

LOCAL EVALUATION REPORT for Inyo County Proposition 64 Public Health and Safety Grant  
Program: Healing Through Outdoor Activities, Prevention, and Engagement (HOPE) Program

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## 1) Executive Summary

Inyo County is a frontier county with 19,016 residents and a large geographic footprint. The Inyo County Probation and Health and Human Services (HHS) Departments have a challenging obligation to provide high quality services that meet the diverse needs of very dispersed local communities. In 2021, Inyo County received a grant from the State of California Board of State and Community Corrections to implement the Healing Through Outdoor Activities, Prevention, and Engagement (HOPE) Program. The HOPE Program had 3 distinct core tracks that all ran simultaneously: the Youth Mentor Program, the Youth Outdoor Program, and the Afterschool Program. These programs aimed to reduce risk factors and boost protective factors for high-risk youth through evidence-based practices that prevent and reduce substance use disorders.

The Youth Mentor Program matches local youth with an adult volunteer who meets with him/her regularly as part of the Lunch Pal Program or through engagement in other community activities. The Youth Outdoor Program exposes youth to new experiences, provides outdoor education, allows for access to nature, promotes physical activity and social interaction, helps develop communication and problem-solving skills, and encourages finding personal strengths. Key activities included hiking, rock climbing, fly fishing, trail building, camping, backpacking, and stewardship projects. The Afterschool Program is a collaboration between local schools, Inyo County, and other community CBOs to provide extracurricular enrichment activities for students. Key activities included music lessons, art classes, gardening classes, cooking classes, bicycle repair classes, and Art in School and Poetry in School Days

Inyo County served 134 enrolled participants who filled out intake paperwork a total of 191 times, since some students joined programs, events, and/or activities up to 4 separate times. Participants filled out a post-event survey with 18 self-report questions on how they felt after the event and/or how the event changed their knowledge and understanding. 82 participants filled out the survey. 80 participants, or 60%, were male and 52, or 39%, were female. 35 participants, or 26%, were Native American and 26 participants, or 19%, were Latino/a.

The HOPE Program had 14,835 documented encounters with youth through community activities and outreach events that took place in collaboration with local schools and at community events. Many of them engaged with the program multiple times/regularly, so the following count is not the total number of participants, but instead a count of total additional youth encounters that the Inyo County HOPE Program was able to conduct during the project period beyond youth who were participating in one or more of the three core tracks. Adults in Inyo County had 386 documented interactions with the HOPE Program.

For answers to 17 out of 18 questions, participants overwhelmingly reported that the HOPE Program was beneficial. Only in response to one question – Question 9 – did participants report that the HOPE Program was not beneficial. Inyo County is actively seeking additional and/or supplemental funding sources to ensure that the HOPE Program continues to be a benefit for the high-risk youth of Inyo County.

## 2) Project Background

Inyo County is a frontier county with 19,016 residents and a large geographic footprint. The Inyo County Probation and Health and Human Services (HHS) Departments have a challenging obligation to provide high quality services that meet the diverse needs of very dispersed local communities. Inyo County ranks 52<sup>nd</sup> out of California's 58 counties in terms of population but is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest county in California in terms of land area, with 10,180 square miles, and is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest county in the entire US. However, only 1.7% of the land is under private ownership, with the Federal Government owning the vast majority (92.0%), the City of Los Angeles owning 3.9%, and the State owning the remaining 2.4%.



Inyo County has both the highest (Mount Whitney) and lowest (Badwater Basin) geographic points in the continental US. The extreme and varied topography regularly causes serious weather-related challenges; blizzards, floods, and fires have all impacted travel and access to basic services in recent years. In 2023, two separate months-long highway closures significantly disrupted travel to and within Southern Inyo County and to and within Mono County, the county directly to the north.

Most residents - 13,304 people - live in the northern region of the county in and around the city of Bishop. However, other residents live in communities up to 250 miles away, with very little if any developed infrastructure and services beyond housing and a gas station. Inyo County's unique geography and small, dispersed communities means that county government plays an outsized role in providing services to residents. Roles and responsibilities that in urban areas are often distributed between teams of people spread out over multiple jurisdictions and/or Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in addition to County government can fall on a single Inyo County staff member, and often that employee wears multiple hats.

In 2021, Inyo County received a grant from the Board of State and Community Corrections to implement the Healing Through Outdoor Activities, Prevention, and Engagement (HOPE) Program. Each grantee was required to address one or more eligible Project Purpose Areas (PPAs):

PPA 1: Youth Development / Youth Prevention and Intervention  
PPA 2: Public Health  
PPA 3: Public Safety  
PPA 4: Environmental Impacts

Inyo County proposed work that fell primarily under PPA 1. The Probation Department collaborated closely with the HHS Department to build on existing, successful youth prevention programs and expand services to address some of the detrimental effects of the passage of Proposition 64 and local ordinances authorizing commercial recreational cannabis businesses. Rates of marijuana use among youth in Inyo County have increased since the passage of Proposition 64, and high-risk youth, in particular, are experiencing the harms of Proposition 64. Inyo County defines high-risk youth as youth who are: abuse victims, children of parents with an SUD diagnosis, economically disadvantaged, have mental health concerns, and/or have previously engaged in delinquent behavior. Inyo County recognized this concerning trend and set about implementation of a program designed to mitigate these poor outcomes and troubling behaviors.



Inyo County HOPE Program Probation staff.

