



Mendocino County Proposition 64 Public Health & Safety Grant Program Local Evaluation Report

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

Mendocino County's Proposition 64 Public Health & Safety Grant Program was awarded to the Probation Department by the California Board for State and Community Corrections as one of 22 grants awarded in the second cohort of the grant which covered the period between May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2024.

Mendocino County's Prop 64 PH&S grant addressed Project Program Area (PPA) 1: Youth Development/Youth Prevention and Intervention. The goals and objectives were developed to counteract the impact that legalized recreational cannabis has on the county's youth. Based on the descriptions of Youth Development and Prevention and Intervention in the Request for Proposals, Mendocino's grant program is a blend of both components focusing on intervening in young people's cannabis and other substance use trajectories, with educational and prevention-oriented programming and activities, while providing a rich youth development program, all within a restorative justice framework. The Restorative Justice Youth Council (RJYC) program was provided by Probation's program partner, Redwood Community Services (RCS). This Local Evaluation Report (LER) describes the extent to which the goals and objectives were achieved. See the full report for all details.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The evaluation of this grant program is based on a logic model which maps out project goals, resources (inputs), activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The evaluation involved both process and outcome components, with details and the overall research design and logic model described in the full report.

Youth Participant Characteristics

The RJYC involved 43 Referred Youth, the same number of Peer Team Volunteers, and 87 Youth Advocates, but participant characteristics were only available for Referred Youth. Of these 51% were male; 33% female; 16% did not disclose. The largest percentage were Latinx (44.2%), followed by White (16%) and Native (12%). The average age was 15.9 years, and the largest percentage lived with their mother (27%). Almost one-third (28%) were gang-involved and 65% were on probation for violent offenses. The high proportion of violent offenses was a factor the RJYC was not as prepared for programmatically as the plan had been for non-violent offenders to be referred to the program.

CONCLUSIONS

Over the last three years, Mendocino County Probation has benefitted from an enhanced ability to ameliorate impacts of recreational cannabis on

justice-involved youth. A visual representation of attainment of objectives by project goal follows:

GOAL 1: Through Restorative Justice Youth Council's (RJYC's) high quality curriculum, EBPs, educational opportunities and activities, referred participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis and other substance use.

A. RCS will provide RJYC Referred Youth Participants with monthly cannabis/other substance educational activities/events:

Yes, met

B. 85% of RJYC Referred Youth Participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis and other substance use:

Not met (with qualifications): - 69.2% increased perception of harm for all but the last item on "all other illegal substances." However, statistically significant improvement occurred for all items except "all other illegal substances" for which participants had a high perception of harm on the pre-survey.

Goal 1 objectives were essentially attained. The RJYC provided a wide range of reoccurring classes in which Referred Youth participated. They improved their perceptions of harm around cannabis and other substance use to a statistically significant extent, with one exception; perception of harm around other illegal substance use was rated as highly harmful initially, leaving little room for improvement on the post-survey. Despite not quite reaching the stated goal of 85%, the fact that the improvements made were large enough, in spite of a small sample size, to reach statistical significance, is important.

GOAL 2: Enroll and Improve positive outcomes of RJYC's Referred Youth Participants, their families, and youth volunteers (i.e., Peer Team/Youth Advocates) including decreased cannabis/other substance use.

Results for Goal 2 objectives were mixed. The RJYC did not quite meet the enrollment goal for Referred Youth Participants but exceeded the goal for Youth Advocates. The program nearly met the 85% completion rate for Referred Youth (i.e., 79.5%). All Youth Advocates completed 100% of their required activities, but none of the parents completed all three of the basic requirements.

Referred Youth increased their knowledge of substance use safety skills and harm reduction. Very little substance use was self-reported, but the average ratings decreased over the program, though not significantly. Referred Youth saw significant

A. Annually, enroll 20 RYPs and 20 PTYV, and 10 YAVs into the RJYC.	Yes, partially met: RYV & PTYV: 43/60-youth goal (71.7%); YAV: 87 of 30 YAV goal (290%).
B. 85% of RYPs will successfully complete RJYC; 75% of RYPs' parents, PTYVs, & YAVs will participate in 80% of required activities;	Yes, partially met: 79.5% of RYPs completed; No parents completed all 3 requirements; 100% of YAVs completed requirements.
C. 85% of RYPs will: 1. increase knowledge/use of harm reduction/safety skills for high risk substance use; 2. decrease self-reported substance use, including cannabis; 3. Improve: 1) social/emotional competencies; 2) mental health outcomes; 3) communication and leadership skills; 4) Self-reported grades/school attendance, measured by surveys	Yes, partially met: C.1. Yes, met; C.2. Not met, improvement noted but not statistically significant; C.3.1. Yes, on 7 of 29 items; C.3.2. Yes; C.3.3. Yes on communication skills items; No, leadership skills not assessed; C.3.4. Improvements in self-reported grades made by 46.2%; fewer days absent self-reported by youth.
D. 75% of RYP parents to increase: 1. perception of harm of youth cannabis and other drug use; 2. their knowledge of community resources, and use of RJYC's referrals to services; and. 3. report positive impacts of RJYC on their child, as measured by program records and parent surveys;	Not met (with qualifications): Responses from 3 of 39 parents. D.1. 3 reported improved perception of harm; D.2. 3 reported improved knowledge of community resources; no referrals; D.3. mixed results; minimal helpfulness of program components; positive impacts of program on their youth.
E. 80% of PTYVs who participate in ≥ 3 hearings, will report their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, social emotional competencies, increased their perception of harm of cannabis/other substance use, and decreased self-reported cannabis and other substance use;	Yes, partially met: Youth reported improved understanding of criminal justice, RJ practices, social/emotional competencies, perception of harm around cannabis and other substances; no change in substance use (minimal use reported).
F. 90% of YAVs will report participation in RJYC improved their understanding of criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, social emotional competencies; leadership skills, their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, decreased self-reported cannabis/other substance use; and increased their confidence in their ability to support peers, measured by surveys.	Yes, partially met: YAVs reported increased understanding of criminal justice, RJ practices, and showed slight increases in social emotional competencies and perception of harm in using substances; however, no statistical tests could be run due to small sample size. There was almost no self-reported substance use within the Youth Advocate survey respondents.

improvements on some but not all of the social and emotional competencies assessed. Past 30-day mental health issues showed significant change from pre- to post-survey. Depression-related items improved as well but not significantly. There was much improvement in barriers that youth reported would keep them from pursuing professional mental health support. Small improvements were made in communication skills, but leadership skills could not be assessed. Self-reported grades showed improvement for 46.2% of the Referred Youth, and self-reported attendance improved somewhat.

It is difficult to draw any conclusions based on parent exit surveys since only three parents completed them. The three who completed the survey showed increases in perception of harm around substance use and agreed that they learned about community resources through their child's involvement in the RJYC program. The three parents found various program components unhelpful for their children, but surprisingly, the same parents indicated that the program was impactful for their children, teaching them about the justice system, restorative justice practices, and that skills developed would benefit them in the future in other settings and situations.

Peer Team Youth Volunteers (who were the same participants as Referred Youth) were required to participate in at least three of their peers' hearings

and did so. Referred Youth indicated on their post-surveys that they had taken much from the program. Importantly, Referred Youth answered a few open-ended questions that also related to the program's impact. About 75% of participants completing pre- and post-surveys provided responses, despite being optional survey items. In summary, though many were not happy that they were required to participate in the program initially, in retrospect they were glad they did, and benefited from their involvement. They liked the staff and classes, calling out the anger management class in particular as very helpful. They also described learning how to talk with adults, including teachers more easily, how to make better decisions, asking for help when they need it, and getting information about substance use/addiction and overdose reversal medication.

Youth Advocate results were available for only nine participants, so statistical tests could not be applied. It must also be noted that most of the Youth Advocates completed the pre- and the post-surveys within two months of each other, while their participation is generally much longer.

Youth Advocate ratings around social and emotional competencies were positive but changed little from pre- to post-survey, which is expected with a short pre-post interval. Perception of harm ratings increased slightly except for cannabis, which fell

slightly, likely due to sample size instability. There was almost no self-reported substance use.

To the extent that this limited data collection allows, Referred Youth and Youth Advocate participants in the RJYC program appeared to have benefited from the program, gaining skills, knowledge, and engaging with RCS staff who supported their efforts.

GOAL 3: Improve capacity of Probation Department to utilize RJYC as a diversion strategy for youth referred for cannabis and other substance use.

A. Probation Department will collaborate with RCS to improve efficiency of referral process to RJYC	Yes, met
B. Probation Department will increase referrals to RJYC by 25% annually over 2020 baseline	Yes, exceeded goal

Based on program documentation and interviews, it appears that the Probation Department and RCS worked collaboratively to ensure that the RJYC program operated and served youth. The agencies met monthly for part of the three-year grant to improve the referral process, and then as needed until the grant's end. Probation referred youth, and RCS enrolled and served them in the RJYC program.

As far as increased referrals are concerned (Objective A), a 2020 baseline could not be determined as the data was not available either from Probation or RCS. Therefore, the first year of the grant acted as the baseline. Referrals were higher for each full year since 2021, from the lowest increase in 2023/24 (80%) to the highest in 2022/23 (220%). The largest referral increase was 6 month grant extension, at 420%.

Objective B was vastly exceeded, which is positive. It was surprising, however, that getting accurate referral numbers was so challenging. Neither Probation nor RCS had ready access to this information, but after considerable research, RCS gathered accurate numbers from case files.

GOAL 4: Build the capacity of Redwood Community Services (RCS) to provide a high quality, sustainable evidence based RJYC, and increase the program's visibility, community presence, and sustainability as a cannabis and other drug prevention/early intervention strategy for Mendocino County youth.

Later in the grant, RCS conducted a review of its curriculum and training sources. Training resources had been purchased through the grant early on, most of which focused on anger management and restorative justice. Support was provided since then

A. RCS will review curriculum, EBPs, and associated educational opportunities and activities used in RJYC activities that relate to harms of youth cannabis use and other substance use and modify any as needed.	Yes, met
B. RCS will modify or purchase curriculum and EBPs and train staff, based on Obj. 4.1 review.	No, not met
C. RJYC will increase program partners 50% over baseline, and referrals into RJYC from new partners by 10% each year, as measured by program records and staff interviews.	Yes, exceeded goal
D. Through inter-agency training, increase external partners' knowledge of restorative justice practices, commitment to a restorative culture, and knowledge of available resources for referred youths' access to SUD treatment and therapeutic support services (e.g., individual/family therapy, anger management), as measured by program records, participation records of staff/partners at outreach events, and surveys.	Yes, extensive outreach, engagement and training provided by RCS

by Youth Transforming Justice (YTJ) without charge, but RJYC program management indicated that more curriculum and training resources were needed to train new staff and enhance programming, adding resources on gang and substance use prevention and intervention.

The intent of Objective B was to provide grant funding for the purchase of additional curriculum and training resources which would not only benefit the Probation Department in its future work with the RJYC program but all other community partners who can refer youth to the program. Though RCS worked with Probation's fiscal office to purchase some suggested resources the program manager sent over for review, it did not happen before the grant's end. This is unfortunate, since there were funds remaining, requiring only a budget modification and an invoice to the grant.

RCS was very successful in adding new community partners to benefit participants, staff, and the RJYC program's sustainability. At the beginning of the grant, the program had two community partners – the Probation Department which utilized the program for youth on probation, and YTJ, which provided the

program structure and model, logistics, and training about restorative justice practices. By the end of the grant, RCS has accumulated 32 additional partnering agencies and individuals, a 1,500% increase.

Finally, review of Quarterly Progress Reports and interviews with RJYC's program manager confirmed that outreach and engagement were a major focus during the grant. Outreach efforts took the form of presentations to agencies and schools that could refer young people or offer ancillary services, such as SUD/mental health support. RCS made presentations to promote the RJYC at interagency meetings and coalitions, providing training to and supporting the events and initiatives of other youth-serving and community-based agencies. See Figure 6 in the full report for outreach benefits. The grant only tracked youth referrals and enrollments from Probation, but RCS indicated that participants were increasingly added to the program from other sources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These evaluation results are informative and lead to several recommendations which are offered for continuous improvement of the partnership between Mendocino County Probation and RCS on behalf of justice involved youth, and the RJYC program.

1. Develop tracking and monitoring systems to more easily access referrals and participants.

It is too often the case that agencies lack databases flexible enough to track and monitor their focus populations but obtaining this data is necessary. Whether participants, clients, patients, knowing who, when, and for how long people have been served or affiliated with a program is needed to understand whether those populations have been reached, served, and how they progressed and exited.

2. Continue to implement surveys for Referred Youth, Youth Advocates, and parents to learn how participants and families experience RJYC.

A benefit of the evaluation work completed for this grant is the development of surveys which assess change and indicate what participants believe the program's benefits and shortcomings are—a critical component of any program improvement effort. As this LER was being written, the contracted evaluator transferred the web-based surveys to the RJYC program manager for continued use to learn how participants change and their perceptions at exit.

3. Improve data collection efforts to more fully determine program impact.

Despite having access to surveys and a clear data collection protocol, the actual data collection for

participants and parents was minimally successful. Exit surveys were completed by only 13% of parents, and matched pre-post surveys were only available for 56.5% of Referred Youth and 31% of Youth Advocates. The last minute efforts to improve the Youth Advocate response rate meant that most matched pairs were conducted within two months of each other, not reflecting their typical length of participation and limiting their usefulness.

Beyond the survey implementation issues, the identification of participants to match surveys was also problematic. The match rate for Referred Youth would have been 73.9% had the correct participant ID numbers been used. Finally, the Leadership skills assessment (i.e., Youth Leadership Competencies Inventory) was not implemented at all, so this program component was not analyzed.

4. Utilize survey results to understand the strengths and challenges of the RJYC for each participant type and to plan future evaluation work and program improvement efforts.

The surveys revealed important information about the experiences of various participants and benefited (or did not benefit) received. Though data collection was less than optimal, findings should be used to plan future evaluation that involve more participants.

5. Use the implementation experiences from the Prop 64 grant to plan future grant management practices and coordinate with partners.

The Mendocino Probation Department's work on the Prop 64 grant was mostly delegated to its primary program partner, RCS, with which it has had a long and mutually beneficial relationship. However, as RCS was not the grantee, the agency was limited in what actions could be taken to improve procurement of funds or respond to BSCC information requests.

