



Letting Go of Clecha, While Holding Corazón; Developing a New Approach to Empowering Youth in Gangs the Homeboy Industries Way

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Letting Go of Clecha, While Holding Corazón;
Developing a New Approach to Empowering Youth in Gangs
the Homeboy Industries Way

Doctor of Education Leadership (Ed.L.D.)
Capstone

Submitted by

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To the Harvard Graduate School of Education
in partial fulfillment of the graduation requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education Leadership

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This capstone is dedicated to my family, including my amazing wife, Jazmín Preciado,
and our three wonderful kids, Santiago Olin, Amaru Agape and Quetzali Yareli.
It is they that helped get me through. It took a *familia*.

This capstone would not be possible if it wasn't for my mom, Martha Areli Borja's,
dream to migrate, to struggle, to make a way out of no way.
She taught me not to see 20 foot borders,
but to look for the 21-foot ladder.

Here's a 21-foot ladder.

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Abstract

This capstone seeks to assess and support Homeboy Industries (HBI), a leader in wrap-around services for formerly gang-involved and incarcerated men and women, in their co-creation of a youth services committee and a comprehensive system of care for young people. In doing so, my strategic project consists of conducting stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and synthesizing those findings to present to the organization. The second part of the strategic project involves building and working with a team of individuals from various departments, including case management, mental health, education, job services within two separate agencies, Homeboy Industries and Learning Works Charter School Network, to create a youth services committee that can carry the work forward. In service of evaluating the progress of the strategic project, I will utilize the 4I Framework of Organizational Learning, developed by management professor, Mary Crossan, and her associates from the Ivey School of Business. The 4I Framework contains “four related (sub)processes-intuiting, interpreting, integrating, and institutionalizing-that occur over three levels: individual, group, and organization” (Crossan et al., 1999, p. 524). Ultimately, the goal is to help an already successful leader in wrap-around support services for adults, Homeboy Industries, create an “organized system of care for young people” (Torres, 2015). This goal can be achieved by maximizing its strengths, coupling them with best practices in youth development, and in creating a team that can place the needs of young people in its core mission. Creating an organized system of care, Homeboy Industries-style, can have national implications as the new secretary of education, John King, has made it a point to visit with the leaders of Homeboy Industries (August 2015, Appendix A) in search of models for empowering the youth in a non-traditional way. If *clecha*, or knowledge that is passed down in prison is the old way of empowering young people, as it often goes in one ear and out the other, then this capstone seeks to capture the experience of Homeboy Industries and Learning Works, the profound work of founder Father Greg Boyle and many amazing practitioners on site at HBI, and combine it with the wisdom of young people, to offer a new approach to empower youth in gangs, the ever-evolving, Homeboy Industries Way. See, the idea of *clecha* or street wisdom has been passed down for generations as the way that older homies “lace” (give) younger homies advice. In the research on best practices to reach gang involved youth, this *clecha* notion dates back to the curbside counselor of the 1930s from the seminal work of psychologist Clifford Shaw, but often times, that form of advice has not worked. This has created what Reed Larson, a pioneer in positive youth development, calls the Intentionality Paradox. According to Larson, the paradox lies in that adults want to be intentional with their advice-giving to young people because “it is easier to think about molding clay than about helping the clay mold itself.” (Larson, 2006, p. 682) Larson along with many other experts in the field of youth development are telling us, what young people have been saying for a long time, “stop telling me what to do.” They don’t care to know how much we know (about life or the struggle), they need to know (and feel) how much we actually care. Many adults care so much that they struggle to balance letting youth learn on their own, and sharing their own experiences or *clecha*. While we are trying to figure it out in the field of youth development and education, too many young people are dying. Every 26 seconds a young person drops out of school in the U.S. (American Graduate, 2016). Over 1 million youth per year are system-involved in “courts with juvenile jurisdiction handling delinquency cases.” (Hockenberry, 2015, p. 6) Thousands of those youth are ending up caged in juvenile halls and prison, and many are dying in our cities nationwide. We must search for new ways to engage and walk with youth in gangs. This is part of that search.