The HOPE Program focused on improving and expanding three key programs: the Youth Mentor Program, the Youth Outdoor Program, and the Afterschool Program. These programs aimed to reduce risk factors and boost protective factors for high-risk youth through evidence-based practices that prevent and reduce substance use disorders. Inyo County has an excellent track record of engaging youth in prevention activities and collaborating with schools, Tribal Governments, and CBOs to ensure that services and activities are robust and sustainable. While the HOPE Program ultimately faced substantial unforeseen challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and linked school closures, as well as severe staff retention and recruitment obstacles, Inyo County remained steadfast in its overall commitment to achieving the goals of the grant, and was flexible and responsive to local community needs. While the final scope, scale, and timing of the program deviated somewhat from the initial plan, the HOPE Program was ultimately successfully implemented and evaluated. All 3 core tracks of the HOPE Program ran simultaneously. Youth were encouraged to participate in as many tracks as they had interest in.

### Youth Mentor Program

Inyo County expanded upon an already established Youth Mentor Program which matches local youth with an adult volunteer who meets with him/her regularly as part of the Lunch Pal Program or through engagement in other community activities. This grant provided for an expansion of the Youth Mentor Program Coordinator position to a full time FTE, with the hope that additional staff time would allow for more recruitment and training of adult mentors, particularly in more remote parts of southern Inyo County. The Youth Mentor Program emphasized the importance of providing youth with an attentive, caring, and reliable adult in their lives.



The Lunch Pals Program in Lone Pine.



The target population for this Program is high-risk elementary school, middle school, and high school students, though all youth are welcome, program capacity permitting. Youth were referred due to risk factors identified by school counselors, HHS staff, or local CBOs. Parents could also request that their child/children enroll, and youth could self-enroll. Inyo County initially planned to use a more formalized referral system to screen enrollment in an effort to target limited resources towards youth with the highest need first, but program capacity was never an issue. Youth were encouraged to stay engaged in the Youth Mentor Program as long as desired.

As part of the HOPE Program, Inyo County also initiated a new feature of the Youth Mentor Program by recruiting high school age students to become peer mentors assisting younger students as part of the elementary and middle afterschool programs.

### Youth Outdoor Program

Inyo County residents are lucky to have a wide variety of outdoor activities including hiking, rock climbing, fishing, kayaking, canoeing, naturalist activities, photography, arts and crafts in the



backcountry, and mountain biking locally available. The Youth Outdoor Program exposes high-risk youth to new experiences, provides outdoor education, allows for access to nature, promotes physical activity and social interaction, helps develop communication and problem-solving skills, and encourages finding personal strengths. The HOPE Program expanded the scale and scope of activities and recruitment efforts for the Youth Outdoor Program. The Youth Outdoor Program had two cohorts: one a more casual Youth Outdoor Program led Inyo County HHS staff and one the more intensive/immersive program overseen by the Yosemite National Park-based CBO Sacred Rok. Youth could participate in both cohorts if they elected to.

Inyo County employs a Youth Outdoor Program Coordinator who is supported by community volunteers and guest speakers who assist with program teaching and leadership. Most youth in this Program have never had positive outdoor experiences in the Eastern Sierra – quite literally their own back yard – and this Program offered an opportunity to enjoy the natural world in a supportive environment that promoted skill development, personal growth, and physical activity.

For 16 years, Sacred Rok has worked to help youth, including incarcerated youth, youth on probation, and foster youth, grow and heal by learning to respect nature and themselves as a member of a caring and nurturing community. Sacred Rok is a small but mighty organization with 2 staff members whose mission is to “help transform the lives of young people by providing the opportunity to develop their sense of self in relation to the natural world through time outside hiking, rock climbing, fly fishing, trail building, camping, backpacking, and stewardship projects.” Sacred Rok leads day trips and 3-5 day camping trips for young people who can benefit from doing everyday things such as walking, swimming, breathing fresh air, sleeping, and eating while out in nature.

Youth were encouraged to participate in the Youth Outdoor Program for as long as they would like.



A Sacred Rok hiking trip in Yosemite National Park.



The HOPE Program fishing in the Owens River.

### Afterschool Program

The Afterschool Program is a new collaboration between local schools, Inyo County, and other CBOs to provide extracurricular enrichment activities for students. Activities were planned to start small and then grow into more frequent and widespread offerings. Key activities included music

lessons from a local guitar player and a well-known Native flute player, art classes, gardening classes, cooking classes, bicycle repair classes, Art in School and Poetry in School Days, and a budding partnership with the newly established Eastside Student Center.



A HOPE Program cooking class.



Naturalist activities during summer camp at Mono Lake.

### **3) Process and Outcome Evaluation Method and Design**

Inyo County evaluated all 3 HOPE Program tracks through a combination of process data, such as program enrollment and/or attendance records and outcome data, such as program surveys that seek to answer the big-picture question: “did the intervention make a difference?” Inyo County also tracked community-level public health data by monitoring sources such as the California Healthy Kids Survey and the Opioid Surveillance Dashboard.

As a frontier County with a small population, Inyo County regularly undertakes activities where the number of participants providing survey responses is too small to allow for calculations of statistical significance. Even so, an analysis of survey results along with descriptive statistics are presented as part of the HOPE Program evaluation. Youth participants were given voluntary written evaluation surveys which primarily include questions where they were asked to rank their answers on a 5-point Likert scale. Some young participants used “face emojis” that corresponded to a range of answers where strongly agree to strongly disagree were used in place of numerical rankings, if they were more comfortable providing answers that way. Participants asked to complete these surveys at the conclusion of their participation in a given HOPE Program track/activity.