Fiscal/grant management and BSCC communications were Probation's roles; quarterly progress reporting, implementation of the RJYC program, and interaction with the evaluator were RCS's primary responsibilities. However, challenges persisted around grant communications, especially during the grant extension and understanding how that impacted the RJYC program, RCS, and the evaluation. Moving forward, it is important that should the Probation Department take on another grant program such as this, they assign appropriate resources to engage with grant funders, the project team, and evaluator to ensure that grant funds are appropriated as planned, and that their engagement promotes the success of the grant program overall.

Project Background

In 2021, a Proposition 64 Public Health & Safety Grant (Prop 64) was awarded to Mendocino County Probation Department by the Board for State and Community Corrections (BSCC). It was one of the 22 grants awarded in the second cohort of the grant program which covered the period between May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2024.

Proposals were required to address eligible activities related to the local impact of legalization of cannabis within one or more Project Purpose Areas (PPAs) as follows:

PPA 1: Youth Development/Youth Prevention and Intervention

PPA 2: Public Health

PPA 3: Public Safety

PPA 4: Environmental Impacts

Mendocino County's Prop 64 PH&S grant addressed PPA 1. The goals and objectives were developed to counteract the impact that legalized recreational cannabis has on youth in the county. Based on the descriptions of Youth Development and Youth Prevention and Intervention in the Request for Proposals, the goals and objectives of Mendocino's grant program are a blend of both components. The program's goals and objectives focus on intervening in young people's cannabis and other substance use trajectories, with educational and prevention-oriented programming and activities, while also providing a rich youth development program for them, all within a restorative justice framework. This Local Evaluation Report (LER) describes the extent to which the goals and objectives have been achieved.

Mendocino County's approach to PPA 1 was to enhance the Restorative Justice Youth Council (RJYC) program, a public/private partnership between Mendocino County Probation and the Arbor-Drug Free Communities Coalition, a Division of Redwood Community Services, Inc. (RCS). Using youth-driven, restorative approaches based on Youth Court, the program will work with high-risk youth and young adults to advocate for restorative practices in schools, with law enforcement, and community-based organizations, providing trauma-informed alternatives to juvenile justice and suspension systems. Within the RJYC program, youth participate in peer-with-peer support and mentorship activities to increase protective factors and independent living skills. To ensure equity of access across the rugged rural areas of the county, the service model includes a variety of in-person and virtual activities. Mendocino County's PPA 1 youth participant roles, eligibility, and intervention information appears in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Program Participation Information for Restorative Justice Youth Council (RJYC)

Population	Criteria for Eligibility	Criteria for Selection of Intervention
Referred Youth Participants (RYPs)	Participants are Mendocino County youth ages 12 – 17, 1 st time offenders of non-violent crime or non-violent school offenses. Youth are referred from Probation or by Mendocino schools and other sources.	Referred youth participate in compulsory and discretionary activities. Discretionary activities are discussed between the RYP and the RJYC Coordinator at intake. The possible options and recommendations of the RJYC Coordinator are determined at the RYP's hearing. The formal Restorative Justice Case Plan is delivered as the official sanctions by the RJYC.
Peer Team Youth Volunteers (PTYVs)	Participants are the RYPs who, as part of their participation, appear in the Youth Council Proceedings of at least 3 other RYPs.	The RJYC model is designed to include this as a component of the referred youths' compulsory activities while participating in the RJYC.
Youth Advocate Volunteers (YAVs)	Once RYPs complete their PTYV requirements, they can become a YAV. The YAV is open to any young person (16 – 25) with an interest in restorative justice and the time to participate.	The YAV role is described within the RJYC program description in the LEP. The YAVs all engage in the same activities.

Evaluation Overview

The evaluation of Mendocino County's Prop 64 grant program is based on logic model for its project. The logic model addresses the goals and maps out project resources (inputs), activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts and are shown in Appendix A. The evaluation involved both process and outcome components, the details of which, as well as the overall research design, and data collection follow. The evaluation questions addressing process and outcome objectives are shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Evaluation Questions

Process-related Evaluation Questions	Outcome-related Evaluation Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Were grant activities implemented as planned?• What barriers were encountered in implementation?• What modifications were needed to overcome barriers?• How well were grant activities implemented?• Were the target audiences reached and engaged?• How satisfied was the target audience with services received?• How did external factors impact implementation?• What lessons have been learned to improve program efforts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How well did the grant activities work in changing conditions, knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviors?• Did grant activities benefit some participants more than others?• Which aspects of the grant were the most successful or seen as most valuable by the target audience?• What external factors influenced the outcomes?

During the grant (in Quarter 9), an evaluator was contracted. The work plan and logic models were reconfigured and approved by the BSCC resulting in more measurable objectives aligned to the project activities. The modification of PPA goals, objectives, and linkages within the logic models, Local Evaluation Plan (LEP), and subsequent evaluation work, was facilitated by evaluation consultant, Lori Mulholland of Mulholland Research & Evaluation Services (MRES) based in Sonoma County.

Research Design

The evaluation of Mendocino County's grant relies on mixed methods, incorporating quantitative and qualitative data to inform both process and outcome evaluation. Table 3 is an evaluation matrix that describes the nature of each objective (i.e., process or outcome-oriented), data sources, and frequency of data collection. Quantitative data documented many of the process-related objectives and certain components of all outcome-related objectives. Quantitative and qualitative data were used to assess change in perceptions and knowledge of youth, young adult, and family participants for specific youth prevention-related objectives. Qualitative data also informed the evaluation with insights about impacts, systemic barriers, challenges, and successes encountered during implementation of the RJYC Program.

Process Evaluation

The process evaluation focuses on the extent of implementation and completion of grant activities. The evaluation will triangulate both quantitative and qualitative data as needed to document implementation and provide various perspectives on the quality of implementation, barriers, and facilitators encountered to inform program improvement efforts. The objectives involve both process and outcome evaluation. Although all objectives are considered outcome-related, process-related data was collected continuously alongside the measurement of outcomes. Process-related indicators documenting implementation were measured in part through program records as well as through surveys as appropriate.

Outcome Evaluation

The outcome evaluation assesses the change in conditions, attitudes, knowledge, or behaviors for intended populations addressed in the objectives being measured. Surveys assessed outcome measures that address change in participant attitudes or knowledge, surveys are used. For objectives that intend for a change of conditions based upon an intervention, program records and interviews were used.

Data Sources and Data Collection

Data sources and data collection by goals, objectives, and the description of objectives as process- or outcome-related, and frequency of data collection are shown in the Evaluation Matrix in Figure 3. The categorization of data as quantitative or qualitative is described below. The extent to which quantitative and qualitative data were used to measure objectives is shown in Figure 4.

Quantitative Data Collection

Objectives will be measured in part with quantitative data from program records for information such as enrollment statistics and participation rates, staff training, documentation of purchases, and assessment results. Quantitative program record data will be collected from multiple sources such as participant sign in sheets, training logs, activity records, and the results of social/emotional competency and leadership development assessments. These records will be added into a project database when not otherwise stored in program-specific databases.

There are also quantitative elements to survey data. Surveys are to be implemented for Referred Youth Participants, Peer Team Volunteers, and parents. Responses will be averaged within participant groups, and percentage of responses falling along each end of the Likert-type scale (e.g., percent of students who Strongly Agree/Agree).

Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative data was collected within the evaluation of PPA 1 objectives, including:

- **Program records** related to various aspects of the RJYC program, collaborative efforts, types of activities and events held for youth and parents, referral services, and involvement of additional program partners;
- **Pre-post RJYC program participation surveys**, which included both qualitative and quantitative data, were implemented with Referred Youth Participants, regarding their experiences in the program and as a Peer Team Youth Volunteer, Youth Advocate Volunteers, and parents of Referred Youth Participants; Surveys included items related to perception of harm from substance use and mental health, modified from the California Healthy Kids Survey (2020). Social and emotional competency items were based on the Washoe County (Nevada) Social and Emotional Competency Assessment Item Bank (2018). Data Collection Protocol is included as Appendix B;
- **Pre-post youth leadership development assessments** for Referred Youth Participants to show changes in leadership and communication skills. The Youth Leadership Competencies Inventory was to be utilized to assess leadership skills. This tool (open source) was developed as part of the Student Leadership Competencies Program by Corey Seemiller, Ph.D. Educational Leadership Studies Professor at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio;
- **Key informant interviews** of Probation and RCS staff/administrators and select program partners about the change in capacity to use RJYC as a diversion strategy; the capacity of RCS to grow the program and sustain it, and the value the program has to the wider community for addressing justice-involved youth and youth at risk of substance use disorder and justice involvement.

Figure 3. Mendocino County Prop 64 PPA 1 Evaluation Matrix

Goal	Goal/Objective	Process or Outcome	Data Source	Collection Frequency
Goal 1: Through Restorative Justice Youth Council's (RJYC's) high quality curriculum, EBPs, educational opportunities and activities, participants will increase their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use.	By 2024: A. RCS will provide RJYC Referred Youth Participants with monthly cannabis/other substance educational activities/events; B. 85% of RJYC Referred Youth Participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis & other substance use.	a. Process b. Outcome	a. Program records, observation b. Participant survey	a. Quarterly b. Quarterly
Goal 2: Enroll and Improve positive outcomes of RJYC's Referred Youth Participants, their families, and youth volunteers (i.e., Peer Team/Youth Advocates) to include decreased use of cannabis and other substance use.	By 2024: A. Annually, enroll 20 unduplicated Referred Youth Participants and 20 Peer Team Volunteers, and 10 unduplicated Youth Advocate Volunteers into the RJYC; B. 85% of Referred Youth Participants will successfully complete RJYC; and 75% of referred youth's parents, Peer Team Youth Volunteers, and Youth Advocate Volunteers will participate in 80% of required activities; C. 85% of Referred Youth Participants will: a. increase knowledge/use of harm reduction/safety skills for high risk substance use; b. decreased self-reported substance use, including cannabis; c. Improve: 1) social/emotional competencies; 2) mental health outcomes; 3) communication and leadership skills; 4) Self-reported grades/school attendance, as measured by program records and participant surveys/assessments; D. 75% of referred youths' parents/guardians will increase: a. perception of harm of youth cannabis and other drug use; b. their knowledge of community resources, and use of RJYC's referrals to services; & c. report that RJYC positive impacts on their child, as measured by program records and parent surveys/ interviews; E. 80% of Peer Team Youth Volunteers who participate in 3 or more hearings, will report that their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of the criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, and social emotional competencies, increased their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, and decreased self-reported cannabis and other substance use; F. 90% of Youth Advocate Volunteers will report that their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of the criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, and social emotional competencies; improved leadership skills, increase their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, decreased self-reported cannabis and other substance use; and increased their confidence in their ability to support peers as measured by youth volunteer surveys and/or focus groups, and assessments.	a. Process b. Process c. Outcome d. Outcome e. Outcome f. Outcome	a. Program records b. Program records c. a) Participant survey b) Participant survey c) Participant survey; assessments of social/emotional competency scales d. a) Parent survey b) Parent survey c) Parent survey and program records for referrals to services e. Peer Team Youth Volunteer Survey f. Youth Advocate Volunteer focus group	a. Quarterly b. Quarterly c. Biannually d. Biannually e. Quarterly f. Biannually

Goal	Goal/Objective	Process or Outcome	Data Source	Collection Frequency
Goal 3: Improve capacity of Probation Department to utilize RJYC as a diversion strategy for youth referred to them for cannabis and other substance use.	By 2024:			
	A. Probation Department will collaborate with RCS to improve efficiency of referral process to RJYC; B. Probation will increase referrals to RJYC by 25% annually over 2020 baseline.	a. Process b. Process	a. Program records/ document review b. Program records	a. Annually b. Annually
Goal 4: Build the capacity of Redwood Community Services (RCS) to provide a high quality, sustainable evidence based RJYC, and increase the program's visibility, community presence, and sustainability as a cannabis and other drug prevention and early intervention program strategy for Mendocino County youth.	By 2024:			
	A. RCS will review curriculum, EBPs, and associated educational opportunities and activities used in RJYC activities that relate to harms of youth cannabis use and other substance use and modify any as needed;	a. Process	a. Documentation, review of process/ Staff interviews	a. Annually
	B. RCS will modify or purchase curriculum and EBPs and train staff, based on Objective 4.A review;	b. Process	b. Purchase records/ Training records	b. Point-in-time
	C. RJYC will increase program partners 50% over baseline, and referrals into RJYC from new partners by 10% each year, as measured by program records and staff interviews;	c. Process	c. Program records/ Staff interviews	c. Annually
	D. Through inter-agency training, increase external partners' knowledge of restorative justice practices, commitment to a restorative culture, and knowledge of available resources for referred youths' access to SUD treatment and therapeutic support services (e.g., individual/family therapy, anger management), as measured by program records, participation records of staff/partners at outreach events, and surveys.	d. Outcome	d. Program records/ Participation records, Interviews of new partners	d. Annually

Figure 4. Quantitative and Qualitative Data Sources

Data Source	Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data	Quantitative Data Accessed
Program Records	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of referrals to RJYC by Probation, schools, other sources • RJYC enrollment of RYPs, PTYVs, and YAVs • # and type of monthly cannabis/other substance education activities and events • Participation records for RYPs, PTYVs, YAVs, and parents • Collaborative efforts, meetings to improve the referral process from Probation • Curriculum purchase, EBPs added (if needed), training conducted • Referrals to services for families/parents • Change in number of program partners
Social Emotional Competency Assessments	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in social/emotional competencies and mental health
Referred Youth Participant Survey	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reported change in knowledge/use of harm reduction/safety skills in high risk drug use • Change in self-reported ratings of substance use, including cannabis • Change in Self-reported grades/school attendance • Change in self-reported ratings of mental health, communication, and leadership skills
Peer Team Youth Volunteer Survey	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in self-reported ratings of criminal justice system knowledge, restorative justice practices, leadership skills, and social emotional competencies • Change in perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use • Change in self-reported cannabis and other substance use
Youth Advocate Volunteer Survey	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in perception of the criminal justice system, restorative justice • Social and emotional competencies gained • Changes in perceptions of cannabis and other substance use • Perceptions about the role of supporting other peers • Most valuable aspects of their participation as a YAV and suggestions for improvement.
Parent Survey	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrospective change in ratings on knowledge of community resources • Self-reported referrals to resources and use of those referrals • Level of impact of RJYC on their child
Key Informant Interviews with RCS, Probation, and Program Partners		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspectives on change in Probation Department's capacity to use RJYC as a diversion strategy for youth; capacity of RCS to grow and sustain the RJYC, and value the program provides to community partners

The qualitative focus of surveys and interviews are shown here by role:

Referred Youth Participant Surveys:

- Communication and leadership skills learned and social and emotional competencies gained
- Changes in perceptions of cannabis and other substance use
- Most valuable aspects of their participation and suggestions for improvement.