Introduction

Homeboy Industries is a national leader in wrap-around support services for formerly incarcerated, previously gang-involved adults. They provide support in an 18-month trainee model which involves 1-on-1 case management, mental health counseling, job development, paid work and educational courses in six key areas: academic, life skills, work readiness, substance abuse, support groups, wellness/enrichment. Even leaders in the field can improve. HBI seeks to continually strengthen their practices in empowering young people who are the “least likely to succeed,” Father Gregory Boyle would say. Homeboy Industries is seeking a profound understanding of how to best build with disengaged, deep “in crisis,” transitioned-aged youth to curtail the school to prison pipeline. However, Father Greg would argue that the measure of success is not college, per se, but healing; how we measure that healing is another matter that few educational wraparound organizations even attempt to take on.

I was brought in to the 28-year old organization by Father Gregory Boyle, and his blessings. It helps tremendously for my entry point that I have known him for over 10 years, because introductions at Homeboy are rarely done. Volunteers and staff come in, hit the ground running, and are rarely formally introduced to the entire community. In addition to knowing Father Greg, I also met a handful of staff members during the January 2015 visit, however, with a staff of close to 100 people, including 70+ senior staff, the process of introducing myself would be something I would need to navigate early on. For the most part, I was left to my own devices to get to know people, share where I am from, and what I was there to do.

I formally came in to the organization as a doctoral resident in educational leadership entering a place that is internationally renowned, and constantly seen as a model to be

studied. In fact, several other students and researchers have previously come to Homeboy Industries and seen behind the curtain. However, the senior leadership has felt that most of these folks have come in initially trying to learn, but quickly transition to “fixing” an already successful organization. So, I was warned by the Director of Educational Services, Marissa Gillette, and the Director of Re-Entry Services who became my supervisor and mentor, Shirley Torres, that I was “not to try and fix us.” I am thankful that they also shared at our May 2015 meetings at Harvard University that there exists some complex, internal challenges in the organization, including personality conflicts and issues of perceived racism, sexism and classism, that I needed to be aware of. Many of these challenges are not endemic to Homeboy Industries, but are part of our societal challenges. I appreciated their candor as it better prepared me to understand some of the context of the organization that I was coming into.

Understanding Where I Was Entering and How

As a child, my family migrated from Jalisco, México and I was partly raised in a few parts of south-central Los Angeles. We constantly moved in an effort to keep up with rent. I was somewhat familiar with the environment and some of the neighborhoods where I conducted my residency; however, the bulk of my experience in Southern California was as a kid and a teen who migrated from a rural town, Juchitlán, to briefly living in the Pico-Union area, a Central-American immigrant community at a time in the 1980s when gangs like Mara Salvatrucha and 18th Street¹ were becoming a stronghold. We then moved to Compton, a primarily African-American neighborhood with some Bloods and Crips gang-members, but around my block the biggest influence came from the multi-racial Florencia Sur 13 gang

¹ It is worth noting that gangs were not the problem in the neighborhood; the challenges centered on poverty and lack of resources.

where some *morenos* were joining south side, too. We stayed mostly to ourselves trying to learn the language, adapt to a new country, and living in fear of deportation. I didn't really grow up around Chicanos² or 2nd, 3rd or even 4th generation Mexican-Americans who spoke primarily English, as was the case for many of those that grew up in East Los Angeles, the home base of Homeboy Industries. Distance, in terms of just a few mere miles in Los Angeles, means a completely different experience for the people who live there. This, too, would be part of my learning curve at Homeboy Industries as I was somewhat returning to a part of home, but not into neighborhoods that I truly knew. Being completely fluent in Spanish and being Mexican gave me credibility and an entrance into meeting many of the trainees and most of the staff in the organization, but that didn't mean that I truly knew what the lived experiences of the homies of East Los Angeles were and are. That was part of my on-going learning. I would also quickly learn that Caló, a beautiful blend of English and Spanish to create a new language, is something that I only knew at a surface level. I grew up speaking Spanish from Southern-México in our household and that's all I really knew. There's also a language that's created in *La Pinta*, in prison, that I would need to quickly pick up. That language is at times coded so that only those who need to understand it, do so. It was Father Greg, Shirley Torres and some of the older homies that first began to use the word *clecha*, and I pretended to know what that was, but I just hadn't grown up with that word. *Clecha* is that knowledge or wisdom that is passed down from the big homie to the little homie. It may be the key to survival or redundancy depending on who you are speaking to.

² Chicanos: I purposefully distinguish between Chicanos and Mexican-Americans following the seminal work of Chicano journalist, Ruben Salazar, and feminist scholar, Gloria Anzaldúa. In my informed opinion, Chicanos are Mexican-Americans who actively engage in struggle for the rights of marginalized communities, whereas; Mexican-Americans may or may not.

