my problem.	SD	D	U	A	SA
8.	I've been thinking that I might want to change something about myself.	SD	D	U	A	SA
9.	I have been successful in working on my problem but I'm not sure I can keep up the effort on my own.	SD	D	U	A	SA

10. At times my problem is difficult, but I'm working on it.	SD	D	U	A	SA
11. Being here is pretty much a waste of time for me because the problem doesn't have to do with me.	SD	D	U	A	SA
12. I'm hoping this place will help me better understand myself.	SD	D	U	A	SA
13. I guess I have faults, but there's nothing that I really need to change.	SD	D	U	A	SA
14. I am really working hard to change.	SD	D	U	A	SA
15. I have a problem and I really think I should work at it.	SD	D	U	A	SA
16. I'm not following through with what I had already changed as well as I had hoped, and I'm here to prevent a relapse of the problem.	SD	D	U	A	SA
17. Even though I'm not always successful in changing, I am at least working on my problem.	SD	D	U	A	SA
18. I thought once I had resolved my problem I would be free of it, but sometimes I still find myself struggling with it.	SD	D	U	A	SA
19. I wish I had more ideas on how to solve the problem.	SD	D	U	A	SA
20. I have started working on my problems, but I would like help.	SD	D	U	A	SA
21. Maybe this place will be able to help me.	SD	D	U	A	SA
22. I may need a boost right now to help me maintain the changes I've already made.	SD	D	U	A	SA

23. I may be part of the problem, but I don't really think I am.	SD	D	U	A	SA
24. I hope that someone here will have some good advice for me.	SD	D	U	A	SA
25. Anyone can talk about changing; I'm actually doing something about it.	SD	D	U	A	SA
26. All this talk about psychology is boring. Why can't people just forget about their problems?	SD	D	U	A	SA
27. I'm here to prevent myself from having a relapse of my problem.	SD	D	U	A	SA
28. It is frustrating, but I feel I might be having a recurrence of a problem I thought I had resolved.	SD	D	U	A	SA
29. I have worries but so does the next guy. Why spend time thinking about them?	SD	D	U	A	SA
30. I am actively making progress on my problem.	SD	D	U	A	SA
31. I would rather cope with my faults than try to change them.	SD	D	U	A	SA
32. After all I had done to try to change my problem, every now and again it comes back to haunt me.	SD	D	U	A	SA

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM AND COVER LETTERS

Consent Form

The purpose and procedures of this study have been explained to me. I understand that in this study I will be asked to fill out a number of questionnaires. Some questionnaires will ask questions about my feelings, thoughts, and relationships. Others will ask questions about the things I'm good at and enjoy doing, as well as my difficulties. I understand that it will take about an hour to complete the questionnaires.

I understand that the researcher will also obtain information from my file and from a person who works for W.W. Creighton Youth Services who I feel knows me the best.

All information I provide will be kept anonymous. Confidentiality and privacy of information will be strictly protected. I understand that my name will appear only on the consent form and not on any of the pages of the questionnaire itself and that consent forms will be stored separately from the questionnaires. I also understand that only the researchers and supervisor will have access to my answers. If at any time during my participation I should feel unable to continue, I am free to terminate my participation at any time and have all information obtained up to that point destroyed. I understand that my custody and care at W.W. Creighton Youth Services will not be affected if I choose to not continue in the study. I am free to omit any questions that I do not feel comfortable answering. By signing this consent form, I am agreeing to voluntarily participate in this study.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

I feel that _____ is the person who works for W.W.
(STAFF WORKER'S NAME)

Creighton Youth Services who knows me the best. I would like this person to answer questions about me.

Lakehead

UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychology

Tel. (807) 343-8441

Fax (807) 346-7734

Dear Youth,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in a study concerning strength-based programming at W.W. Creighton Youth Services.

This study is the thesis project of Lezlie Gomes, a Master's student at Lakehead University is being supervised by Edward Rawana, Ph.D., Registered Psychologist. The title of the study is "Evaluating strength-based programming for juvenile offenders".

The purpose of this study is to provide information on strength-based programming with young offenders in Thunder Bay. This information will help staff at W.W. Creighton Youth Services and other researchers understand whether or not this kind of programming is helping incarcerated youth.

During the course of the study you will be asked to fill out a number of questionnaires on two different days. The first time will be shortly after you agree to participate. The second time will 3 to 6 months later, before your release date. Some questionnaires will ask questions about your feelings, thoughts, and relationships. Others will ask questions about the things you're good at and enjoy doing, as well as your difficulties. It will take about an hour to complete the questionnaires each time.

We will also be obtaining information from your files, such as your risk level. Additionally, we will be obtaining information from a staff worker at W.W. Creighton Youth Services who you feel knows you the best.

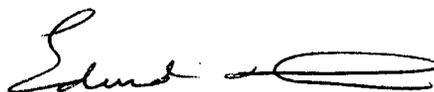
All information you provide will be kept anonymous. Your name will appear only on the consent form and not on any of the pages of the questionnaire itself. Your consent form will be stored separately from the questionnaires. The information from all the questionnaires will be coded, analysed, and securely stored at Lakehead University for seven years. No individual will be identified in any report of the results. The results will be shared with the Psychology department at Lakehead University, W.W. Creighton Youth Services, and an article will be prepared for publication.

If at any time during participation you feel unable to continue, you may terminate your participation and have all information obtained up to that point destroyed. You will also be free to omit any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. W.W. Creighton staff will not know if you terminate your participation.

Sincerely,



Lezlie Gomes, HBA
Master's Candidate



Edward P. Rawana, Ph.D
Registered Psychologist

Dear Creighton Staff,

As you may be aware, I am a Master's student in Clinical Psychology at Lakehead University. For my Master's thesis, I will be evaluating strength-based programming with Phase I juvenile offenders in Thunder Bay. It is my hope that information gained through this study will be useful for Creighton staff in the continued implementation of strength-based programming for incarcerated youth. As part of my thesis, I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in completing two brief questionnaires regarding the strengths of a particular youth who has identified you as knowing him/her the best. These questionnaires will need to be completed once now and then again in two months, before the youth is released, to help determine whether or not the youth's strengths have increased.

_____ has identified you as the individual on staff who knows him/her the best.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaires concerning this youth within the next week, if possible. Once you've completed the questionnaires, please seal them in the envelope provided, write the date in the corner, and leave it for me at reception. The second set of questionnaires will be dropped off to you in a couple months.

Thank you for your time. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (766-9065) or my thesis supervisor, Edward Rawana, Ph.D., Psychologist (343-6342).

Sincerely,

Lezlie Gomes, H.B.A.
M.A. Candidate, Clinical Psychology

Dear Creighton Staff,

Thank you for your help in completing the first questionnaire package regarding _____ . Please complete the enclosed questionnaires concerning the above youth *within the next week, if possible*. Once you've completed the questionnaires, please seal them in the envelope provided, write the date in the corner, and *leave the envelope for me at reception*. Thank you for your time and cooperation. Your help in this project is greatly appreciated.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (766-9065) or my thesis supervisor, Edward Rawana, Ph.D., Psychologist (343-6342).

Sincerely,

Lezlie Gomes, H.B.A.
M.A. Candidate, Clinical Psychology