Peer Team Youth Volunteer Surveys:

- Changes in perception of the criminal justice system, restorative justice,
- Social and emotional competencies gained

- Changes in perceptions of cannabis and other substance use
- Most valuable aspects of their participation as a PTYV and suggestions for improvement.

Parent Survey:

- Perceptions about youth cannabis and other substance use
- Perceived helpfulness of family participation in their child's RJYC
- Perceived helpfulness of information shared on community resources, referrals to resources
- Barriers to use of referrals, perceived usefulness of the referrals, and impact on family
- Perceived impact of RJYC on their child

Youth Advocate Survey:

- Changes in perception of the criminal justice system, restorative justice
- Social and emotional competencies gained
- Changes in perceptions of cannabis and other substance use
- Perceptions about the role of supporting other peers
- Most valuable aspects of their participation as a YAV and suggestions for improvement

Administrative Staff and Program Partner Key Informant Interviews:

- Process and findings from RCS review of curriculum, EBPs, and educational opportunities and activities used in RJYC that relate to harms of youth cannabis use and other substance use
- Any modifications made and the impact on the program
- Helpfulness and impact of any new curriculum purchased, EBPs put into use, and training
- Collaborative efforts between RCS and Probation Department to improve referrals to RJYC
- Probation Department perception of value RJYC program to youth and Probation's goals
- Program partners views on benefits of RJYC to youth and community, successes and challenges

Logic Model

Mendocino County's Logic Models are included as Appendix A of this LER.

Data Analysis

The data analysis methods used within this evaluation include both quantitative and qualitative methods which are described below. Overall, qualitative data was triangulated with quantitative data to allow data from various sources to inform the measurement of each objective where appropriate. In this way, data that describes the extent of implementation is combined with the quality of implementation. Qualitative data provides insights into the reasons why a particular program component was or was not implemented to the extent intended, and the extent to which the objective was achieved.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected for process and outcome objectives were analyzed using various analytical tools. Surveys were implemented using a web-based survey platform. Excel was used to capture descriptive statistics to address relevant objectives. SPSS for statistical analysis was used to calculate inferential statistics to determine whether attitudes, knowledge, and/or behavior changes significantly from the pre- to post-test or by retrospective post-test. The latter questions were analyzed using dependent samples paired t-tests in SPSS statistical software. Program records were used to gather numerical data related to change over time, such as numbers of referrals and participant enrollment. These numbers were compared to the baseline year number and a simple percentage change calculated to show change over time.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data from surveys and key informant interviews underwent content analysis to determine prominent themes and response patterns within and across groups and questions.

Data Management

Data was managed collaboratively between Mendocino County Probation, RCS, and MRES. The MRES evaluator met frequently with RCS to ensure that data collection tools were developed, evaluation activities are implemented as required, timelines are maintained, and any unforeseen challenges are addressed in a timely way.

All survey data that required matching (e.g., pre/post-test design) was matched using a unique participant identification number used within RJYC. When necessary, data was transferred from RCS to MRES via a Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP). Once transferred, data was kept in a password protected secure drive. At the conclusion of the grant, the data will be destroyed by MRES.

Project Management

The MRES evaluator communicated with Mendocino County Probation and/or RCS as needed by phone and email regarding program implementation and evaluation activities. MRES also met virtually with the Mendocino grant team, at first monthly, and then as needed to review progress and plan next steps. During meetings, project implementation, current activities, and challenges and concerns were discussed. The evaluator conducted a site visit with RCS in April 2023 to finalize data collection procedures and train staff on implementing survey tools. The management of the grant, tool development, and decision-making used a collaborative approach between the grant team.

County Probation, RCS, and MRES met as needed to plan for the delivery of Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) to the BSCC. MRES shared preliminary results with Mendocino County Probation and RCS to ensure that data collection systems were operating optimally, and that results obtained are moving toward the achievement of objectives. The purpose of the bi-annual preliminary review will be to discuss the emerging results and determine whether any course corrections need to be made to program implementation or to data collection or to the overall evaluation itself.

Limitations of Data

Since available funding did not permit a rigorous experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design as the costs of adding a randomly assigned control group or a comparison group would have been prohibitive and impractical, it cannot be ruled out that other factors may to some extent have influenced participant change or changes in the indicators of improvement. Therefore, it is not possible to determine, with reasonable certainty, that the changes that participants experience, are due exclusively to the program and not to external factors. The data collected, however, directly assesses the experiences, knowledge gained, attitudes and behavior changes of all program participants which should be used for program improvement and further program planning purposes.

Applied research and evaluation of programs are conducted in real life settings which cannot be controlled to the extent that research within a lab or clinical setting can, and therefore, are subject to several limitations, including self-selection bias and the limitations of the non-experimental design. Survey data for participants is also self-reported, and therefore is subject to individuals' interpretation, accurate memory around experiences, and sometimes, social responding (i.e., responding in ways that participants believe presents them in a positive light). These limitations are also possible in interviews and focus groups as well. It is also the case that often program participants

are not overly interested in completing surveys and may not provide responses that represent their true feelings, rushing or skipping questions, or in other ways that increase response bias. For instance, some participants answer questions similarly, such as answering “Agree” to all questions or respond randomly. These are examples of “response set” and are a limitation to collecting accurate data.

While it is not possible to prevent all these types of response bias, several strategies were put in place to minimize the likelihood of their occurrence. First, the evaluator wrote introductions to each survey describing the need for accurate representations of respondent perceptions and ensured confidentiality and anonymity of results. Staff who administered or interacted with participants prior to survey administration were also trained to reiterate to participants the importance of honest answers and the confidentiality and anonymity of results. Most surveys were administered upon intake to the program (i.e., pre-surveys) and immediately upon completion of the program or the participant’s stay in the program to minimize the amount of time for memory to shift. Most items included in surveys were denoted as required and so could not be skipped. Open-ended questions were not treated in this way so only those who wanted to provide additional insights could do so, as requiring answers to such questions often results in participants abandoning the survey. The evaluator reviewed survey responses to ensure that there was a limited occurrence of response sets. In interviews, the evaluator reiterated to participants that the information was to be used for program improvement and that individual responses would not be called out or shared with the grant team in any way that would identify the individual respondents.

Data collected is never perfect and limitations exist based on the consistency and accuracy of its collection. It is also challenging to obtain survey data especially when program staff must administer the surveys themselves. In some instances, program staff forgot to administer surveys or indicated that the time they had with participants was too minimal to administer the surveys, limiting the number of responses. The resulting small number of surveys limits the reliability of the data in that individual bias can impact results, i.e., outliers can more easily skew results one way or another than if results reflected a larger sample.

Data Collection and Participant Characteristics

The implementation of survey data and basic participant characteristics are shown here to provide context for the evaluation results that follow in the next section of the LER. The number and response rate of pre- and post-surveys collected by respondent type appear in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant Survey Numbers and Rates

Respondent Type	# of Pre-surveys	# of Post-surveys	# / % of Matched Pairs	# of Participants During Grant	Overall Response Rate (Paired or Post-surveys / Total Participants)
Referred Youth	23	17	13 / 56.5%	39	33.3%
Youth Advocates	24	10	9 / 31.0%	87	10.3%
Parents of Referred Youth	N/A	3	N/A	39	7.7%*

* This is an overall response rate; however, if it is based on the time since Referred Youth began completing intake surveys (using 23 as the number of pre-surveys collected), the response rate increases to 13.0%.

Participation in the surveys for Referred Youth and Advocates was generally low, but especially so for the Post-surveys. Over half of the Referred Youth who completed the pre-survey also completed the post-survey. Still, compared to the number of participants, the response rate was only 33.3%.

Youth Advocate survey participation was lower, with 31% completing both pre- and post-surveys. Compared to overall Advocate numbers, just 10.3% completed both pre- and post-surveys. Parents

were only asked to complete a post-program survey; only three participated, for a 7.7% response rate. Using the number of youth pre-surveys collected as a basis, the rate increases to 13.0%.

Typical data collection includes descriptive characteristics of each type of participant in a program. However, it was only possible to gather participant characteristics for Referred Youth Participants. These participants each had case files which the RJYC program manager reviewed to capture basic characteristics of the total population of Referred Youth Participants. This was not the case for Youth Advocates. Figure 5 shows characteristics at intake of all 43 Referred Youth Participants.

Figure 5. Referred Youth Participant Demographic and Other Characteristics at Intake

Race/Ethnicity	Intake Age	Housing/Living Situation at Intake	Offenses that led to Probation Involvement *
Asian: 1 (2.3%) Black/African American: 3 (7%) Caucasian/White: 7 (16.3%) Hispanic/Latino: 19 (44.2%) Native American: 5 (11.6%) Mixed race/ethnicity: 4 (9.3%) Blank/Refused: 4 (9.3%)	13= 1 (2.3%) 14= 4 (9.3%) 15= 8 (18.6%) 16= 17 (39.5%) 17= 13 (30.2%) Ave = 15.9	Parents: 6 (14%) Mom: 20 (46.5%) dad: 2 (4.7%) Foster: 2 (4.7%) mom/step-parent: 3 (7%) Family (aunt/uncle, grandparents: 3 (7%) Blank/unknown: 7 (16.2%)	Overall: Violent offenses: 28 (65.1%) Gang involvement: 12 (27.9%) Offenses taking place at school: 20 (46.5%) Violence at school: 16 (37.2%) Weapons related: 5 (11.9%) Specific: Battery: 21 (48.8%) Possession of substances: 12 (27.9%) Disorderly conduct: 5 (11.6%) Conspiracy: 4 (9.3%) 3 (7%) each: Possession of a gun/knife (2 were at school); Fighting at school; vandalism 2 (4.7%) each: assault with weapon; weapon at school; shoplifting, burglary; obstruction 1 (2.3%) each: DUI, Reckless Driving, threat to kill teacher, threaten with crime/terrorism, stalking, trespass, petty theft, dissuading witness, false fire alarm, false ID
Gender			
Female: 14 (32.6%) Male: 22 (51.2%); Missing/Refused: 7 (16.3%)			

* 25 of 43 (58.1%) Referred Youth Participants were on probation for more than one offense

All categories except for age and infraction contained missing data or youth either refused or preferred not to answer. Percentages of missing data is shown in the figure above. Of 43 Referred Youth Participants, the highest percentage were Hispanic/Latino (44.2%), followed by White (16.3%) and Native American (11.6%). Almost one-third of youth were female, and 51.2% were male; the rest (16.3% preferred not to answer or) left the item blank. The average age at intake was 15.9 years, with a range of 13 to 17 years. The largest percentage were 16 years old (39.5%). Almost 15% lived with both parents, while those living with their mother constituted 46.5%; those living with their father were 4.7% of the total. Another 7% lived with a parent and step-parent, and another 7% lived with relatives, such aunts, uncles or grandparents. Finally, 4.7% were listed as living in foster care.

In terms of the offenses for which youth were on probation, the highest percentage were violent in nature (65.1%). Gang involvement was described in 27.9% of the cases. Violent offenses that took place at school were described within 16 (37.2%) of the cases. These are disturbing but are relevant factors in program implementation since the work between the Probation Department and RCS was based on non-violent offenders being referred to the RJYC; however, for two-thirds of referred youth, this was not the case. The level of violent offenses by youth referred by probation was something that the RJYC program was not initially as prepared for in terms of curriculum and training as they would like to have been.

Evaluation Results

Results, organized by each goal and objective are shown below.

GOAL 1: Through RJYC's high quality curriculum, EBPs, educational opportunities and activities, referred participants will increase their perception of harm about cannabis/other substance use.

By 2024:

A. RCS will provide RJYC Referred Youth Participants with monthly cannabis/other substance educational activities/events.

Each month RCS produces a calendar of activities that will take place at the Arbor Teen Center/Youth Resource Center. Each weekday, there is a reoccurring set of activities, educational, recreational, skill building, or therapeutic sessions. By domain, these activities are shown in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. RJYC - Arbor Teen Center/Youth Resource Center Monthly Activities

Type of Activity	Recreational	Life Skills / Educational	Therapeutic / personal Development
Session Name	Morning walk Redwood Trail Clean-up Gardening Dream Catcher-making Board games Crochet class	Job/Employment skills Resume assistance CalFresh nutrition/application assistance Sex education Self-care class Learning social confidence Healthy relationships Domestic violence education Food bank/Housekeeping skills Let's Talk: AOD education Narcan training	Healthy Living Circle Express to Destress Anger management Self-care Support Circle: Raise Up Talking Circle Art Expression LGBTQIA2S+ Drop-in Sexuality and Gender Affirming Service Resources (S.A.G.A.) Youth Council

B. 85% of RJYC Referred Youth Participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis and other substance use.

The pre- and post-surveys used assessed perception of harm for cannabis, alcohol, and all other illegal drugs. Matched surveys were available for 13 youth participants. Of the 13 youth, nine (69.2%) increased their score on perception of harm for all items totaled; the other four (30.8%) had the same total score from pre- to post-survey. Based on the wording of the objective, the RJYC did not meet the 85% threshold increase in perception of harm around regular marijuana use. However, analysis shows statistically significant increases in perception of harm for the first four items, including the regular marijuana/cannabis use item. The results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Referred Youth Perception of Harm From Pre- to Post-Survey

How much do teens risk harming themselves physically and in other ways when they:	N	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Statistically Significant	t-test Results
1. Drink alcohol regularly (at least weekly or more)	13	2.38	2.92	Yes	$t(12) = 2.5011 p = .0279$
2. Have 5 or more drinks of alcohol at least once or twice a week	13	2.46	3.08	Yes	$t(12) = 2.5512 p = .0254$
3. Use cannabis/marijuana regularly (at least weekly or more often—smoke, vape, eat or drink)	13	2.08	3.08	Yes	$t(12) = 4.4159 p = .0008$
4. Use prescription drugs to get high or for reasons other than prescribed	13	2.92	3.77	Yes	$t(12) = 2.8561 P = .0145$
5. Use other illegal drugs to get high (such as cocaine, meth, heroin, fentanyl, etc.)	13	3.15	3.85	Almost*	$t(12) = 2.1116 p = .0564$

Scale: 4 = Great risk; 3 = Moderate risk; 2=Slight risk; 1=No risk * = Almost significant at .05 level

Improvements in desirable scores were made from pre- to post-survey for all five items, four of which are considered statistically significant improvements (highlighted in green). However, it should be noted that the probability (i.e., p value) for the last item (perception of harm in using other illicit drugs) at .0564 was just beyond the standard cut-off for determining statistical significance (i.e., the probability of obtaining the result due to random fluctuation in five or fewer times out of 100 times, or .05%). Not coincidentally, this item was the most highly rated for risk on the pre-survey, indicating the most agreement that using illegal drugs was a great risk, and as such the *ceiling effect* is at play, where improvement is difficult to achieve as most agreed that using these substances was a great risk before exposure to the program.