On just the third day of my residency, July 20th, 2015, during a senior cabinet meeting, I heard Father Greg tell a story about this outside perception that many people have of good and evil that exists at Homeboy. There's this societal talk of a "savior" priest and "evil" gangsters who need morals, and need to be saved. Father Greg despises that tired, cliché rhetoric, and combats that misconception every day and at every place that he speaks at all over the world. I quickly would learn that Homeboy Industries is not trying to save anyone, but to walk with people on their journey and create a community of kinship such that, as Father Greg says, "God might recognize it."

The lines between societal rhetoric and truth, however, get blurred because its founder is indeed a Jesuit priest who serves at an important Catholic church in Boyle Heights, Dolores Mission. That reality, for some, conjures up the missions of California in the 19th century that historically did more harm than good to the Indigenous peoples and their culture as they sought to "civilize the savages." To others, it conjures up the work of Mother Theresa, and the vow to not only live amongst the poor or forsaken, but to build community amongst them. Father Greg explains it through the poetry of Rumi, "[we] find the real world, give it endlessly away, grow rich flinging gold to all who ask. Live at the empty heart of paradox. I'll dance there with you— cheek to cheek" (Boyle, 2010, p. 26). That conflict of perception actually played itself out early on during my introductory visit to Homeboy Industries in January of 2015. I was there for a week shadowing Father Greg and seeing if this site would be a good fit, on both ends, to conduct my 10-month residency as part of my graduation requirement along with this capstone for the doctorate in educational leadership from Harvard University. That week I also needed to search for potential schools for our three children in the area as we would all return from Massachusetts to California for the residency. An educational colleague, local political activist, and founder of a local school

that I visited said to me, “Can I ask you why would you want to go there [to Homeboy]? Don’t you know that gang members are the new Indians there, and Father Greg is the new Junipero Serra trying to save them? Or are you a colonizer that’s now coming from Harvard, too?” I was dumbfounded, and hurt by this person’s comments. I didn’t know how to react, but I genuinely felt hurt and torn. I am learning how much easier it is to pick up and throw stones, and much harder to hand out oranges. I knew that coming to Homeboy Industries would be both a great opportunity, and a decision that some, like this educator would potentially misunderstand and judge me for. I would proceed with my eyes wide open, but would indeed proceed.

It is during this early entry into Homeboy Industries that I quickly realized that I, too, didn’t fully know what Homeboy was and is. That story that Father Greg shared on the third day, of people’s misunderstandings and judgments of homies and priests, was both refreshing and instrumental to hear. I wonder(ed) if the outside community of the greater Los Angeles share(d) those educators’ comments, and if any of them had ridden off Homeboy due to some of the mistakes of the past by the Catholic Church or other missionary efforts. The history of colonization is real, and it both impacts who gets to serve, who is served, and even how we assess or see today’s reality. I hold this tension as both a student, educator and activist trying to figure out best practices, knowing far too well that for many that walk through the doors of Homeboy this is a matter of life and death. This would be one of many lenses through which I would need to see and not see the organization and its approach.

Problem and Context

According to the National Gang Center “92 percent of larger cities [population of 250,000 and more] in the U.S., and 66 percent of suburban cities report having major gang problems.” (NGC, 2013) Based on those national statistics and the fact that Education Week labeled Los Angeles the “dropout epicenter” of the nation, coming both to Los Angeles, CA. and Homeboy Industries was critical for me and my work. It meant coming to one of the epicenters of the perceived crisis and the solution(s).

What the Youth Have to Carry

Coupled with the fact that for youth who are gang involved, who are also impacted severely by multiple levels of poverty and carrying complex traumas, the “recidivism among youthful offenders is extremely high: 2/3 will be re-arrested, up to 1/3 re-incarcerated within a few years after release” (HBI, 2016). Homeboy Industries rarely works with kids “at risk,” they work with kids who are already deep in crisis. According to Shirley Torres, for many of the kids, “death is right around the corner” (S. Torres, personal communication, October 12, 2015). That is no understatement. The Homeboy Industries alternative High School, operated by Learning Works, is literally next door to the Felipe Bagues Mortuary. On January 21, 2016, I attended a funeral administered by Father Greg for 17-year-old, Jimmy Izael Rivas, who was the younger brother of one of the youth that attend the high school. When I stepped out of the mortuary, there were young people standing outside the school, in their own process of mourning and self-reflection. Somehow they must deal with another death of a teenager, and come right back in to the school to attempt to focus on their academic subjects, and pretend as if things are business as usual.