Inyo County created a password-secure spreadsheet where youth demographic information and survey responses were entered by HOPE Program staff on a rolling basis. Inyo County also submitted HOPE Program progress and spending-to-date reports to the Board of State and Community Corrections on a quarterly basis.

Inyo County approached evaluation of the HOPE Program with a mixed method research design incorporating quantitative and qualitative data. While collecting baseline data was included in Inyo County LOCAL EVALUTION REPORT



initial HOPE Program evaluation design, delayed programming, staffing challenges, lingering complications caused by COVID-19, and initial low youth participation numbers all combined to prevent collection of pre-implementation surveys. Instead, Inyo County collected post-implementation survey responses. Inyo County also collected a small amount of qualitative evaluation data throughout HOPE Program implementation, such as brief comments from youth participants and staff on perceived accomplishments and/or improvements.

Initial process questions that County considered included:

- Were activities implemented as planned?
- Were any barriers encountered during implementation?
- What modifications were needed to overcome barriers?
- How well were activities implemented?
- Were target audiences reached and engaged?
- How satisfied was the target audience with services?
- How did external factors impact implementation?
- What lessons have been learned to inform programming efforts?

Initial outcome questions that Inyo County considered included:

- What modifications were needed to overcome barriers?
- How well were activities implemented?
- Were target audiences reached and engaged?
- How satisfied was the target audience with services?
- How did external factors impact implementation?
- What lessons have been learned to inform programming efforts?
- How did the activities impact target audience?
- Did grant activities impact participants differently?
- Which aspects were most successful or most valuable as determined by target audience?
- What external factors influenced outcomes?
- How did activities impact the way target audience thinks? (Long-term impacts: what they believe.)
- How did activities impact the way target audience feels? (Long-term impacts: what they love.)
- How did activities impact what target audience does? (Long-term impacts: who they become.)

#### **4) Evaluation Results**

Inyo County served 134 enrolled participants who filled out intake paperwork a total of 191 times, since some students joined programs, events, and/or activities up to 4 separate times. Participants filled out a post-event survey with 18 self-report questions on how they felt after the event and/or how the event changed their knowledge and understanding. 82 participants filled out the survey, Inyo County LOCAL EVALUTION REPORT

with the remaining 52 participants declining to respond. Some participants chose to answer some but not all of the 18 questions when completing the survey. 80 participants, or 60%, were male and 52, or 39%, were female. 35 participants, or 26%, were Native American and 26 participants, or 19%, were Latino/a. School events took place in Bishop, Big Pine, Lone Pine, and Round Valley. Community events took place in Bishop, Big Pine, Independence, Lone Pine, Tecopa/Shoshone, and Round Valley.

Additionally, between 2022 and 2024, the HOPE Program had 14,835 documented encounters with youth through community activities and outreach events that took place in collaboration with local schools, CBOs, and at community events. Many of them engaged with the program multiple times/regularly, so the following count is not the total number of participants, but instead a count of total additional youth encounters that the Inyo County HOPE Program was able to conduct during the project period beyond youth who were participating in one or more of the three core tracks. In a county where total residents aged 5 to 17 is 2,909, this high number is representative of a widespread and successful effort to engage a large portion of local youth in the HOPE Program.

This number is even more impressive when the unexpectedly condensed timeframe of the HOPE Project is taken into account. The HOPE Program initially launched in the spring of 2021, already somewhat behind schedule and at a time COVID-19 restrictions and remote school schedules were still very significantly disruptive on a daily basis. As a result, the HOPE Program did not begin in earnest until 2022, and the timeframe for implementing activities was shorter than initially designed.

Adults in Inyo County had 386 documented interactions with the HOPE Program. As with youth, many teachers, parents, and community members engaged with the program multiple times/regularly, so the count is of total adult encounters with the Inyo County HOPE Program, not the total number of adults participating.

The primary community activities and outreach events that took place, in addition to documented engagement numbers, are summarized by calendar year below.



Participants and staff in the HHS Leadership Camp.

**2022 youth encounters:** 2,086

**2022 adult encounters:** 153

**2022 community activities and outreach events:** Art in School Days, summer youth leadership camp, KidZone booth at the Tri-County Fair, Fall Festival, push-up challenge, mentor/adult volunteer outreach, and youth first-aid training.

**2023 youth encounters:** 6,848

**2023 adult encounters:** 149

**2023 community activities and outreach events:** anger management classes, art lessons, Art in School Days, Art in the Sky, back-to-school backpack event, bicycle repair classes, bicycle rodeo, Christmas blanket distribution, cooking classes, DMV tutoring, Every 15 Minutes, Family Fun Day at Bishop City Park, Fright Night at the Tri-County Fair, gardening classes, guitar lessons, hiking trips, National Night Out, Northern Inyo Hospital Wellness Fair, Mexican Consulate appointments, Poetry in School Days, pumpkin carving, push-up challenge, summer youth outdoor camps, Shop with a Cop, survival skills training, and vaping cessation classes.