In addition to the average ratings improving statistically in four of the five items, it is also worth noting that the post-survey responses for all items were much more closely clustered around the mean than they were on the pre-survey. The closer dispersion of post-scores indicates that there was much more agreement around the improved or desired responses after the program than there was before participants began the program, which is also a positive finding.

GOAL 2: Enroll and Improve positive outcomes of RJYC’s Referred Youth Participants, their families, and youth volunteers (i.e., Peer Team/Youth Advocates) including decreased cannabis/other substance use.

By 2024:

- A. Annually, enroll 20 unduplicated Referred Youth Participants and 20 Peer Team Volunteers, and 10 unduplicated Youth Advocate Volunteers into the RJYC.

Over the course of the grant, a total of 43 youth were referred to the RJYC from probation. This represents 71.7% of the 60 youth goal. Since each referred youth participant also serves as a Peer Team Volunteer, the numbers and percentages are the same for both these participant types.

Youth Advocates, by comparison, were enrolled at numbers well beyond the goal of ten per year; 87 Youth Advocates participated (290% of the 30 participant goal). Table 3 shows enrollment by year.

Table 3. Enrollment of Youth and Youth Advocates by Year

Year	Year 1 # / % of Goal	Year 2 # / % of Goal	Year 3 # / % of Goal	Extension Period (Apr – Oct 2024)	TOTAL # / % of Goal
Referred Youth and Peer Team Volunteer Enrollment	5 (25%)	16 (80%)	9 (45%)	13 *	43 (71.7%)
Youth Advocates	12 (120%)	13 (130%)	25 (250%)	37	87 (290%)

* 39 is used as denominator since 4 of the youth enrolled were still enrolled as the grant extension period ended.

The extension period proved to be a time of high enrollment, especially for Youth Advocates. The addition of this time period helped improve overall numbers attained.

- B. 85% of Referred Youth Participants will successfully complete RJYC; 75% of their parents, Peer Team Youth Volunteers, and Youth Advocates will participate in 80% of required activities.

Referred Youth Program Completion:

Program completion was captured in QPRs and separately by the RCS staff who operated the RJYC program. Completion rates by year are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Referred Youth RJYC Program Completion by Year

Year	Year 1 # / % of Goal	Year 2 # / % of Goal	Year 3 # / % of Goal	Extension Period (Apr – Oct 2024)	TOTAL # / % of Goal
Referred Youth Completing the RJYC Program	4 of 5 (80%)	12 of 16 (80%)	8 of 9 (88.9%)	7 of 9 (77.8%) *	31 of 39 (79.5%)*

* 39 is used as denominator since 4 of the youth enrolled were still enrolled as the grant extension period ended.

Review of the QPRs and RCS program records shows that a total of 31 referred youth of the 39 who exited during the grant completed the RJYC program (79.5%). This falls short of the planned 85% successful completion rate included within the objective. The remaining four participants were still in the program as the extension period ended.

Parental Participation:

RCS staff have reported throughout the grant that engaging the participation of parents of Referred Youth Participants is extremely challenging. Reported barriers to participation include work schedules, parenting demands, transportation, family dysfunction, substance/mental health challenges, as well as the inclusion of others who are filling in for parents as guardians, such as grandparents or other extended family. Factors related to fulfilling the demands of being a guardian for another child also impacted some individuals' ability to participate in the RJYC. That said, there are three basic activities that parents are required to engage in when their child is enrolled: 1) Enrolling the youth in the program and completing enrollment information/the intake interview; 2) Completing the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) educational session; and 3) Completing the post-program survey. These are results:

1. Enrollment/Intake Process/Interview: Program records indicate that all 43 parents/guardians (100%) completed the intake enrollment forms and interview.
2. AOD Education: Only 2 of the 39 parents of Referred Youth who exited the RJYC program (5.1%) completed the AOD education session.
3. Exit Survey: A total of 3 parents (7.7%) completed the RJYC exit survey for parents.

Peer Team Youth Volunteer Participation:

All Referred Youth Participants who completed the program (i.e., 39) during the full grant period participated in three or more peer hearings to complete their Peer Team Youth Volunteer requirements.

Youth Advocates:

Youth Advocates are required to complete six hours of training on restorative justice practices, how to build rapport with youth from diverse backgrounds, and learn skills to support Referred Youth Participants through their program from intake to completion and attend hearings. A sample of the recent Youth Advocate trainings include these topics:

- The school to prison pipeline: policies and practices that push youth into the juvenile justice system;
- US prison population and the racial disparities, invisible/cumulative/intergenerational inequality and bias;
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): What they are and using them to understand risk and empower youth;
- Six benchmarks of trauma-informed care;
- What is restorative justice? Definition, practices, traditional vs restorative, fair process;
- Restorative language used in the program, pre-hearing conference goals, hearing procedure, how to write an opening and closing statement, how to draft a restorative plan;
- How to use "stages of change" model in questioning, trauma-informed questions; and,
- What is motivational interviewing?

There is no formal exit for Advocates. They volunteer as long as they are able. All Advocates volunteered at least two months; therefore, all completed the required components that define their participation.

C. 85% of Referred Youth Participants will:

1. increase knowledge/use of harm reduction/safety skills for high risk substance use;
2. decrease self-reported substance use, including cannabis;

3. improve: 1) social/emotional competencies; 2) mental health outcomes; 3) communication and leadership skills; 4) self-reported grades/school attendance, as measured by program records and participant surveys/assessments.

C.1. increase knowledge/use of harm reduction/safety skills for high risk substance use;

Questions about knowledge were included in the pre-post-surveys for Referred Youth. Results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Referred Youth Knowledge of Harm Reduction/Safety Skills From Pre- to Post-Survey

Please indicate how much you know about the following topics:	N	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Statistically Significant	t-test Results
1. What harm reduction services and supplies are	13	2.15	3.31	Yes	$t(12) = 4.6291$ $p = .0006$
2. Where to find harm reduction supplies locally	13	2.15	3.23	Yes	$t(12) = 5.1121$ $p = .0003$
3. How to use Narcan and fentanyl test strips	13	2.23	3.85	Yes	$t(12) = 4.8824$ $p = .0004$
4. The Good Samaritan Law	13	2.15	3.46	Yes	$t(12) = 4.5707$ $P = .0006$

Scale: 1 = Nothing; 2 = Very Little; 3 = A Fair Amount; 4 = A lot

Each of the four items were considered extremely statistically significant, meaning that these results would have been obtained by chance or random fluctuation only a few out of 10,000 times.

C.2. decrease self-reported substance use, including cannabis;

Results about the extent of current (i.e., past 30-day use) of cannabis revealed small decreases in use from pre- to post-survey, but only two substances (i.e., alcohol and marijuana) were selected, with the exception of the item about polysubstance use, for which two participants reported any use. See Table 6 below for details.

Table 6. Referred Youth Self-reported Substance Use From Pre- to Post-Survey

During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have or use:	N	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Statistically Significant	t-test Results
1. One or more alcoholic drinks	13	0.85	0.62	No	$t(12) = 1.8974$ $p = .0821$
2. Five or more alcoholic drinks in a row, that is, within a few hours	13	0.31	0.08	No	$t(12) = 1.3887$ $p = .1902$
3. Marijuana (smoke, vape, eat, or drink)	13	1.46	1.15	No	$t(12) = 1.7598$ $p = .1039$
5. Two or more substances at the same time (such as alcohol with marijuana, ecstasy with mushrooms)?	13	*	*	2 participants reported use	

Scale: 0 = 0 days; 1 = 1 – 2 days; 2 = 3 – 9 days; 3 = 10 – 19 days; 4 = 20 or more days * 2 participants indicated polysubstance use in the past month; 1 reduced use from 20 or more days to 0 days; 1 reduced use from 3 – 9 days to 0 days

C.3. improve: 1) social/emotional competencies; 2) mental health outcomes; 3) communication and leadership skills; 4) self-reported grades/school attendance, as measured by program records and participant surveys/assessments.

C.3.1 Social/emotional competencies: A total of 29 items on the pre- and post-surveys for Referred Youth related to social and emotional competencies. These items were drawn from the Washoe County School District Social and Emotional Competency Assessment (WCSD-SECA) developed by Washoe County School District's research partnership with the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL), and the University of Illinois at Chicago through an Institute of Education Sciences Research-Practitioner Partnership grant. These items were selected based on their relevance to the skills targeted within the RJYC program.

The pre- and post-survey item scores were calculated by individual participant and matched pair t-tests were conducted by participant. This analysis showed that of the 13 participants, four (30.8%)

had statistically significant improvement from pre- to post-surveys. Several items analyzed across participants showed significant change from pre- to post-survey for all participants as shown below:

Figure 7. Referred Youth Change in Social Competencies and Statistical Significance

Statistical Threshold:	Reached statistical significance at the $p=.01$ Level	<u>Almost</u> reached statistical significance at the $p=.05$ Level
Survey Items (n = 13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing how to get better at things that are hard for me to do at school. Knowing when I am wrong about something. Knowing how I need to study to do well on a test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staying calm when I feel stressed. Finishing tasks even if they are hard for me. Sharing what I am feeling with others. Talking to an adult when I have problems at school.

C.3.2. Mental health outcomes: Referred Youth were also asked a series of questions pertaining to mental health on the pre/post survey. The first set related to the past 30-day frequency of behavioral issues symptomatic to the conditions of depression and anxiety using a scale from 0 (never) to 4 (most/all days):

How frequently did these issues and feelings occur for you in the last 30 days?

- I got upset easily or got into arguments physical fights.
- I had trouble concentrating or paying attention.
- I had trouble feeling happiness or love.
- I felt alone even when I was around other people.
- I had trouble going to sleep, woke up often, or had trouble getting back to sleep.

Scale: 0 = never 1 = 1 - 3x/month 2 = 1 - 2 times a week 3 = 3 - 4 times a week 4 = most/all days

Looking at all Referred Youth participants from pre- to post-survey, the mean score of all items (which could total up to 20) decreased significantly (Mean pre-score: 8.62; Mean post-score: 5.92; $t(12)=2.9406$, $p=.0124$) meaning that symptoms improved over the time youth were enrolled in the program.

The second set of questions asked youth for a current assessment of their feelings of isolation and loneliness using a scale of Never (1) to Often (4).

In the past month did you have these feelings?

- How often do you feel lonely?
- How often do you feel that no one really knows you well?
- How often do you feel that you are no longer close to anyone?

Scale: 0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Often

Referred Youth participants' scores from pre- to post-survey decreased but the change was not statistically significant. The mean pre-score (which could total 9) was 3.92; the mean post-score was 3.08.

Two items focused specifically on depression and suicidality and another question queried the extent to which youth would let any of nine barriers stop them from seeking help when experiencing depressed feelings. Percentages of youth who responded "yes" are shown in Table 7 by item.

Table 7. RYPs Pre-Post Survey Responses About Depression, Suicidality, and Self-help Seeking Barriers

Depression and Suicidality Survey Items	n	# (% Responding Yes)	
		Intake	Exit
During the past month, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that you stopped doing some usual activities?	13	6 (46.2%)	3 (23.1%)
During the past month, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?	13	1 (7.7%) *	1 (7.7%) *
Self-help Seeking Behavior Survey Items	N = 13	# (% Responding Yes)	
		Intake	Exit
If you were very sad, stressed, lonely, or depressed, would any of these things stop you from talking to a counselor or therapist? (Mark all that apply)			
1. I would not know where to go for help		3 (23.1%)	0 (0%)
2. There isn't anyone I can talk to		3 (23.1%)	1 (7.7%)
3. They wouldn't understand		4 (30.8%)	0 (0%)
4. People would think there is something wrong with me		4 (30.8%)	2 (15.4%)
5. My parents might find out		3 (23.1%)	2 (15.4%)
6. Other students might find out		5 (38.5%)	3 (23.1%)
7. I wouldn't have a way to pay for it		2 (15.4%)	1 (7.7%)
8. I wouldn't want to talk to a counselor or therapist		5 (38.5%)	4 (30.8%)
9. Other reasons		3 (23.1%)	1 (7.7%)
10. Does not apply; none of these would stop me from talking to a counselor or therapist		3 (23.1%)	5 (38.5%)

* The two reporting suicidality at intake and discharge were different participants.

Half the participants reported depression at program exit than reported so at intake. One participant reported suicidality, and a different participant reported suicidality at program exit.

The reasons not to seek out mental health support chosen by participants in the pre-survey were also selected by an equal or lesser number of participants in the post-survey, which is an improvement. The exception to this was item 10, where more participants indicated at program exit that none of these reasons would stop them from seeking professional help—also an improvement. It is important to remember that the individuals choosing any of these items represent the areas for growth. The majority of participants at both intake and exit indicated that no factors would keep them from seeking help.

C.3.3. communication and leadership skills: Questions about communication and emotional regulation skills were included in the pre- and post-surveys. Results for the Referred Youth are shown in Table 8.

Communication Skills:

Table 8. Referred Youth Participants' Communication and Emotional Regulation From Pre- to Post- Survey

Please tell us how easy or difficult each of the following are for you.	Mean Pre-survey	Mean Post-survey
1. Knowing what my strengths are.	2.5	2.8
2. Knowing when I can't control something.	2.7	2.8
3. Knowing how to get better at things that are hard for me to do at school.	2.3	3.0
4. Knowing when I am wrong about something.	2.5	3.2
5. Accepting when I am not the best at everything I do.	2.8	2.8
6. Knowing how I need to study to do well on a test.	2.4	2.8
7. Knowing when my feelings are making it hard for me to focus.	2.5	2.7
8. Knowing the emotions I feel.	2.5	3.0
9. Knowing ways I calm myself down.	2.7	2.9
10. Learning from people with different opinions than me.	2.9	3.1

11. Knowing what people may be feeling by the look on their face.	3.2	3.1
12. Knowing when someone needs help.	3.1	3.1
13. Getting through something even when I feel frustrated.	2.5	2.8
14. Being patient even when I am really excited.	2.6	3.0
15. Staying calm when I feel stressed.	2.5	2.9
16. Finishing tasks even if they are hard for me.	2.5	2.9
17. Setting goals for myself.	2.8	2.8
18. Doing my schoolwork even when I do not feel like it.	2.5	2.8
19. School work: Being prepared for tests.	2.9	3.0
20. Respecting a classmate's opinions during a disagreement.	3.0	3.2
21. Getting along with my classmates.	3.1	3.1
22. Getting along with my teachers.	3.1	2.9
23. Sharing what I am feeling with others.	1.9	2.4
24. Talking to an adult when I have problems at school.	1.8	2.5
25. Thinking about what might happen before making a decision.	2.5	2.7
26. Knowing what is right or wrong.	2.9	3.2
27. Thinking of different ways to solve a problem.	2.9	3.2
28. Asking for advice when making an important decision.	2.8	3.2
29. Taking safe risks to do something that is important to me.	3.1	3.2

Scale: 1 = Very Difficult; 2 = Difficult; 3 = Easy; 4 = Very Easy

Most items were rated around 2.5 to 2.8 (close to “this is easy for me”) on the pre-survey, with some exceptions. Items 23 and 24 were rated the lowest (1.9 and 1.8 respectively). These and others improved by the post-survey. Most of the average increases were small (i.e., half a point or less).