During the previous month, in our one-on-one interview in December, Shirley Torres expanded on what she has learned over the last 13 years about the youth that they walk with at Homeboy:

“I learned this first-hand in house visits that you had young men and women in gangs who were living in the kitchen, who were on cardboard boxes and not beds, and when you started to see what young people had to go [home] to, you realize, where’s their home? What did this tell them about the kind of future they should imagine?” (S. Torres, personal communication, December 17, 2015)

In Father Greg Boyle’s book, *Tattoos on the Heart*, he asks us to “imagine kids who have been thrown away, given up on, left for dead” (Boyle, 2010, p. 31). Many of the youth are impacted by chronic hyper-arousal where their “exposure to danger repeatedly triggers the nervous system becoming unusually sensitive so that even minor threats can trigger a sequence of physical, emotional, and cognitive emergency responses” (Bloom, 2011, p. 107). Shirley Torres describes the youth that they serve as constantly on edge when they leave Homeboy Industries. “Once they leave us they have to survive, and if they are not hyper-vigilant, if they’re not thinking with the back part of their brain, then they could be killed because they went to the liquor store in the wrong neighborhood” (S. Torres, personal communication, December 17, 2015). This has happened far too many times at Homeboy Industries. Hours after the memorial service for Jimmy Izael Rivas, I couldn’t help but overhear one of the young people that I interviewed speaking on the phone as he read to them an article from the Los Angeles Times of another death that took place yesterday, as he said, “sh-t, I gotta’ figure out another way to get home today, cuz it’s hot³ right now.”

Many of these same youth find themselves turning to drugs, or to what many label as risk-taking behavior, or even to “any activity that relieves the unrelenting, emotionally-

³ Hot: This expression, “it’s hot right now,” is popular among some young people as their own sociological analysis where they deem that the level of violence has increased in a dramatic fashion, and their own sense of safety is at stake.

driven, repetitive distress” (Bloom, 2011, p. 109) that they face on a daily basis. For many youth, self-medicating with drugs and alcohol is an easily accessible way to temporarily relieve this pain that they carry. In an article in the newspaper *Boyle Heights Beat* entitled “Alcohol Drowns Boyle Heights,” the authors found that accessibility is so common place in “Boyle Heights, with 100 stores that sell alcohol, [which] has 77 percent more stores than West Covina, with 57, and 45 percent more than Compton and Santa Monica, which have 69. All are communities with roughly the same number of residents.” (Lam, 2012) In some neighborhoods of Boyle Heights, “stores selling alcohol appear to be on almost every block” (Lam, 2012) for the youth and neighbors alike.

Psychologist, Dr. Susan Bloom, in her book, *Destroying Sanctuary*, describes the cycle that many young people end up in where the “end result of this complex sequence of posttraumatic events can be repetition, stagnation, rigidity, and a fear of change all in the context of a deteriorating life” (Bloom, 2011, p. 122). If that is part of what the youth have to carry, Homeboy Industries must also be aware of the multiple external factors that impact their ability to be successful in engaging young people.

What Homeboy Industries is Faced With

As a society, we have little tolerance for kids or adults in gangs. According to many mainstream news reports, gangs are the new “terrorists” of our society. Dr. Susan Bloom states that “we have ceased to take the time to examine and understand repetitive patterns of behavior. As a result, these symptomatic “cries for help” fall on deaf ears. Instead, the society and its representatives judge, condemn, exclude, and alienate the person who is behaving in an asocial, self-destructive, or anti-social way without hearing the meaning in the message” (Bloom, 2011, p. 119). Then, we attempt to categorize youth and adults who are

deeply struggling as “sick, bad or both.” “Right now, there are basically three explanations for problematic human behavior; people are thought to be “sick,” and if so they are usually sent to the mental health system; they are “bad,” and they are relegated to the justice system; or they are both, and no one wants to deal with them, so they shuttle back and forth between the two systems” (Bloom, 2011, p. 135). This is where Homeboy Industries has stepped in to create a sort of alternate universe, at least within the confines of their buildings, for folks who have been labeled sick, bad or both, who were previously in gangs and who have been institutionalized for many years in prison.