**2024 youth encounters:** 5,901

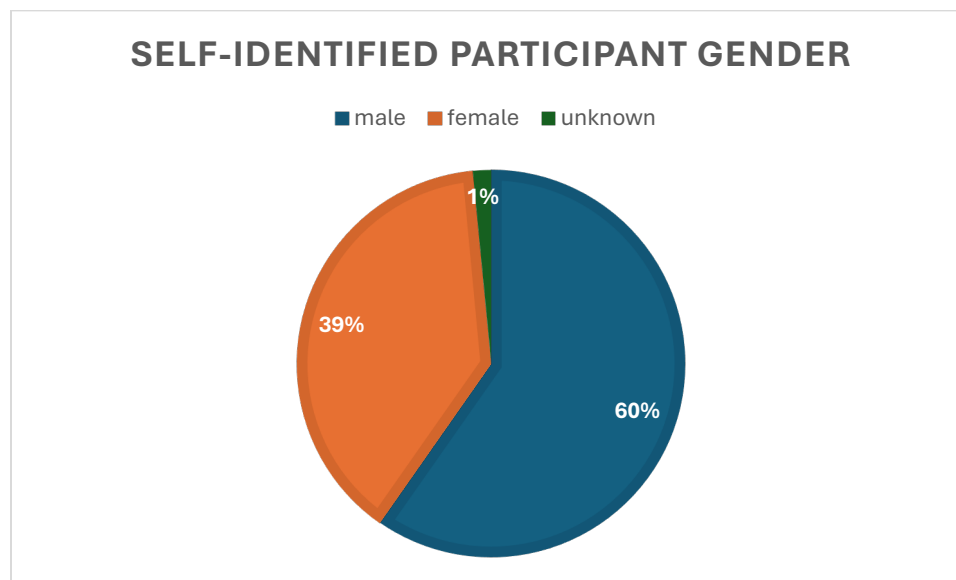
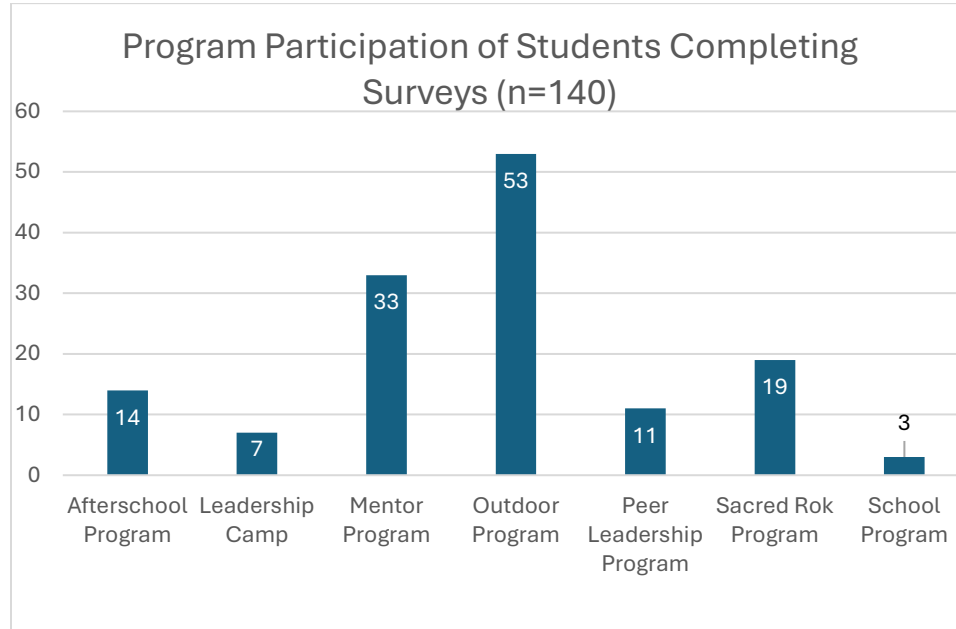
**2024 adult encounters:** 84

**2024 community activities and outreach events:** archaeology field trip, Art in School Days, animal tracking training, bicycle rodeo, bighorn sheep safari, Big Pine Tribal Easter Egg Hunt, Big Pine Tribal TANF presentation, Cerro Coso Community College outreach event, cooking classes, CPR and first-aid training, community health fair, Girl Scout community clean up, Healthy Heart Fun Run, hiking trip, KidZone at the Tri-County Fair, kayaking trip at Crowley Lake, Mini Mentor youth peer mentor program, Mono Basin camp, National Night Out, oral health education, outdoor skills presentation, Owens Valley Career Development Center wildlife presentation, summer youth leadership camp, school superintendent presentation, Walk for Life, WIC National Nutrition Month, and Youth Summer Escape program.

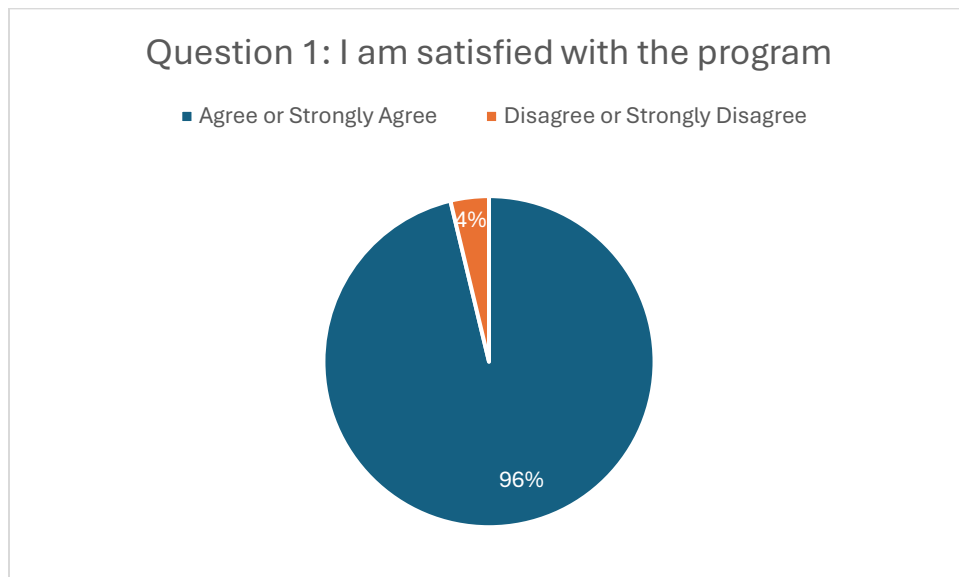


Art in School Days.