Looking individually at the 13 Referred Youth, 11 increased their scores from pre- to post-survey (one youth each increased their scores by 1, 2, 10, 14, 15, 17, and 26 points; two youth each increased their scores 3 points and 7 points). Of the two remaining youth, one had the same score at pre vs. post, and the other decreased their post-score 6 points from their pre-score. No changes were significant.

Leadership Skills:

Youth Leadership Surveys were not utilized as planned, so this domain cannot be addressed in results.

C.3.4. Self-reported grades/school attendance, as measured by program records and participant surveys/assessments.

Self-reported grades:

The pre and post-surveys asked Referred Youth a question about grades. The question was written as shown here:

Grades improved for six of the Referred Youth (46.2%) while they remained same for seven Referred Youth. For those six who improved their grades, four improved by one position (e.g., from Bs and Cs to Mostly Bs). One improved by two positions (i.e., from Cs and Ds to As and Bs). Finally, one improved by three positions (i.e., from Mostly Fs to Cs and Ds).

School Attendance:

The pre- and post-surveys also included a question about attendance in the last 30 days, shown here.

During the most recent grading period, how would you describe the grades you received in school?

- ☐ Mostly As ☐ Bs and Cs ☐ Mostly Ds
☐ As and Bs ☐ Mostly Cs ☐ Ds and Fs

In the past 30 days of the last or current school year (whichever is most recent), how often did you miss an entire day of school for any reason?

- ☐ I attended all days
☐ 1 day
☐ 2 days
☐ 3 or more days

Table 9 below shows the number and percentage of participant responses on this question.

Table 9. RYPs Self-Reported School Attendance – Pre-Post Survey

# of Days Missed in last 30	Pre-survey	Post-survey
n = 13	# (%)	# (%)
0 – attended all days	1 (7.7%)	3 (23.1%)
Missed 1 day	3 (23.1%)	5 (38.5%)
Missed 2 days	5 (38.5%)	4 (30.8%)
Missed 3 + days	4 (30.8%)	1 (7.7%)
Average number of days*	1.92	1.23

* Caution must be taken in interpreting actual number of days as the 4th choice includes any number of days over two.

On average, the number of days missed decreased from pre- to post-survey. Responses from pre- to post-survey were the same for 8 of the 13 participants. At each time point, one youth missed no days in the last month; three youth missed one day; three youth missed two days; and one youth indicated that they missed three plus days on both pre- and post-survey. The other five participants decreased the number of missing days. Though the number of days is captured for missing no days, one or two days, three or more days is consolidated into one response option. Bearing this in mind, the average days missed for the 13 participants overall decreased from 1.92 to 1.23 days. The percentage of participants who missed three or more days decreased considerably from pre- to post-survey.

D. 75% of referred youths' parents/guardians will increase:

1. perception of harm of youth cannabis and other drug use;
2. their knowledge of community resources, and use of RJYC's referrals to services; and
3. report that RJYC positive impacts on their child, as measured by program records and parent surveys/ interviews.

D.1. 75% of referred youths' parents/guardians will increase their perception of harm of youth cannabis and other drug use;

Only three parents completed the survey after their Referred Youth completed or left the program. These parents indicated a higher perception of harm for regular alcohol use, binge drinking, and regular marijuana use, misuse/abuse of prescription drugs, and other illegal drug use by teens after their child's involvement in the program than before the program; however, there were not enough respondents to conduct any statistical analysis.

D.2. 75% of referred youths' parents/guardians will increase their knowledge of community resources, and use of RJYC's referrals to services

All three parents completing the survey agreed (1) or strongly agreed (2) that they learned a lot about resources available in the community for themselves or their families. None of the three clients received any referrals during their children's involvement in RJYC, but all three indicated that they received information they could use later.

D.3. 75% of referred youths' parents/guardians will report that RJYC positive impacts on their child, as measured by program records and parent surveys/ interviews.

The Parent Survey included questions about the helpfulness of each component of the RJYC and the overall impacts of the program on their child. These results are shown below in Tables 10 and 11.

Table 10. Parents' Perception of the Helpfulness of RJYC Program Components for Their Child

How helpful to your child were these parts of the program? Note: If they didn't participate in an activity or with certain staff, mark "Does not apply." If you never heard about an aspect of the experience from your child, mark "Don't Know."	Very unhelpful	Not helpful	OK	Helpful	Very helpful	Don't Know	Does Not Apply
a. Developing the RJYC Restorative Plan with Advocate		2	1				
b. Community engagement hours		2	1				
c. Safety skills/AOD classes	2	1					
d. Narcan training	2	1					
e. Anger management class	3						
f. Reflection project	1	1	1				
g. Know Your Rights training	2	1					
h. Individual sessions with the counselor (for SUD)		1	1				1
i. Individual therapy with a counselor							3
j. His or her own Peer Team Hearing		1	1			1	
k. Writing a letter of apology							3
l. Participating in Restorative Circle with those impacted						1	2
m. Repairing damage done to property							3
n. Participating in others' Peer Team Hearings		3					
o. Family therapy with a counselor							3
p. The Arbor staff	1	2					
q. The counseling staff	2						1
r. The Youth Advocate		3					

The three parents who completed the exit survey did not find those elements that applied to their child's RJYC experience helpful, with the most positive rating being "ok" which was provided by one parent. Eight of the items were marked as not applying or the parent did not know. In contrast, parents provided more positive ratings about the impacts of the program on their children, as shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11. Parents' Perceptions of Overall Impact of RJYC Program on Their Child

To what extent are these statements about the program's impact true for your child:	Not at all true	A little true	Fairly true	Totally true	Don't know
a. He or she learned a lot about the criminal justice system.			1	2	
b. He or she learned a lot about restorative justice practices.			1	2	
c. He or she can use the skills learned and practiced (such as active listening, empathy, identifying strengths in others, asking strength based questions) in other parts of their life and in the future.				3	
d. Participating as a Youth Council Member made them reflect more on their own experience.			2	1	

Despite the less than positive perceptions about various components of the RJYC program, the three parents who completed the survey reported that their children did benefit in certain ways from the program, with all indicating that each positively worded statement was either "Fairly" or "Totally True."

- E. 80% of Peer Team Youth Volunteers who participate in 3 or more hearings, will report that their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of the criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, and social emotional competencies, increased their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, and decreased self-reported cannabis/other substance use.

Since all Referred Youth participants were also Peer Team Youth Volunteers participating in at least three of their peers' hearings, the responses to program impact questions were taken from the Referred Youth survey results. Results for 11 of 13 youth were available and are shared in Table 12.

Table 12. Peer Team Youth/Referred Youth Participants Perception of Program Impact

<i>To what extent are these statements about the program's impact true for you: (n=11)</i>	Not at all true	A little true	Fairly true	Totally true	Don't know
a. I learned a lot about the criminal justice system.			4 (36.4%)	7 (63.6%)	
b. I learned a lot about restorative justice practices.			3 (27.3%)	8 (72.7%)	
c. The training I received about being a Peer Team Volunteer prepared me well.			6 (54.5%)	5 (45.5%)	
d. It felt good to be a positive presence and a support person for other participants during their hearings.			5 (45.5%)	6 (54.5%)	
e. I can use the skills they learned and practiced (such as active listening, empathy, asking strength based questions) in other parts of their life and in the future.			2 (18.2%)	9 (81.8%)	
f. Participating as a Youth Council Member made me reflect more on their own experience.			7 (63.6%)	4 (36.4%)	

Here ratings were positive, with all ratings provided falling into the "Fairly" or "Totally" true range. The highest rating was provided for the applicability that the skills learned would have for them to other areas of their futures. Referred Youth were also asked a few open-ended questions about their perceptions of the program.

Referred Youth Participants' Responses to Open-ended Program Satisfaction Questions:

How did you feel about getting referred to the RJYC and how do you feel about the process now?

- I liked it. It helped a lot with myself.
- I was not happy at first, but I'm glad I did it now.
- I was not happy at first, but then it gave me somewhere to go and they had some fun activities.
- I think it was better than probation. I liked the process.
- I was not happy about the referral at first but then started to like it.
- The process was ok.
- Ok. I think it was a good thing to do.
- I was glad that I got to do it.
- I was not happy at first but then I started to like it.
- At first, I thought it was stupid because my friend got nothing [for their role in the infraction], so I thought it was extra, but now I'm glad because I meant a lot of cool people.

What did you like best about the program?

- The kindness
- The hearings
- RJYC staff (6 comments included staff or only mentioned staff)
- The staff was nice and supportive.
- All the classes
- Meeting people in the classes that I attended
- The anger management classes (2 comments)
- My worker Christie; she was very supportive and flexible to me and my family's needs.

Please explain any positive impacts the program had on you or any ways you improved.

- They helped with me and my addiction and were informative.
- I learned about empathy.
- I learned how to talk to adults better.
- I learned more about drugs. I can use coping skills I learned from anger management class.
- It taught me how to make better decisions.
- I learned how to talk to my teachers. Before this, I was kind of afraid of them, but I learned

to see them as people who want to help me. Now I ask questions in class when I need help and do my homework. I'm getting better grades now, too.

- For the most part, it really helped my anger problem.
- I learned to control my anger better and learned more about my relationships.
- It helped me see things a little different, to control my temper better.
- I learned a lot about Narcan and stuff like that as well about controlling myself.

These participant comments provide insight into the benefits youth saw after completing RJYC.

F. 90% of Youth Advocate Volunteers will report that their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of the criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, and social emotional competencies; improved leadership skills, increase their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, decreased self-reported cannabis and other substance use; and increased their confidence in their ability to support peers as measured by youth volunteer surveys and/or focus groups, and assessments.

Improved Knowledge of the Justice System, Restorative Justice Practices, and Related Benefits:

Several questions on the Youth Advocate post-survey focused on the perceptions of the program and its impact on the Advocates. Results were available for nine participants. With such a small sample of participants, results were not tested for statistical significance. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Youth Advocates' Perceptions of RJYC Program Impacts

<i>To what extent are these statements about the program's impact true for you: (n=9)</i>	Not at all true	A little true	Fairly true	Totally true	Average Rating
a. I learned a lot about the criminal justice system.		2	4 (44.9%)	3 (33.3%)	3.1
b. I learned a lot about restorative justice practices.		1	3 (33.3%)	5 (55.6%)	3.4
c. The training I received about being a Peer Team Volunteer prepared me well.		2	1 (11.1%)	6 (66.7%)	3.4
d. It felt good to be a positive presence and a support person for other participants during their hearings.		1	3 (33.3%)	5 (55.6%)	3.4
e. I can use the skills I learned and practiced (such as active listening, empathy, identifying strengths in others, asking strength based questions) in other parts of their life and in the future.		1	1 (11.1%)	7 (77.8%)	3.7
f. Participating as a Youth Council Member made me reflect more on their own experience.		3	4 (44.9%)	1 (11.1%)	2.4

Scale: 1 = Not at all True; 2 = A little True; 3= Fairly True; 4= Very True

Youth Advocates reported positive impacts of their participation. On four of the questions, a majority indicated that the statements were totally true—that they learned about restorative justice practices, were well trained for their role, could apply the skills learned to other settings, and that it felt good to support others during their hearings. The average rating was highest given for the belief that the skills they learned can be transferred to other areas of their lives. The lowest rating was given for the impact the program had on Advocates reflection on their own experiences.

Social and Emotional Competencies:

Social and emotional competencies were also included in the Youth Advocate surveys. The scale used ranged from “this is very difficult for me” (1), this is difficult for me (2), this is easy for me (3), and this is very easy for me (4). Ratings are shown by item in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Youth Advocates' Social / Emotional Competency From Pre- to Post-Survey

Please tell us how easy or difficult each of the following are for you. (n=9)	Mean Pre-survey	Mean Post-survey
1. Knowing what my strengths are.	2.8	2.9
2. Knowing when I can't control something.	2.7	2.9
3. Knowing how to get better at things that are hard for me to do at school.	3.2	3.0
4. Knowing when I am wrong about something.	2.6	3.0
5. Accepting when I am not the best at everything I do.	3.0	2.9
6. Knowing how I need to study to do well on a test.	3.0	3.1
7. Knowing when my feelings are making it hard for me to focus.	3.1	2.7
8. Knowing the emotions I feel.	3.1	3.0
9. Knowing ways I calm myself down.	3.0	2.7
10. Learning from people with different opinions than me.	3.1	3.1
11. Knowing what people may be feeling by the look on their face.	3.4	3.0
12. Knowing when someone needs help.	3.2	3.2
13. Getting through something even when I feel frustrated.	2.6	2.7
14. Being patient even when I am really excited.	3.0	3.1
15. Staying calm when I feel stressed.	2.8	2.7
16. Finishing tasks even if they are hard for me.	3.0	3.0
17. Setting goals for myself.	3.6	3.2
18. Doing my schoolwork even when I do not feel like it.	3.2	3.0
19. School work: Being prepared for tests.	2.8	3.1
20. Respecting a classmate's opinions during a disagreement.	2.8	3.2
21. Getting along with my classmates.	3.3	3.3
22. Getting along with my teachers.	3.6	3.1
23. Sharing what I am feeling with others.	2.1	2.8
24. Talking to an adult when I have problems at school.	2.9	3.2
25. Thinking about what might happen before making a decision.	3.4	3.2
26. Knowing what is right or wrong.	3.4	3.1
27. Thinking of different ways to solve a problem.	3.1	3.1
28. Asking for advice when making an important decision.	3.6	3.4
29. Taking safe risks to do something that is important to me.	3.2	3.2

Most items were rated around a three (this is easy for me), with some exceptions. Some item ratings decreased slightly from pre- to post-survey. However, given the small number of survey respondents, and the short period of time that most pre- and post-survey were completed (i.e., an average of two months apart), it is not surprising that more change is not noted. Looking individually at the nine Advocates, five increased their scores from pre- to post-survey by one to eight points. Another increased their score by 18 points. The other three decreased their score from pre- to post-survey, by 9, 12, and 27 points.