Homeboy Industries

Father Greg Boyle calls the work of Homeboy Industries “grace-filled pedagogy of the people of Dolores Mission” (Boyle, 2010, p. 24). He shares that Dolores Mission Church is considered the “poorest in the city [of Los Angeles].” (Boyle, 2011) Father Greg attests that his parish is situated, “in the middle of the largest grouping of public housing west of the Mississippi” (Boyle, 2011). At the time, late 1980s, that area was considered to have the “highest concentration of gang activity in the country” (Boyle, 2011). According to the LAPD, the approach with gang members was to “wipe these kids out” (Rummel, 1992) with policies like Operation Hammer and Crash. This all took place at a time when reporters called that era, the “decade of death” where “close to a thousand people per year were killed in Los Angeles” (Brenoff, 2015). It only took the burying of one kid for Father Greg to have enough and start the organization to respond to the needs of the community. Homeboy Industries would take a very different approach; they would choose to see gang members as “human beings, and not as monsters, worthy of second chances” (Rummel, 1992).

At Homeboy Industries, Father G, as he is affectionately called, is welcoming those kids from juvenile hall, camp, the streets, gangs, etc. and shares that they call you “mom or dad, big brother or sister, not because they are discovering that you are their father or mother, but because they have discovered that they are a son or daughter worth having” (Boyle, 2010, p. 32). Dr. Margaret Wheatley who studies organizational culture describes the notion of “vocation” as something coming from “spiritual and philosophical traditions. It describes work that is given to us that we are meant to do” (Wheatley, 2002, p.2). That eloquently depicts part of the foundation of Homeboy Industries. In the early days, back in 1988, the work began with Father Greg reaching out to youth who were from 8 neighboring gangs within the same geographic area. Shirley Torres describes those days where Homeboy was a “place where people knew your name. People knew when you stopped showing up. People went to your home, and people got you out of bed so that you could make it here” (S. Torres, personal communication, December 17, 2015). Homeboy Industries created Dolores Mission Alternative, a school to serve middle school and high school age youth who were being “booted” from traditional schools. It was a combination of “home study and specially-designed classes aiming to get kids back on educational track, or at least help them pass the high school equivalency exam” (Fremon, 2008, p. 45). The school ran for 20 years from 1988-2008. Then, Homeboy decided to focus on its wrap-around services and partner with outside agencies that had expertise in running schools. They partnered with Opportunities for Learning Charter School Network (2008-2010), but quickly realized that it needed to find a partner that truly understood the youth that they were serving and how (they did so). Homeboy Industries has now developed a partnership with Learning Works Charter School Network and they have been operating the Homeboy Industries school for youth since 2010. HBI fundamentally operates with one of its guiding principles as

attachment theory based on the seminal work of Psychologist John Bowlby. Homeboy Industries understands that attachment is the basic “operating system” (Bloom, 2011, p. 12) for individuals. This is a “therapeutic community where people find the truth of who they are” (Homeboy Industries, 2015, p. 1).

Homeboy Industries prides itself in its work with adults coming out of prison and those that are ready to leave gang life behind. One of Father Greg’s popular sayings at Homeboy is that “we don’t exist for those who need help, we only exist for those who want it” (G. Boyle, personal communication, November 23, 2015). He shared, in our 1-on-1 interview, that it is really difficult to engage gang involved youth because what they usually get is “*clecha*” (Boyle, 2015) that goes in one ear and out the other.

“That’s a dilemma because young people don’t want it (change). I mean that’s the truth. Once you have young people who do want it you’re not working with a gang population, you’re working with at-risk youth, you’re working with kids whose pilot light is flickering, but they’re not in the neighborhood, and they’ll respond, like some of these kids here, but then you’ve become a different program, then you’ve become a gang prevention program, and that’s not what we are. I don’t know the answer but that’s the conundrum of it.”

(G. Boyle, personal communication, November 23, 2015)

It is based on that conundrum that the review of knowledge for action was given its direction. The focus is not that Homeboy Industries serves “at-risk” youth, but how to best engage youth on the margins, youth in deep crisis, who may not yet “want” to change.