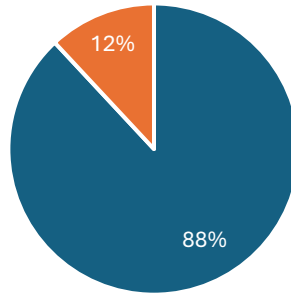
Survey Question	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Respondents
Q1: I am satisfied with the program	77	3	n=80
Q2: I have a positive connection to an adult	59	8	n=67
Q3: I am better able to handle anger	6	1	n=7
Q4: I have more patience	13	12	n=25
Q5: I get along better with others	30	11	n=41
Q6: I am doing better at home and school	6	5	n=11
Q7: I am more confident in school	15	8	n=23
Q8: My school attendance is improving	20	3	n=23
Q9: I feel better about myself	8	12	n=20
Q10: I feel less stressed or anxious	22	3	n=25
Q11: I have an understanding of nature	9	0	n=9
Q12: I am more confident in nature	3	0	n=3
Q13: I experience a connection to nature	13	1	n=14
Q14: My use of substances has decreased	1	7	n=8
Q15: I view marijuana as a substance that causes harm	6	4	n=10
Q16: I have options to engage in positive experiences	12	0	n=12
Q17: I seek out new experiences	21	2	n=23
Q18: I feel a sense of belonging within this group	17	9	n=26





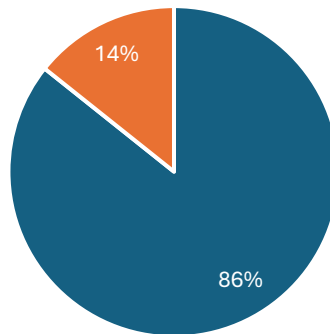
### Question 2: I have a positive connection to an adult

■ Agree or Strongly Agree    ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



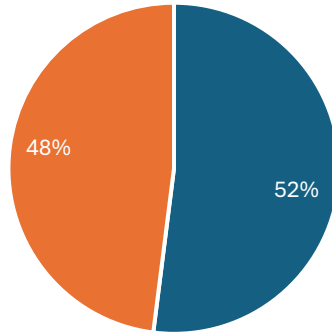
### Question 3: I am better able to handle anger

■ Agree or Strongly Agree    ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



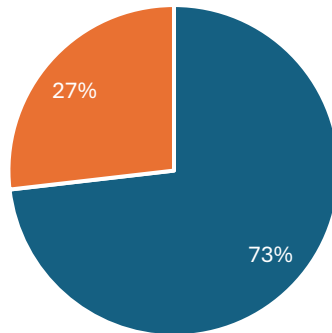
#### Question 4: I have more patience

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



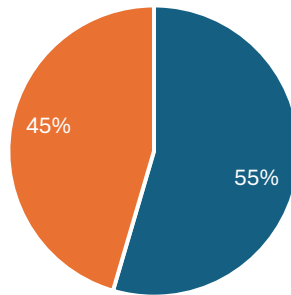
#### Question 5: I get along better with others

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



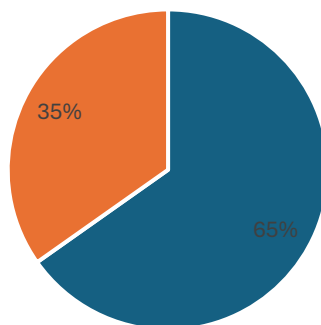
### Question 6: I am doing better at home and school

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



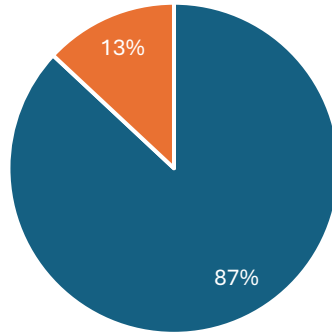
### Question 7: I am more confident in school

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



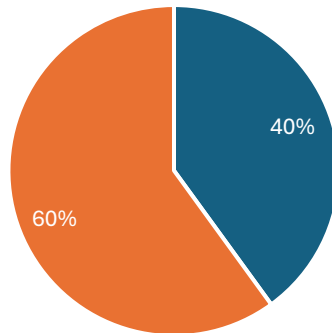
### Question 8: My school attendance is improving

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



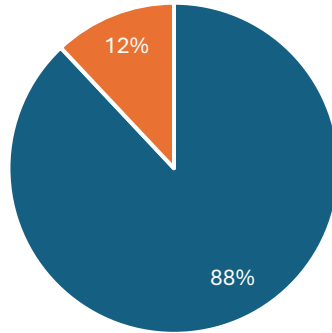
### Question 9: I feel better about myself

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



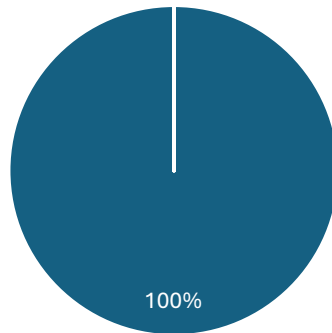
### Question 10: I feel less stressed or anxious