Youth Leadership:

Youth Leadership Surveys were not utilized as planned, so this domain cannot be addressed in results.

Perception of Harm:

Perception of harm of various types of substance use was also asked of Youth Advocates; shown below.

Table 15. Youth Advocates' Perception of Harm From Pre- to Post-Survey

How much do teens risk harming themselves physically and in other ways when they do the following:	N	Mean Pre-Survey	Mean Post-Survey *
1. Drink alcohol regularly (at least weekly or more)	9	3.0	3.6
2. Have 5 or more drinks of alcohol at least once or twice a week	9	3.3	3.7
3. Use cannabis/marijuana regularly (at least weekly or more often—smoke, vape, eat or drink)	9	3.6	3.2
4. Use prescription drugs to get high or for reasons other than prescribed	9	3.6	3.8
5. Use other illegal drugs to get high (such as cocaine, meth, fentanyl, etc.)	9	3.7	4.0

Scale: 4 = Great risk; 3 = Moderate risk; 2=Slight risk; 1=No risk * Tests for statistical significance were not applied due to sample size.

Generally, perception of harm increased slightly from pre- to post-survey, with the exception of the item around cannabis use. None of these results could be reliably tested for statistically significant differences since the sample size was too small.

Current Substance Use:

Youth Advocates were also asked about their past 30-day use of substances. Not shown in Table 16 are items 4 through 12, which were cold/cough medication, inhalants, Adderall/Rx stimulants, cocaine, ecstasy, prescription drugs (other than prescribed), or any other illicit drugs (due to no use).

Table 16. Youth Advocates' Self-reported Substance use from Pre- to Post-Survey

During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have or use:	N	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
1. One or more alcoholic drinks	9	0	0
2. Five or more alcoholic drinks in a row, that is, within a few hours	9	0	0
3. Marijuana (smoke, vape, eat, or drink)	9	1: 10 – 19 days	1: 1 – 2 days
13. Two or more substances at the same time (such as alcohol with marijuana, ecstasy with mushrooms)?	9	0	0

Scale: 0 = 0 days; 1 = 1 – 2 days; 2 = 3 – 9 days; 3 = 10 – 19 days; 4 = 20 or more days * 1 Youth Advocate indicated marijuana use in the past month, and reduced use from 10-19 days at pre- to 1-2 days at post.

Only one Youth Advocate indicated any use at all and that was for marijuana, and they indicated decreased use at post-survey.

GOAL 3: Improve capacity of Probation Department to utilize the RJYC as a diversion strategy for youth referred to them for cannabis and other substance use.

By 2024:

A. Probation Department will collaborate with RCS to improve efficiency of referral process to RJYC.

Monthly meetings took place between Probation and RCS from the beginning of the grant through June 2023. During those meetings, staff from the two agencies collaborated to improve the referral process and discuss probationer progress, and programmatic issues. Since that time, the two agencies have met twice about the program, but continually communicate over email about any needs, concerns, or referrals.

B. Probation Department will increase referrals to RJYC by 25% annually over 2020 baseline.

RCS provided referral information during the grant. The data reported in some of the QPRs unfortunately had some duplication between new and ongoing participants, and the errors could not be determined. The Probation Department did not have access to historical information for a 2020/21 baseline, so Year 1 referral information was used as a baseline. These figures are shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Change in Referrals Over Grant Years

	Baseline Measure (2020/21)	Year 1 2021/22	Year 2 2022/23	Year 3 2023/24	Extension 2024: Apr – Sept (6 months)
Youth Referrals from Probation Department to RCS	Not available	5	16	9	13
% Change from Baseline (i.e.,)	--	Used as baseline year	220% increase	80% increase	420% increase*

* Based on 6 months of enrollment (baseline year #s were halved to account for the half-year measurement)

Enrollment during Year 1 was low at five participants. This dramatically increased in Year 2, decreasing in Year 3, but in the last six month extension period, referrals increased dramatically. All periods represent much more than 25% increases.

GOAL 4: Build the capacity of Redwood Community Services (RCS) to provide a high quality, sustainable evidence based RJYC, and increase the program’s visibility, community presence, and sustainability as a cannabis and other drug prevention and early intervention program strategy for Mendocino County youth.

By 2024:

- A. RCS will review curriculum, EBPs, and associated educational opportunities and activities used in RJYC activities that relate to harms of youth cannabis use and other substance use and modify any as needed.

RCS staff reviewed existing resources in the grant’s last year which spanned a variety of topic areas. At the center of this review were restorative justice resources. In the first year of the grant, the Restorative Justice Coordinator who worked most directly with the grant in its first years, drew upon his past professional connections to the Marin County-based restorative justice program, *Youth Transforming Justice (YTJ)*, developed by Don Carney. Through his agency, he provided training and technical assistance on restorative justice issues under contract with RCS, initially supported through the grant. While still under contract to RCS, YTC and Humboldt County Youth Court held a training for the RJYC staff, Youth Council and Advocates during which they role played various scenarios and positions as Referred Youth, Council Members and Advocates. YTJ and Humboldt Youth Court also involved the RJYC and Advocates in their own work during times of low enrollment of Referred Youth from Mendocino Probation. After the contract ended, he continued to provide support to RCS staff free of charge around the following issues:

- Sustainability opportunities for Restorative Justice Programs, grants, funding streams;
- Navigating community partnerships, language for school partnerships and program relationships
- Curriculum, training recommendations
- Case management for high-risk offenders, working with gang involved youth, engaging youth not participating
- Identifying community partners and ways to increase community involvement in program
- Program observation
- (During periods of low referrals/youth involvement) staff & youth attended YTJ hearings and utilized YTJ Advocates
- Structural and process outline
- Identifying and sharing forms and documents needed for the program
- Engaging parents and parent/guardian AOD training component
- Restorative Plan support
- Trauma informed care, school to prison pipeline, and restorative practices
- General program creation, support, and visibility of program
- Navigating court and court officials for program engagement

Staff and eight Youth Advocates and Youth Council members also participated in a 3-day Annual Youth Court Summit by the California Association of Youth Courts at the UC Merced in March 2024 which RCS paid from other sources. Since that time, the RCS program director described a lack of restorative justice resources that is essential to the RJYC program. There are many resources available, but most are proprietary.

A lack of curriculum and training resources on other topics have also been a barrier to the RJYC program. In interviews, staff indicated that the agency was missing up-to-date materials related to gang prevention, which has become necessary as a number of the referred youth were gang affiliated. RCS further described a need for more materials about substance use prevention/intervention, most specifically related to relapse prevention. The Agency purchased the *Safety First Substance Use Prevention Program* in the first year of the grant with grant funds.

Two staff associated with the program early in the grant were trained on anger management program facilitation, through the California Association of Anger Management Providers (CAAMP) and the National Anger Management Association (NAMA). There were also some restorative justice trainings staff participated in early in the grant, but some staff left, and the knowledge and skills gained left with them.

Near the end of the extension period, the RJYC program manager identified curriculum and staff training needs, forwarding a list and details of potential supportive resources to the Probation Department. The domains related to gang involvement, restorative justice training, mental health and substance use prevention/intervention resources, which included:

1. *ARISE Youth Gang Prevention Program*: A comprehensive program designed to address youth gang prevention strategies. Cost: \$849.99
2. *Restorative Justice 1.0 Training*: Introduction to restorative justice practices to foster peace and healing. Cost: \$350 per person (2 people): \$700.
3. *Advanced Restorative Justice Practitioner Training*: Advanced training for restorative justice practitioners, focusing on in-depth strategies and applications. Cost: \$350 per person (2 people): \$700.
4. *Teacher Pay Teacher: All Restorative Practices and Restorative Circle Bundles*. Comprehensive restorative practice templates and resources. \$200.
5. *Restorative Practices: Student Workbook for RP - Peer Mediation Manual (Revised)*: A workbook to guide students through restorative practices and peer mediation. Cost: \$9.99.
6. *Restorative Teaching Tools*: A resource offering strategies and activities for restorative teaching. Cost: \$7.99.
7. *Restorative Bundle Program Workbook*: A bundle of resources and workbooks to implement restorative justice practices. Cost: \$8.98.
8. *Restorative Practices Workbook*: A guide for individuals in learning & applying restorative practices. Cost: \$49.95.
9. *Setting Relations Right: Contemporary Issues in Restorative Practices*: A text exploring broader mindsets and skill sets in restorative practices. Cost: \$52.62.
10. *Restorative Circles: How to Build Strong Learning Communities and Foster Student Wellbeing*: A guide to implementing restorative circles in schools to enhance student wellbeing. Cost: \$14.32.
11. *Restorative Circles - Basics & Beyond*: A complete guide to using restorative circles in schools & community settings. Cost: \$6.99.
12. *Restorative Justice Trainings & Curriculum*: Restorative justice curriculum designed for non-profits and educational settings. Cost: \$45.
13. *Equipped for Life: A Game for Helping Adolescents Think and Act Responsibly*: A game designed to teach adolescents responsible decision-making skills. Cost: \$54.95.
14. *Relapse Prevention Game*: A therapeutic tool for teaching relapse prevention strategies. Cost: \$59.95.
15. *ARISE Mental and Physical Health for Teens and Young Adults (23 Books)*: A comprehensive set of resources addressing both mental and physical health for youth. Cost: \$919.
16. *ARISE Family Tools: Family Skills Training Program (2 Books + Additional Resources)*: A toolkit designed to improve family dynamics and strengthen relationships through skills training. Cost: \$599.

17. *DSM-5-TR Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Hardcover + Desk Reference)*: Official manual for diagnosing mental disorders, including the latest updates. Cost: \$44.44
18. *Insight Story Cards in a Pouch*: A therapeutic tool with 90 symbolic images to stimulate storytelling and self-reflection. Cost: \$25.95.

Total Costs: \$4,349.12.

B. RCS will modify or purchase curriculum and EBPs and train staff, based on Objective 4A review.

This objective was not pursued until the third year of the grant when the evaluator discussed the lack of action around it with the Prop 64 Grant Team. With efforts being made around other objectives, this component did not receive the amount of effort early enough. RCS conducted the curriculum review and as described above, during the extension period, requested Probation's fiscal office working with Prop 64 to purchase some or all of the resources (depending on the availability of funding determined by the Probation Department's fiscal grant manager). However, these purchases did not take place.

C. RJYC will increase program partners 50% over baseline, and referrals into RJYC from new partners by 10% each year, as measured by program records and staff interviews.

RJYC partners were not named specifically in the outreach or additional narrative sections of the QPRs. Therefore, the RJYC program staff provided the evaluator with a list of the original partnering agencies at the start of the grant and new partners added during the grant years.

According to the RJYC program director, the RCS agency on behalf of the RJYC, conducts outreach to engage the community and increase program visibility, thereby strengthening community relationships. A primary goal of these outreach efforts is to create partnerships for the RJYC program. These community partnerships can support the program's efforts to improve sustainability by referring youth, facilitating hearings, engaging with youth through mentorship, and/or community service opportunities, providing support in some way that benefits the program or the referred youth, the Youth Council itself or staff. Figure 8 below shows the addition of new partnerships beyond the first community partners which were Mendocino County Juvenile Probation and Youth Transforming Justice (YTJ).

Figure 8. Community Partnerships Developed During the Grant

Community Partners at Prop 64 Start-up (2)	Community Partners Added During the Grant (19)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mendocino County Juvenile Probation: Youth referrals • Youth Transforming Justice (YTJ) – Expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Free Communities Coalition: Substance Use Prevention Expertise, promotion • DFC Ukiah Valley Youth Leadership Council: Youth Advocates, Youth Council • Redwood Collegiate Academy: Youth referrals, Youth Advocates, Youth Council • Sequoia Career Academy: Youth referrals, Youth Advocates, Youth Council • River Oak Charter School: Youth referrals • Anderson Valley Unified School: Youth referrals, Youth Advocates, Youth Council • Ukiah High School: Youth Advocates, Youth Council • Ukiah High School Restorative Justice Club: Youth Advocates, Youth Council, promotion • Mendocino County Office of Education – Community School: Youth Advocates, Youth Council • Middle College (high school): Youth Advocates, Youth Council • Mendocino Community College: Youth Advocate, Youth Council, Mentors • Big Picture Learning-South Valley High School: Youth referrals, Youth Advocates, Youth Council • Redwood Community Services Stepping Stones Transitional Age Youth Housing Programs: Promotion, Facilitators • Redwood Community Services Foster Family Agency: Youth referrals, Advocates, Youth Council • Mendocino County AIDS & Viral Hepatitis Network: Expertise, Mentors • Mendocino County Superior Court judges: Facilitators • Pinoleville Pomo Nation Tribe: Youth Advocates, Youth Council, Facilitators, Mentors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coyote Valley Tribe: Youth Advocates, Youth Council, Facilitators, Mentors • The Arlene & Michael Rosen Foundation: Financial benefactors, Facilitators • Round Valley Indian Tribes (Yuki: Yukian Family; Pit River: Hoka Family; Pomo: Hoka Family; Nomlaki: Penutian Family; Concow: Penutian Family; Wailacki: Athabascan Family: Youth Advocates, Youth Council, Facilitators • Mendocino County Youth Project: Facilitators, Mentors • Northern Circle Indian Housing Authority: Facilitators, promotion • Blue Zones Project: Mentors, promotion • Redwood Empire Food Bank, Ukiah: Mentors • Redwood Valley Animal Shelter: Mentors • Ukiah United Methodist Church: Mentors, promotion • Laytonville Family Resource Center: Promotion • Fort Bragg Police Department: Youth referrals, promotion
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The increase in program partners was substantial, moving from two to 32, an increase of 1,500%.

D. Through inter-agency training, increase external partners' knowledge of restorative justice practices, commitment to a restorative culture, and knowledge of available resources for referred youths' access to SUD treatment and therapeutic support services (e.g., individual/family therapy, anger management), as measured by program records, participation records of staff/partners at outreach events, and surveys.

The RJYC staff focused heavily on outreach and engagement of community agencies and area schools over the life during the grant years. This took the form of outreach efforts, presentations to agencies and schools, and at various interagency meetings and coalitions, training, and support of other agencies community events and initiatives, and active recruitment of youth and Youth Advocate participants for the RJYC. As the RJYC program manager described,

"For our program, outreach is engaging the community and increasing program visibility, and strengthening community relationships, in hopes of creating partnerships and involvement in the program. We consider our community partners as people and agencies who are actively involved in the program in various ways—by utilizing the RJYC program, referring youth, facilitating hearings, engaging with youth through mentorship, and/or community service opportunities, or providing support in some way that benefits the program, referred youth, youth council or staff."