Review of Knowledge for Action

Given the multiple challenges of reaching gang involved youth, even for one of the nation’s leaders in wrap-around support services, there is a real need to find new and creative ways to do so, not only for the countless lives who depend on it, but also for the safety and social welfare of our society. In this Review of Knowledge for Action (RKA), I will explore best practices in the youth development literature as it is an area of identified growth for the

organization. I am coupling the literature review with my 20+ years of direct experience as an inner-city educator and a co-founder of a youth development organization to support gang involved/trauma impacted youth in their own process of development and self-actualization. My RKA research question is, “how do best practices in youth development, coupled with the strengths of Homeboy Industries, provide a lens to create a comprehensive youth development model?”

To achieve this goal, I am exploring the youth development literature, asset-based cultural wealth frameworks, gang intervention best practices, and coupling those with my direct experience as the co-founder of the Homies Empowerment Program in Oakland, CA.

I. From Seeing Criminal Gangs to Envisioning Youth Development in Gangs

See, gangs by definition are not inherently negative, yet when this label is imposed on poor Latino youth, they go from being “a group of people who are friends and who do things together” (Webster’s Dictionary) to “a group of young people who do illegal things together and who often fight against others.” (Webster’s Dictionary) One could argue that according to the descriptions put forth by the National Gang Center, 4 out of the 5 criteria that makes a group a gang are not necessarily negative ones.

It is worth noting that the National Gang Center (NGC) is a “project jointly funded by the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).” The NGC is seen as a legal authority in terms of gang related issues to the federal government and its law enforcement agencies. The criteria used for classifying groups as gangs is as follows:

- “The group has three or more members, generally ages 12–24.
- Members share an identity, typically linked to a name, and often other symbols.
- Members view themselves as a gang, and they are recognized by others as a gang.
- The group has some permanence and a degree of organization.

- The group is involved in an elevated level of criminal activity” (NGC, 2016)

The first four criteria are so broad that this definition of a gang could be applied to many groups of people. In order to ground this research in a real community, I want to first take you home sort of speak, to a place that has deep roots for me, where I have been a resident member for 23 years, a place that provides a microcosm where we can situate this stereotype of the gang and the gangster, and see how it plays out in real time in an urban community in the U.S. This neighborhood, 94601 zip code, has the highest number of incarcerated youth in all of Alameda County, CA and they are also gang impacted, some involved, Latino boys (Flores, 2010, p. 11) experiencing “schooling as a subtractive process” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 3). That zip code represents a working class, Latino neighborhood in East Oakland, CA with very similar demographics to Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles where Homeboy Industries was born, and where the charter school *Learning Works* is situated. This, however, is not a regional issue, nor a regional tale. This reality is presenting itself in many urban cities such as San Francisco (Mission district), Chicago (La Villita, Barrio Pilsen), Boston (Chelsea, Roxbury, Mattapan, Dorchester), New York (Bronx, Queens, Harlem), and even in non-urban places considered the heartland of America such as Omaha, Nebraska. The mere sound of the words ‘youth’ and ‘gang’ together, causes many to instantly judge, and possibly scramble for solutions to this phenomenon that is seen as a generational epidemic.

Therefore, when some people think about gangs, the first thought that comes to mind is of how we can intervene and *cure* our society of this disease. It is then that a series of programs, or proposed remedies, are created and projects are undertaken. Programs and projects that are often funded and implemented claim or seek to be the solution to this “problem,” yet their approach often times fails to address the root causes of gang involvement, and thus, only the symptoms are treated, resulting in ineffective Band-Aid programs as opposed to real

healing and empowerment for a community. When thinking about youth in gangs, the actual gang-members and the circumstances that drive them to join are rarely considered, so most of the emphasis is on gang prevention, and not on youth development and empowerment. The attempt here is not apologize or excuse gang crime, but to better understand why young people join gangs, because gang prevention or suppression efforts for the last 60+ years have not curtailed youth in gangs or crime. Maybe it's time we research and try another way.

This review of knowledge for action (RKA) is a call for a youth development approach that incorporates best practice lessons from empirical research, and an asset-based strategy for empowering gang involved/trauma impacted youth.