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



### Question 11: I have an understanding of nature

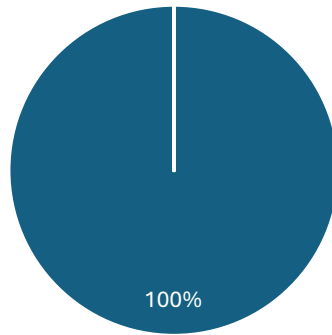
■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree





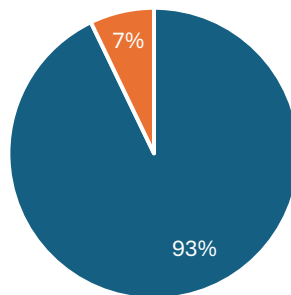
### Question 12: I am more confident in nature

■ Agree or Strongly Agree    ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



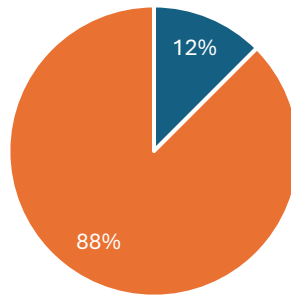
### Question 13: I experience a connection to nature

■ Agree or Strongly Agree    ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



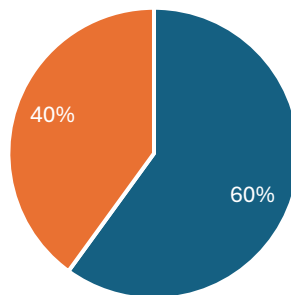
Question 14: My use of substances has decreased

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



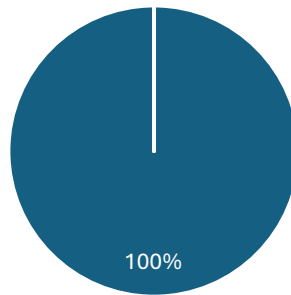
Question 15: I view marijuana as a substance that causes harm

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



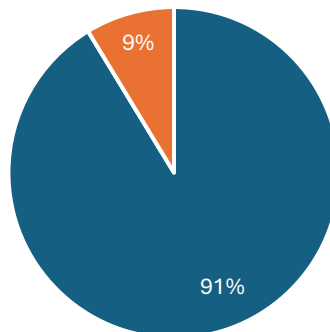
### Question 16: I have options to engage in positive experiences

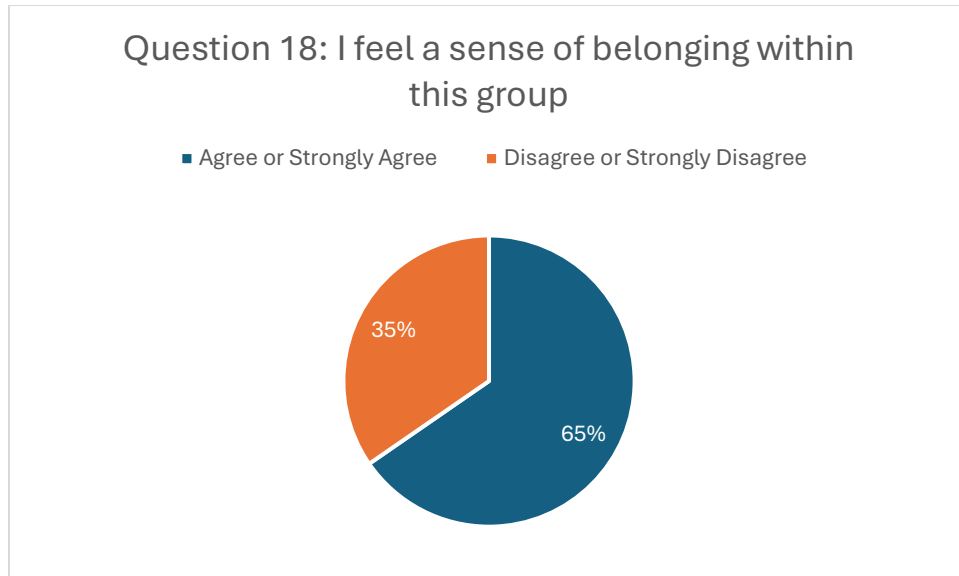
■ Agree or Strongly Agree    ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree



### Question 17: I seek out new experiences

■ Agree or Strongly Agree    ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree





Looking at county-wide trends via community level public health data sources, results are more mixed than participants' survey responses, where youth consistently reported that participating in the HOPE Program was a positive experience and helped them engage in positive behavior change. Between 2021 and 2023, some measures improved, others remained steady, and others declined. However, because of Inyo County's very low population numbers, small changes can have very outsized impacts, and reported changes are often not statistically significant, so all results must be reviewed with that context in mind.

From the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS):

Students reporting current marijuana use either fell or stayed the same between 2021 and 2023, the most recent available data, for 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders:

- 7<sup>th</sup> grade: consistent at 3%
- 9<sup>th</sup> grade: fell from 15% to 5% between 2021 and 2023
- 11<sup>th</sup> grade: consistent at 20%

Students reporting current binge drinking fell between 2021 and 2023 for 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders:

- 7<sup>th</sup> grade: fell from 2% to 1%
- 9<sup>th</sup> grade: fell from 16% to 4%
- 11<sup>th</sup> grade: fell from 22% to 12%

Students reporting currently experiencing chronic sadness/hopeless rose between 2021 and 2023 for 9<sup>th</sup> graders and fell for 11<sup>th</sup> graders:

- 9<sup>th</sup>: rose from 36% to 40%
- 11<sup>th</sup>: fell from 45% to 41%

Students reporting having caring adult relationships fell between 2021 and 2023 for 7<sup>th</sup> graders, 9<sup>th</sup> graders, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders:

- 7<sup>th</sup>: fell from 63% to 51%
- 9<sup>th</sup>: fell from 55% to 47%
- 11<sup>th</sup>: fell from 62% to 53%

From the California Opioid Surveillance Dashboard: Between 2021 and 2023, opioid-related overdose hospitalizations, at an age-adjusted rate per 100,000 residents dropped from 10.27 to 2.78. However, given that Inyo County has less than 20,000 residents, these rates are not representative of true cases.