Discussion of Results and Conclusions

Discussion of program results along with the general degree of effectiveness of the project activities in achieving the objectives are presented below along with related conclusions.

The RJYC involved 43 Referred Youth, the same number of Peer Team Volunteers, and 87 Youth Advocates, but participant characteristics were only available for Referred Youth. Of these 51% were male; 33% female; 16% did not disclose. The largest percentage were Latinx (44.2%), followed by White (16%) and Native (12%). The average age was 15.9 years, and the largest percentage lived with their mother (27%). Almost one-third (28%) were gang- involved and 65% were on probation for violent offenses. The high proportion of violent offenses was a factor that the RJYC was not as prepared for programmatically as the plan had been for non-violent offenders to be referred to the program, requiring additional curriculum and training resources.

A. RCS will provide RJYC Referred Youth Participants with monthly cannabis/other substance educational activities/events:

Yes, met

B. 85% of RJYC Referred Youth Participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis and other substance use:

Not met (with qualifications): - 69.2% increased perception of harm for all but the last item on "all other illegal substances." However, statistically significant improvement occurred for all items except "all other illegal substances" for which participants had a high perception of harm on the pre-survey.

GOAL 1: Through Restorative Justice Youth Council's (RJYC's) high quality curriculum, EBPs, educational opportunities and activities, referred participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis and other substance use

Goal 1 objectives were essentially attained. The RJYC provided a wide range of reoccurring classes within which Referred Youth participated. They improved their perceptions of harm around cannabis and other substance use to a statistically significant extent, with one exception; perception of harm around other illegal substance use was rated as highly harmful initially, leaving little room for

A. Annually, enroll 20 RYPs and 20 PTYV, and 10 YAVs into the RJYC.	Yes, partially met: RYV & PTYV: 43/60-youth goal (71.7%); YAV: 87 of 30 YAV goal (290%).
B. 85% of RYPs will successfully complete RJYC; 75% of RYPs' parents, PTYVs, & YAVs will participate in 80% of required activities;	Yes, partially met: 79.5% of RYPs completed; No parents completed all 3 requirements; 100% of YAVs completed requirements.
C. 85% of RYPs will: 1. increase knowledge/use of harm reduction/safety skills for high risk substance use; 2. decrease self-reported substance use, including cannabis; 3. Improve: 1) social/emotional competencies; 2) mental health outcomes; 3) communication and leadership skills; 4) Self-reported grades/ school attendance, measured by surveys	Yes, partially met: C.1. Yes, met; C.2. Not met, improvement noted but not statistically significant; C.3.1. Yes, on 7 of 29 items; C.3.2. Yes; C.3.3. Yes on communication skills items; No, leadership skills not assessed; C.3.4. Improvements in self-reported grades made by 46.2%; fewer days absent self-reported by youth.
D. 75% of RYP parents to increase: 1. perception of harm of youth cannabis and other drug use; 2. their knowledge of community resources, and use of RJYC's referrals to services; and. 3. report positive impacts of RJYC on their child, as measured by program records and parent surveys;	Not met (with qualifications): Responses from 3 of 39 parents. D.1. 3 reported improved perception of harm; D.2. 3 reported improved knowledge of community resources; no referrals; D.3. mixed results; minimal helpfulness of program components; positive impacts of program on their youth.
E. 80% of PTYVs who participate in ≥ 3 hearings, will report their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, social emotional competencies, increased their perception of harm of cannabis/other substance use, and decreased self-reported cannabis and other substance use;	Yes, partially met: Youth reported improved understanding of criminal justice, RJ practices, social/emotional competencies, perception of harm around cannabis and other substances; no change in substance use (minimal use reported).
F. 90% of YAVs will report participation in RJYC improved their understanding of criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, social emotional competencies; leadership skills, their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, decreased self-reported cannabis/other substance use; and increased their confidence in their ability to support peers, measured by surveys.	Yes, partially met: YAVs reported increased understanding of criminal justice, RJ practices, and showed slight increases in social emotional competencies and perception of harm in using substances; however, no statistical tests could be run due to small sample size. There was almost no self-reported substance use within the Youth Advocate survey respondents.

improvement on the post-survey. Despite not quite reaching the stated goal of 85% of participants increasing their perception of harm, the fact that the improvements made were large enough, in spite of a small sample size, to reach statistical significance, is important. Given the change in perceptions that were apparent in such a small group of respondents, if a larger number of pre- and post-surveys had been collected, these results may have looked different, and likely even better.

GOAL 2: Enroll and Improve positive outcomes of RJYC's Referred Youth Participants, their families, and youth volunteers (i.e., Peer Team/Youth Advocates) to include decreased use of cannabis and other substance use.

Results for Goal 2 objectives were mixed. The RJYC did not quite meet the enrollment goal for Referred Youth Participants but exceeded the enrollment goal for Youth Advocates. The program nearly met the 85% completion rate for Referred Youth (i.e., 79.5%). All Youth Advocates completed 100% of their required activities, but none of the parents completed all three of the basic requirements. The only requirement completed by all parents/guardians was the enrollment forms and intake interview. Referred Youth increased their knowledge of substance use safety skills and harm reduction. Very little substance use was self-reported, but the average ratings decreased over the program, though not significantly. Referred Youth saw significant improvements on some, but not all of the social and emotional competencies assessed. Past 30-day mental health issues showed significant change from

pre- to post-survey. Depression-related items improved as well but not significantly so. There was much improvement in the barriers that youth reported would keep them from pursuing professional mental health support. There were small improvements in communication skills, but leadership skills could not be assessed as the instrument was not administered. Self-reported grades showed improvement for 46.2% of the Referred Youth, and self-reported attendance improved somewhat.

It is difficult to draw any conclusions based on parent exit surveys since only three parents completed them. The three who completed the survey showed increases in perception of harm around substance use and agreed that they learned about community resources through their child's involvement in the RJYC program. As far as the extent to which they found various components of the program helpful for their child, ratings were not overly positive. Aside from the items that parents did not know about or that did not apply to their child, the highest ratings given were "OK," as opposed to "Helpful" or "Very Helpful." Without a larger number of parents responding, it is impossible to know how universal these results would be. However, the selection of various program components as being unhelpful or very unhelpful is disconcerting. Surprisingly, the same parents indicated that the program was fairly impactful for their children, teaching them about the justice system, restorative justice practices, and that the skills developed would benefit their children in the future in other settings and situations. The lack of congruence with responses to these two questions is not often seen and definitely warrants further investigation.

Referred Youth were required to participate in at least three of their peers' hearings, but they were not separate participants, so Referred Youth survey results were used to answer questions about the Peer Team Youth Volunteers. Referred Youth indicated on their post-surveys that they had taken much from the program. They responded positively to statements (i.e., indicating Fairly or Totally True) to each statement. They reported learning about the criminal justice system and restorative justice practices, were well-trained to act as Peer Team Volunteers and felt positive about helping their peers in this way. There was strong agreement that the skills they learned could be easily transferred to other aspects of their lives. Perhaps most importantly, Referred Youth answered a few open-ended questions that also related to the impact of the program. About 75% of participants completing pre- and post-surveys provided responses, despite being optional survey items. In summary, though many were not happy that they were required to participate in the program initially, in retrospect they were glad they did, and benefited from their involvement. They liked the staff and classes, calling out the anger management class in particular as very helpful. They also described learning how to talk with adults, including teachers more easily, learning how to make better decisions, asking for help when they need it, and getting needed information about substance use/addiction and overdose reversal medication.

Youth Advocate results were available from only nine participants, so some of the statistical tests could not be applied as they were for Referred Youth results. It must also be noted that most of the Youth Advocates completed the pre- and the post-surveys within two months of each other, while their participation is generally much longer. RCS asks for a six-month commitment from Advocates, and most are able to make that commitment. That said, the ratings provided were mostly positive. Youth Advocates indicated they learned about criminal justice, restorative justice, were trained, and can apply what they've learned to other settings (the most highly rated item). However, as opposed to the youth results, there were a small percentage of Youth Advocates who chose the "A Little True" response option for each item, revealing a wider range of experiences than Referred Youth who only chose options "Fairly or Totally True." Still, nine is not a large sample to draw solid conclusions but it warrants watching and investigating further.

Youth Advocate ratings around social/emotional competencies were generally positive but changed little from pre- to post-survey, which would be expected within such a short span of time from pre- to post. Ratings for perception of harm increased slightly from pre- to post-survey except for ratings around cannabis, which fell slightly. However, with the small number of respondents, this could be random fluctuation, and statistical testing was not warranted with the small sample size. There was no self-reported substance use except for one respondent who indicated using cannabis 10 to 19 days in the previous month on the pre-survey, which fell to 1 – 2 days in the last month on the post-survey. To the extent that this limited data collection allows, Referred Youth and Youth Advocate participants in the RJYC program appeared to have benefited from the program, gaining skills, knowledge, and engaging with RCS staff who supported their efforts.

3: Improve capacity of Probation Department to utilize the RJYC as a diversion strategy for youth referred to them for cannabis and other substance use.

Based on program documentation and interviews, it appears that the Probation Department and RCS worked collaboratively to ensure that the RJYC program served youth. The two agencies met monthly for part of the three-year grant to improve the referral process, and then as needed for the last part of the grant. Probation referred youth, and RCS enrolled and served them in the RJYC program.

As far as increased referrals are concerned, a 2020 baseline could not be determined as the data was not available either from Probation or from RCS. Therefore, the first year of the grant acted as the baseline year. It may be that since COVID-19 was still impacting communities in 2021, using that year as the baseline creates an artificially low figure against which to assess change. Referrals were higher for each full year since 2021, ranging from a low of nine in 2023/24 (an 80% increase) to a high of 16 in 2022/23 (a 220% increase). The largest jump in referrals was in the last six months of the grant extension, when there were 13 referrals from Probation. This represents a 420% increase.

A. Probation Department will collaborate with RCS to improve efficiency of referral process to RJYC

Yes, met

B. Probation Department will increase referrals to RJYC by 25% annually over 2020 baseline

Yes, exceeded goal

Objective B was vastly exceeded, which is positive. It was surprising, however, that getting accurate referral numbers was so challenging. QPR data could not be used as it contained duplicated number of new and ongoing referrals and enrollments, and since the evaluator had not been responsible for compiling and reporting these numbers during the grant, just how those numbers were duplicated could not be determined. Neither Probation nor RCS had ready access to this information, but after considerable research, RCS was able to gather accurate numbers from case files.

GOAL 4: Build the capacity of Redwood Community Services (RCS) to provide a high quality, sustainable evidence based RJYC, and increase the program's visibility, community presence, and sustainability as a cannabis and other drug prevention and early intervention program strategy for Mendocino County youth.

RCS conducted a thorough review of its curriculum and training sources as described within Objective A. Training resources had been purchased through the grant early on, most of which focused on anger management and restorative justice. Some level of support had been provided since then by YTJ, without charge, but RJYC program management indicated that more resources and training were needed to train new staff and enhance its programming, adding curriculum and training around gang and substance use prevention and intervention. This review was started rather late in the grant.

The intention of Objective B was to provide grant funding for the purchase of additional curriculum and training resources which would not only benefit the Probation Department in its future work with the RJYC program but all other community partners who can refer youth to the program. Though efforts were made to work with the Probation Department’s fiscal office to purchase some of the suggested resources that the RJYC program manager sent over for review, it did not happen before the grant ended. This is unfortunate, especially since there were ample funds to expend, requiring only a budget modification and an invoice to the grant.

RCS was very successful in adding new community partners to benefit participants, staff, and improving the sustainability of the RJYC program. At the beginning of the grant, the program had two community partners – the Probation Department which utilized the program for youth on probation, and YTJ, which provided the program structure and

model, logistics, and training about restorative justice practices. By the end of the grant, RCS has accumulated 32 additional partnering agencies and individuals, a 1,500% increase.

Finally, review of QPRs and interviews with RJYC program management and staff confirmed that outreach and engagement of community agencies and area schools was a major focus over the life of the grant. These outreach efforts took the form of presentations to agencies and schools that could refer young people or offer ancillary services, such as counseling or SUD/mental health supportive services. RCS participated in – and made presentations at various interagency meetings and coalitions, providing training to and supporting the events and initiatives of other youth-serving and community-based service agencies. The grant did not track youth referrals and enrollments from sources other than Probation, but staff indicated that additional youth participants and Youth Advocates were increasingly being added to the RJYC program from other sources as the grant progressed. This successful outreach benefits the program and its participants. RCS and the RJYC program manager also engaged with county-level and community-based agencies and schools directly to improve the recruitment of youth and Youth Advocate participants for the RJYC.

A. RCS will review curriculum, EBPs, and associated educational opportunities and activities used in RJYC activities that relate to harms of youth cannabis use and other substance use and modify any as needed.	Yes, met
B. RCS will modify or purchase curriculum and EBPs and train staff, based on Objective 4.1 review.	No, not met
C. RJYC will increase program partners 50% over baseline, and referrals into RJYC from new partners by 10% each year, as measured by program records and staff interviews.	Yes, exceeded goal
D. Through inter-agency training, increase external partners' knowledge of restorative justice practices, commitment to a restorative culture, and knowledge of available resources for referred youths' access to SUD treatment and therapeutic support services (e.g., individual/family therapy, anger management), as measured by program records, participation records of staff/partners at outreach events, and surveys.	Yes, extensive outreach, engagement, and training provided by RCS

Recommendations

The evaluation results are informative and lead to several recommendations offered here for continuous improvement of the partnership between Mendocino County Probation and RCS on behalf of justice involved youth or risk of justice system involvement as well as the RJYC program specifically.

- 1. Develop tracking and monitoring systems to more easily access referrals and participants.** It is too often the case that agencies lack databases flexible enough to track and monitor their focus populations but obtaining this data is necessary. Whether they be participants, clients, patients, members, volunteers, or customers, knowing who, when, and for how long people have been served or affiliated with a program is critical to understand whether those populations have been reached, served, and how they have progressed through the program, service, or system of care.

Both the Probation Department and RCS would benefit from developing or purchasing a data system to track its participants. It would not even need to be elaborate or expensive. It could be as simple as an Excel spreadsheet or a google sheet. It should not be difficult to quickly know how many people have been referred or served by the program within a specific time period.