II. Diagnosing the Problem: Factors/Root Causes

The Macro – Environment

Although many believe that youth choose to join a gang, the reality is that there is a wide range of factors causing them to be involved with gangs, some positive, and some for mere survival. The combination of poverty, unemployment, and racial segregation that plague many poor communities of color create the perfect conditions for gangs as we currently know them. Several of the major factors that tend to increase the likelihood of gang involvement are discussed by many scholars including gang researcher Malcolm W. Klein, who has written extensively on gangs, focusing primarily on the African-American community, but whose findings are comparable to many people growing up in an economically poor, urban area. He states that the “loss of industrial jobs, out migration of the middle class, growing residential segregation of the inner-city, increasing failure of schools to prepare inner-city children for a service economy, and the resulting strains on family life” (in Stinchcomb, Klein 1995a, p. 28) are among the major factors for gang

involvement. Educational sociologist Dr. Ricardo Stanton-Salazar takes it a step further describing these “minority-based urban neighborhoods [and] in their geographical and segregated manifestations” (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, p. 35) as “invisible social prisons” (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, p. 35) in which youth have to function when living within them. As Father Greg Boyle states, it is the “lethal absence of hope that leads kids into gangs, and the fact that there was no way out of the cycle of gang violence compounded people’s despair” (HBI website, 2016, education section). The youth that become involved with gangs, are generally fleeing rough childhood experiences and are looking to feel accepted, loved, and protected; they are in search of a sense of belonging, a sense of family, which albeit often conditionally contingent upon loyalty and obedience, is provided by some gangs.

Gang Involvement and Push-out Rates

Gang involvement is often paired with high push-out⁴ rates and both are found in communities with the abovementioned conditions. School hours are critical for youth because during this time, they stay away from influences that can be negative as well as gain the knowledge necessary to shape their value systems. But, when youth find themselves in educational settings where the information being taught is uninspiring and irrelevant to their lives, many steer away (or are being pushed away) from schools and the pull from the streets becomes stronger and much more attractive. According to a 2014 report from the U.S. Department of Education, former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan states that “data collected by our Office for Civil Rights show that youths of color and youths with

⁴ I utilized the word “push-out” when describing these rates, rather than the traditional “dropout” label, because it is important for us to shift some of the focus and responsibility when a student “leaves” the school, not just to him/herself, but also to a myriad of factors including the possibility of a subtractive schooling experience that may have deeply contributed to their departure or expulsion. In 2014, the U.S. Department of Education published a resource guide (Guiding Principles) for improving school climate and discipline with the understanding that schools play a major role in “pushing” students out.

disabilities are disproportionately impacted by suspensions and expulsions” (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2014, p. i). Duncan goes on to cite a Boccanfuso, C. (2011) study that found that “95% of out-of-school suspensions were for nonviolent, minor disruptions such as tardiness or disrespect” (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2014, p. ii). Even though education is a powerful tool, when it takes the form of subtractive schooling, where some youth are not taught to value their own history, culture and indigenous languages, or others are “pushed out” with zero tolerance policies, those can also be seen as potential contributors to gang involvement.

From the hundreds of youth that I have been blessed to work with over 20 years, the vast majority of them have shared, in one form or another, in their school autobiographies, that they could pinpoint the first time they were made to feel “stupid” and felt like they didn’t belong in school. Many youths carry deep school wounds that push them out to the streets. One of my former students from Oakland, CA, Yessenia Buenrostro, whom I first met when she was in middle school, really struggled through school. When I met her, the school had officially labeled her FBB, far below basic, and was asked, almost forced, to stay four days per week after school for an extra two hours to work on her oftentimes tedious drill-and-kill ditto sheets. She’d say, “César, I feel hella dumb.” I, along with many other educators worked with her for years. The results were not instantaneous. In high school she eventually came in to Homies Empowerment and after being in our youth leadership training program for two years she began to reassess her life. She wrote a powerful poem entitled “Cutting” as she looked back on a period of her life when she contemplated suicide. That poem was published for the book “Youth Wisdom.” In it, she states that “I went from cutting myself, cutting on my future, to cutting out that type of thinking. I can no longer practice unhappiness. It’s time to cut all that out” (Empowerment, by Y. Buenrostro in Youth Wisdom, 2013, p. 16).

However, most young people don't know how to "cut all that out." According to the Center for Disease Control, "suicide is the second largest cause of death for ages 10-24" (CDC, 2013, WISQARS⁵). Educator Kirsten Olson, in her book "*Wounded by School*," talks about the multiple ways that youth carry "painful, burning memories of shaming experiences in school that produce generalized anxiety and shut [them] down" (Olson, 2009, p. 13). Please keep in mind, that this perspective may merely portray gang involvement and even school experiences as negative, and like everything else, these issues are always much more complex than that, including suicide.