## 5) Discussion of Results

For answers to 17 out of 18 questions, participants overwhelmingly reported that the HOPE Program was beneficial. Only in response to one question – Question 9 – did participants report that the HOPE Program was not beneficial. Even though participants did not agree with the statement “I feel better about myself,” the fact that the result is a stark outlier suggests that either: 1) it is a unique and interesting finding worthy of further investigation, or 2) the question may have been confusing and/or hard for participants to interpret. Additionally, only 20 participants answered this question, so the finding is not statistically significant, and caution should be used when drawing conclusions. However, because the responses to the other 17 questions indicate a consistent trend, even without statistical significance these results suggest overall HOPE Program success in making a positive difference in participants’ lives and positively altering their behavior.

The HOPE Program overcame many impediments to implementation. COVID-19 posed an enormous and lasting challenge. Inyo County has very low staff numbers, often with entire Departments having only 5-8 people, requiring all employees to wear many hats and making staffing weekend events difficult. Sacred Rok, a key partner, struggles to hire staff members, which caused delays. There are few CBOs in Inyo County, limiting external referrals and requiring complex and specialty services to be provided in-house. Additional obstacles included weather-related challenges, such as when heavy rain caused flooding that wiped out roads to Death Valley National Park and activities had to be rescheduled multiple times.



Lone Pine Day Camp visiting Death Valley National Park.



Even despite these challenges, collaboration with external partners and organizations such as local arts organizations and Tribal partners were hugely beneficial. Even seemingly small opportunities, like collaborations allowing youth to play basketball during open gym and attend after school programs, were hugely beneficial. The HOPE Program was able to successfully implement its core activities while also conducting outreach and engagement at a widespread community level. Inyo County is actively seeking additional and/or supplemental funding sources to ensure that the HOPE Program can continue to be a benefit for the high-risk youth of Inyo County.

## 6) Logic Model

Inyo County established the following logic model when designing the program in 2019. While not all *Outcomes* and *Impacts* were collected and analyzed as originally planned, the initial model was highly ambitious even before, the HOPE Program faced significant obstacles, as mentioned above in the Discussion of Results Section. Many of the metrics included in *Outcomes* and *Impacts* are ones where change over time is typically measured in decades if not generations. It is therefore not surprising that no local data is available in the short term, particularly under less-than-ideal circumstances. The HOPE Program is confident that because the *Inputs* led to successfully completed *Activities* that were accurately tracked via *Outputs*, were the Program and its evaluation efforts to continue for years to come, the downstream *Outcomes* and *Impacts* could be successfully tracked and analyzed via the plan below.

### Inputs

- Staff Time: program development, monitoring, implementation
- Staff Training: Mentor and Outdoor Program skills
- Financial Support: Prop 64 Grant, Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention Block Grant, additional Inyo County funding
- Community Support: Inyo Council for the Arts, Schools, Master Gardeners, Sacred Rok
- County Agencies: Probation, HHS
- Administrative Support: Evaluation planning, data analysis, invoicing and budget tracking

### Activities

- A. Establish afterschool enrichment activities for grades 1-12+.
- B. Establish peer mentoring program for grades 9-12+. The mentors are grades 9-12+ and the mentees are elementary aged youth in the afterschool program.
- C. Establish Outdoor Leadership program for grades 9-12+.
- D. Conduct Outdoor Program trips (Sacred Rok for ages 13-17; Inyo County for younger ages).
- E. Conduct outreach activities for Mentor, Outdoor, and Afterschool programs.

- F. Conduct Mentor Program activities.
- G. Provide updates to Inyo County Board of Supervisors to show the progress and impact of these programs.
- H. Cultivate partnerships between Probation, HHS, and community entities to leverage prevention funds and programming efforts to sustain this project.

#### Outputs

- All: Participant surveys, participant orientation/enrollment paperwork, number of participants, number of ethnic minority participants, participant stories.
- A. Number of partnerships.
- D. Number of partnerships, number of families who attend outings.
- E. Number of partnerships, flyers and educational material, number of presentations at schools or partnering organizations, number of participants reached, number of ethnic minority participants reached.

#### Outcomes

- All: Annually, measure a positive change in the overall protective factors listed by developmental age for each participant.
- A. By April 30, 2024, measure a 10% decrease in the number of youth referrals for behavior issues at the Bishop Elementary School among grades 1 through 5 as measured by the school guidance counselor.  
  
By January 31, 2022, design an afterschool program that includes enrichment and skill-building activities at Bishop Elementary School. By April 30, 2024, expand to 2 other schools in Inyo County.
- B. By September 1, 2022, design a peer mentoring component to the Inyo County Mentor Program, to involve high school-aged youth in the elementary afterschool programs as positive role models.
- C. Annually, at least 90% of children and parents of children in the program will report satisfaction with the program.
- D. By September 1, 2022, double the number of Inyo County Outdoor Program camps and outdoor activities offered each year as measured by program records with 4 camps and 40 outings total per year.