2. **Continue to implement surveys for Referred Youth, Youth Advocates, and parents to learn how participants and families are experiencing the RJYC.** A benefit of the evaluation work completed for this grant is the development of participant surveys which assess change and provide an indication of perceived benefits and shortcomings of the program. This is a critical component of program improvement efforts. As this LER was being written, the evaluator transferred the surveys (developed in SurveyMonkey), to the RJYC program manager to continue learning how participants change through the program and perceptions at program exit.
3. **Improve data collection efforts to more fully determine program impact.** Despite having access to surveys and an easily accessible data collection protocol, the actual data collection for participants and parents was minimally successful. Accounting for the time prior to the development of the surveys, matched pre-post surveys were only available for 56.5% of Referred Youth and 31% of Youth Advocates. The last minute efforts to improve the Youth Advocate response rate meant that most of those matched pairs were conducted within two months of each other, not reflecting the typical length of participation for this group, thus limiting their usefulness. Exit surveys were completed by only 13% of Referred Youth's parents (using the number of Referred Youth pre-surveys as the basis). It should be noted that given the minimal parent participation in the RJYC program, this result is not too surprising.

Beyond the survey implementation issues, the identification of participants to match surveys was also problematic. The rate for Referred Youth would have been 73.9% had the correct participant ID numbers been utilized. This is a survey implementation problem. Ensuring that participants are using the correct information to identify themselves so that surveys can be matched is critical and a quality control issue for the evaluation. Finally, it should be noted that the Leadership skills assessment (i.e., Youth Leadership Competencies Inventory) was not implemented at all, so this component within the objectives could not be analyzed. Staff indicated that the time needed with youth was too limited to utilize this instrument, but without the assessment, there was no data to use to determine program impact in this regard, which is unfortunate.

4. **Utilize survey results to understand the strengths and challenges of the RJYC program for each type of participant and to plan future evaluation work and program improvement efforts.** The surveys revealed some important information about how participants experienced and benefited (or did not benefit) from the program. Though data collection was less than optimal, findings should be used to plan future evaluation efforts involving many more participants. For example, parent survey results indicated inconsistencies in perception (i.e., views of program components as unhelpful vs. the overall impacts they indicated their children received from participating).

While these findings are based on a very small percentage of respondents, should the surveys be used with a larger population, they may indicate a reliable inconsistency in the ways parents see the program. Some of this may be a lack of participation itself, in that parents do not know enough about the program to fully appreciate the individual components. It may be a result of the way that completion of these components was expressed to parents by their children, or something else entirely. In any case, understanding parents' concerns or lack of understanding more deeply will help determine ways to improve their experiences, participation, and support of the RJYC

program's efforts to support their parenting practices and use of community resource referrals. A parent focus group may help disaggregate issues leading to the lack of parental participation.

5. **Use the experiences from the implementation of the Prop 64 grant to plan future grant management practices and grant partner coordination efforts.** The Mendocino Probation Department's work around the Prop 64 grant was mostly delegated to its primary program partner, RCS, with which it has had a long and mutually beneficial relationship. However, as RCS was not the grantee, the RCS agency was limited in what actions could be taken to improve the procurement of funds or respond to grant requested information and communications.

QPR submission, program implementation, and the interaction with the evaluator were the primary responsibilities of RCS. However, challenges persisted around communication about the grant, especially during the grant extension and understanding how that impacted the RJYC program, RCS, and the evaluator. The fact that no curriculum or training resources were procured for the program during the extension is disappointing. Ample funding remained and Probation had agreed to the modifications of the logic model and grant goals and objectives that included the purchase of curriculum and training to improve the quality and sustainability of the RJYC program. Moving forward, it is important that should the Probation Department become involved in another grant program such as this, they assign appropriate resources to engage with the grant funders, project team, and evaluator to ensure that the grant funding are appropriated to the extent planned, and that their engagement promotes the success of the grant program overall.

APPENDIX A: PPA 1 Logic Model for Mendocino County Prop 64 Grant Program

GOAL 1: Through Restorative Justice Youth Council's (RJYC's) high quality curriculum, EBPs, educational opportunities and activities, referred participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis and other substance use.				
GOAL 2: Enroll and Improve positive outcomes of RJYC's Referred Youth Participants, their families, and youth volunteers (i.e., Peer Team/Youth Advocates) to include decreased use of cannabis and other substance use.				
GOAL 3: Improve capacity of Probation Department to utilize the RJYC as a diversion strategy for youth referred to them for cannabis and other substance use.				
GOAL 4: Build the capacity of Redwood Community Services (RCS) to provide a high quality, sustainable evidence based RJYC, and increase the program's visibility, community presence, and sustainability as a cannabis and other drug prevention and early intervention program strategy for Mendocino County youth.				
INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACTS
<p>Probation and RCS staff time for collaboration, program development, outreach and engagement, and program monitoring</p> <p>Program Partners (e.g., Probation, law enforcement agencies, RCS, schools, community based organizations)</p> <p>Financial support (e.g., Prop 64 grant funding);</p> <p>Organizational tools (e.g., RCS staff and agency expertise in restorative justice & youth development, SUD treatment services, and linkages to other therapeutic services for youth and families);</p> <p>Training and TA from regional/national experts on restorative justice work and</p>	<p>Intake process for referred youth and their families;</p> <p>Collaborative work between Probation and RCS to streamline referrals;</p> <p>RCS staff outreach to potential program partners; training to partnering agencies on restorative justice, and the RJYC program;</p> <p>RCS training to staff on restorative justice practices, substance use identification, cannabis use prevention, and EBPs;</p> <p>RJYC program activities for referred youth, including leadership and communication training, substance use awareness education, training on life skills, job skills, and other helpful workshops;</p>	<p>Goal 1: Participants engaged in RJYC curriculum, EBPs, educational opportunities and activities</p> <p>Goal 2: 20 referred youth enrolled/year; 20 parents/guardians of referred youth participate; 20 Peer Team Volunteers participate in 3+ RJYC hearings/year; 10 Youth Advocate Volunteers are trained, and support referred youth and the RJYC program/year; 85% of Referred Youth Participants complete RJYC; 75% of referred youths' parents, Peer Team Youth Volunteers, and Youth Advocate volunteers participate in 80% of required activities</p>	<p>GOAL 1. By 2024:</p> <p>A. RCS will provide RJYC Referred Youth Participants with monthly cannabis/other substance educational activities/events;</p> <p>B. 85% of RJYC Referred Youth Participants will increase their perception of harm around cannabis and other substance use.</p> <p>GOAL 2. By 2024:</p> <p>A. Annually, enroll 20 unduplicated Referred Youth Participants and 20 Peer Team Volunteers, and 10 unduplicated Youth Advocate Volunteers into the RJYC;</p> <p>B. 85% of Referred Youth Participants will successfully complete RJYC; and 75% of referred youth's parents, Peer Team Youth Volunteers, and Youth Advocate Volunteers will participate in 80% of required activities;</p> <p>C. 85% of Referred Youth Participants will:</p> <p>a. increase knowledge/use of harm reduction/safety skills for high risk substance use;</p> <p>b. decreased self-reported substance use, including cannabis;</p> <p>c. Improve: 1) social/emotional competencies; 2) mental health outcomes; 3) communication and leadership skills;</p> <p>4) Self-reported grades/school attendance, as measured by program records and participant surveys/assessments;</p> <p>D. 75% of referred youths' parents/guardians will increase:</p> <p>a. perception of harm of youth cannabis and other drug use;</p> <p>b. their knowledge of community resources, and use of RJYC's referrals to services; and</p> <p>c. report that RJYC positive impacts on their child, as measured by program records and parent surveys/interviews;</p>	<p>Referred Youth Participants in RJYC will apply leadership skills, life skills, social and emotional competencies learned to improve their long-term life outcomes, such as reducing further interactions with the justice system, avoiding substance use or obtaining treatment for SUD or other therapeutic needs, and engaging in positive pro-social activities.</p> <p>Youth Volunteers (both Peer Team and Youth Advocates) will learn leadership and communication skills, and improve social and emotional competencies through their participation, thereby improving their attainment of positive life outcomes,</p>






<p>relevant content to learn/implement best practices (e.g., webinars, conferences, meetings, and other resources);</p> <p>Evaluation support to document program implementation/outcomes (e.g., tracking tools, surveys, evaluation consultant);</p> <p>Evidence-based programs (EBPs) and staff trained;</p> <p>Continuous staff training on Restorative Justice practices; Collaborative relationships with other restorative justice programs.</p>	<p>Case Management services for referred youth (e.g., participant assessment of risk/needs, restorative justice case plans, and referrals to community based SUD treatment services, mental health support, and other support);</p> <p>RCS training for Peer Team and Youth Advocate Volunteers; Leadership and communication training, substance use awareness education, life skills training and other helpful workshops.</p>	<p>Goal 3: Streamlined referral process between Probation and RCS; 25% increase in referrals to RJYC program from Probation over baseline</p> <p>Goal 4: Review and modification as needed of RJYC curriculum, EBPs, educational opportunities and activities related to cannabis and other substance use; Curriculum and EBPs purchased, and 8 RCS staff trained to implement curriculum and EBPs; 50% increased number of RJYC program partners; 10% increase in referrals for youth participants from new program partners; Inter-agency training provided on restorative justice and culture, SUD treatment and therapeutic support services available for referred youth.</p>	<p>E. 80% of Peer Team Youth Volunteers who participate in 3 or more hearings, will report that their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of the criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, and social emotional competencies, increased their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, and decreased self-reported cannabis and other substance use;</p> <p>F. 90% of Youth Advocate Volunteers will report that their participation in RJYC improved their understanding of the criminal justice system, restorative justice practices, and social emotional competencies; improved leadership skills, increase their perception of harm of cannabis and other substance use, decreased self-reported cannabis and other substance use; and increased their confidence in their ability to support peers as measured by youth volunteer surveys and/or focus groups, and assessments.</p> <p>GOAL 3. By 2024:</p> <p>A. Probation Department will collaborate with RCS to improve efficiency of referral process to RJYC;</p> <p>B. Probation Department will increase referrals to RJYC by 25% annually over 2020 baseline.</p> <p>GOAL 4. By 2024:</p> <p>A. RCS will review curriculum, EBPs, and associated educational opportunities and activities used in RJYC activities that relate to harms of youth cannabis use and other substance use and modify any as needed;</p> <p>B. RCS will modify or purchase curriculum and EBPs and train staff, based on Objective 4.1 review;</p> <p>C. RJYC will increase program partners 50% over baseline, and referrals into RJYC from new partners by 10% each year, as measured by program records and staff interviews;</p> <p>D. Through inter-agency training, increase external partners' knowledge of restorative justice practices, commitment to a restorative culture, and knowledge of available resources for referred youths' access to SUD treatment and therapeutic support services (e.g., individual/family therapy, anger management), as measured by program records, participation records of staff/partners at outreach events, and surveys.</p>	<p>and improving their communities.</p> <p>Probation Department will increase capacity to refer youth for cannabis and other substance use to RJYC as a progressive diversion strategy.</p> <p>RCS along with its program partners, will build capacity to deliver and sustain a robust restorative justice program for the youth of Mendocino County;</p> <p>Through outreach and engagement efforts, RJYC program will help to establish a restorative culture for youth in Mendocino County.</p>
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APPENDIX B: Participant Data Collection Process

MENDOCINO COUNTY – REDWOOD COMMUNITY SERVICES

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE YOUTH COUNCIL PROP 64 PROGRAM EVALUATION

Survey links & QR Codes
are for demonstration
purposes only

Participant Group	Intake	Discharge
Referred Youth	<p>After basic intake documents are complete, within the first week of participation (but before any real program activities that might “enhance their skills/knowledge/attitudes), the participant should complete the Participant Pre-Survey on SurveyMonkey in your office: Allow about 15 minutes.</p> <p>https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RYPRe</p> <p>They should also take Student Leadership Competency Youth Inventory (https://wright.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8vKVStKA6kljdQ1)</p> <p>Instruct them to write their first name and under last name, use their RCS Unique Identifier Code #; print out result when done. Label printed summary with date and “Intake.” Store results with others, then scan and send to LMTerauds@gmail.com monthly or as you get them in – your preference.</p> <p>(The Inventory should take about 5 minutes)</p> 	<p>Before discharge from the program (any time in the final week or two), participant should take the Participant Post-Survey on SurveyMonkey:</p> <p>https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RYPPost</p> <p>They should also repeat the Student Leadership Competency Youth Inventory – both should be done on site.</p> <p>(https://wright.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8vKVStKA6kljdQ1)</p> <p>Instruct them to write their first name and under last name, use their RCS Unique Identifier Code #; print out result when done. Label printed summary with date and “Discharge.” Store results with others, then scan and send to LMTerauds@gmail.com monthly or as you get them.</p> 
Youth Advocate Volunteers	<p>After basic intake documents are complete, within the first week of participation, the volunteer should complete the Youth Advocate Volunteer Pre-Survey on SurveyMonkey (allow about 15 minutes for them to complete it):</p> <p>https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RJAdvocPre</p> <p>They should also take Student Leadership Competency Youth Inventory</p> <p>(https://wright.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8vKVStKA6kljdQ1)</p> <p>Instruct them to write their first name and under last name, use their RCS Unique Identifier Code #; print out result when done. Label printed summary with date and “Intake.” Store results with others, then scan and send to LMTerauds@gmail.com monthly or as done.</p> <p>Note: If they are over Grade 12, they should mark grade 12 in Item 5 (Grade in School) and put their college name and year (freshman, soph) along with school name or if they are working, just indicate they are working under School Name.</p> <p>Your choice whether you have them do it on site or at home.</p> 	<p>At the 6-month point of Advocates’ volunteering or when they end their participation, (any time in the final week or two), the volunteer should take the Youth Advocate Post-Survey on SurveyMonkey:</p> <p>https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RJAdvocPost</p> <p>They should also repeat the Student Leadership Competency Youth Inventory</p> <p>(https://wright.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8vKVStKA6kljdQ1)</p> <p>Instruct them to use their write their first name and under last name, use their RCS Unique Identifier Code #; print out result when done. Label printed summary with date and “Discharge.” Store results with others, then scan and send to LMTerauds@gmail.com monthly or as done.</p> <p>Note: If they are over Grade 12, they should mark grade 12 in Item 5 (Grade in School) and put their college name and year (freshman, soph) along with school name or if they are working, indicate they are working under School Name.</p> 
Parents / Guardians of Referred Youth	None	<p>At or just before their child exits the program, parents should get survey link/QR code:</p> <p>ENGLISH VERSION: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RJParentSurvey</p>  <p>SPANISH VERSION: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RJYCEncuestaPadres</p> 