Annually, at least 90% of youth participating will report they had a positive experience in the Inyo County Outdoor Program, they experienced something new as a result of the Inyo County Outdoor Program, they connected with a trusted adult in the Inyo County Outdoor Program, and they felt they belonged due to the Inyo County Outdoor Program.

Annually, at least 75% of youth participating will report a positive change in the following outcomes: better understand nature, more confidence in nature, feel better about self, feel less stressed and anxious, more patient (think before I act), better able to handle anger, get along better with others, do better at home and school

- E. By April 30, 2024, increase overall participation in the Inyo County Mentor Program by 50% with at least 45 mentors and 45 youth participating as measured by program records.

Annually, conduct additional outreach to include ethnic minority youth in the Inyo County Mentor and Outdoor Programs, with at least half of participants involved in the program identifying as ethnic minority youth. Staff will offer at least 2 presentations per year with groups representing different communities reaching at least 200 people with outreach information.

By April 30, 2024, measure a 10% decrease in the number of youth referrals for behavior issues at the Bishop Elementary School among grades 1 through 5 as measured by the school guidance counselor.

By September 1, 2022, double the number of Inyo County Outdoor Program camps and outdoor activities offered each year as measured by program records with 4 camps and 40 outings total per year.

By April 30, 2024, increase participation in the Inyo County Outdoor Program by 50% with at least 120 youth participating as measured by program records.

By April 30, 2024, increase participation in the Inyo County Outdoor Program by 50% with at least 120 youth participating as measured by program records.

At least 50% of youth participating will report a positive change in perception of harm of substances, substance use (middle and high school only), attendance at school, handling anger, confidence in school, and getting along at home.

- F. By April 30, 2024, increase overall participation in the Inyo County Mentor Program by 50% with at least 45 mentors and 45 youth participating as measured by program records.

By April 30, 2024, measure a 10% decrease in the number of youth referrals for behavior issues at the Bishop Elementary School among grades 1 through 5 as measured by the school guidance counselor.

Annually, at least 90% of youth participating will report positive qualities about their relationship with their mentor and they would like to continue the program.

G, H. By April 30, 2024, secure funding to help sustain the program and services funded by the prop 64 grant after the grant program ends.

### Impacts

- Participants will experience an increase in positive childhood experiences.
- Community engagement will increase at participant, family, volunteer, and agency levels.
- Participants will become community educators.
- Participants will believe they are worthy and capable.
- Family involvement will disrupt the cycle of substance use/abuse.
- Programs widely viewed influential for the well-being of Inyo County's high-risk youth, and funding will be procured to sustain them.

### **7) Grantee Highlight**

A stand-alone 1-page success story that highlights a key HOPE Program accomplishment follows on the next page.

## Inyo County and Sacred Rok: A Successful Partnership Benefiting Inyo County Youth



Sacred Rok worked with the Healing Through Outdoor Activities, Prevention, and Engagement (HOPE) Program as a partner agency providing evidence-based nature education and mentoring to youth. Sacred Rok led trips for youth to experience nature and the wilderness by participating in activities that included nature hikes, swimming, fly fishing, rock climbing, daily reflections, trail building in Yosemite National Park, habitat restoration in the Bishop Paiute Tribe's Conservation Open Space Area, and trash cleanups. Overall, the 19 youth who participated in Sacred Rok activities reported a strong decrease in stress and anxiety, and all reported an increase in confidence while in nature.

### Question 10: I feel less stressed or anxious

- Agree or Strongly Agree
- Disagree or Strongly Disagree



### Question 12: I am more confident in nature

- Agree or Strongly Agree
- Disagree or Strongly Disagree



*"Sacred Rok is helping youth learn to respect themselves. The classroom of nature always seems to inspire a higher intelligence of awareness ... One of the youth was extremely reluctant to go on an overnight trip, saying 'I don't know how to swim,' 'I've never slept outside,' and 'what about bears?' And yet ... as we drove into Yosemite and set up camp at Tenaya Lake, through hiking and paddleboarding she was able to stretch herself and enlarge her experience, including seeing a bear and her cub. She even made it through the nights sleeping in a tent. She didn't do it alone though. With staff, a youth mentor, and other youth on the trip, she was able to go through these things as a group and learn new skills as trust developed. [Her final comments were] 'I wished we had more time! I loved it so much!'"*



## 8) Appendices

Inyo County demographic information, as reported by the 2020 Census data, is listed below.

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>% Population</b>	<b>Total Number of People</b>
American Indian/Alaska Native	13.8%	2,624
Asian	1.8%	343
Black/African American	1.2%	229
Native Hawaiian	0.1%	19
Two or more races	4.0%	760
White	79.1%	15,041
Hispanic/Latino/a (ethnicity)	24.8%	4,716
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19,016</b>

<b>Age</b>	<b>% Population</b>	<b>Total Number of People</b>
Under 5	4.9%	932
Between 5 and 17	15.3%	2,909
Between 18 and 65	55.1%	10,478
Over 65	24.7%	4,697
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19,016</b>

## 9) Sources

California Department of Public Health. (2021-2023). *California Overdose Surveillance Dashboard*. <https://skylab.cdph.ca.gov/ODdash>.

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Inyo County. (2025). *Youth Programs Mission*. <https://www.inyocounty.us/Youth-Programs>.

Sacred Rok. (2023). *Annual Report 2023*. <https://www.sacredrok.org/annual-reports>.

United States Census Bureau. (2020). *QuickFacts: Inyo County, California*. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/inyocountycalifornia/HCN010217>.