Some youth resist the subtractive schooling and wounding process and turn to gangs as a form of resistance. What is seen as rebelliousness may actually be a reasonable opposition to "a schooling process that disrespects them; they oppose not education, but schooling" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 7-8). Within a great majority of schools, as in the general society, the young people who are affiliated with gangs are often dismissed, ignored or seen as disposable; many feel that likewise is the rich history of struggle that their ancestors went through. Rather than receiving an empowering culturally-relevant education, these "involuntary minorities," (in Valenzuela, by Dr. John Ogbu, 1991, p. 17) whose ancestors experienced a "forceful incorporation into U.S. society through slavery, conquest, or colonization," (in Valenzuela, by Dr. John Ogbu, 1991, p. 17) are often taught a history that not only ignores the rich culture and their people's contributions to society, but it also emphasizes the need for assimilation. Thus, it should come as no surprise that these youth, who have not been exposed to their own rich history, undergo what anthropologist, Dr. John Ogbu, calls "cultural inversion, whereby they consciously or unconsciously oppose the cultural practices and discourses associated with the dominant group," (in Valenzuela,

⁵ WISQARS: Injury Prevention & Control: Data and Statistics from the Center for Disease Control, <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/>

Fordham and Ogbu, 1986, p. 20) including schooling. Veteran educator and restorative justice practitioner, George Galvis, explains that cultural inversion also manifests itself in the desire of some young people to join a gang.

“What happens to indigenous people [including Latinos] in a society where our cultures are systematically taken from us through forced acculturation is that we rebel and create counter-cultures such as gangs... with their own faux codes, values and principals of survival” (Galvis in Acosta, 2016, p. 27).

Galvis admits that in some of these counter cultures “some of the values of honor, community and loyalty are distorted and self-destructive.” (Galvis in Acosta, 2016, p. 28). He argues that in “many ways, our young come to mimic the worst elements of colonization... stemming from the wounds of being dehumanized and treated with racial disregard” (Galvis in Acosta, 2016, p. 28).

The Micro – Individuals’ Experience

Some Latino youth, growing up in neighborhoods with under resourced services, often times live through an oppressive schooling experience throughout adolescence, which is a phase of life filled with already difficult physical, emotional, and psychological changes for the ‘average’ person, thus, it is in this phase when most become affiliated with gangs. During adolescence, a young person is shaping his/her sense of self, and is therefore very susceptible to influence. Dr. Matthew H. Morton from the Center for Evidence-Based Interventions at the University of Oxford, through his work in partnership with the US Department of Education and Health and Human Services, speaks about the impact of exposure to complex trauma on youths’ potentially antisocial behavior;

“In particular, those adolescents experiencing multiple psychosocial risk factors, such as low self-esteem, hopelessness, exposure to (complex) trauma, and associations with negative peer groups, are significantly more likely to participate in antisocial behavior including drug use, violence, delinquency, and early sexual activity” (Morton, 2013, p. 2).

As aforementioned, Homeboy Industries attempts to not work with at-risk youth, but they are seeking to be there for youth who are already deep in crisis, coming out of incarceration or who are in gangs, but may be in need of money (via a job) and that may be the carrot that brings them in. Many of these young people carry toxic stress, which is “generally applied to the prolonged experiences of exposure to adverse conditions that occur in childhood when the body’s stress management resources are overused and overtaxed” (Bloom, 2011, p. 15-16). Many of the youth also have a disrupted attachment, which impacts their “ability to trust and feel safe with other people. (This) is a major source of toxic stress and [it creates] a wide variety of long lasting negative consequences for the developing child and the adult he or she becomes” (in Bloom, by A. N. Shore, 2009, p. 17). So, it is not uncommon for gang-involved youth to carry the scars of childhood experiences, diagnosed and undiagnosed chronic traumatic stress disorder (Acosta, 2015, p. 16) and to have them manifest via their decision-making process at this time.

Regardless of the angle one chooses to analyze gangs, criminal justice researcher and professor, Dr. Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, states that “from both a macro-based, socioeconomic opportunity perspective and [or] a micro-based, personal psychological perspective, gangs are essentially meeting [some of] the *unfulfilled needs of their members*” (Stinchcomb, 2002, p. 29). These young people, who have been brought up in cycles of violence, including poverty, abuse, and neglect, are in search of a sense of belonging, a sense of power, and/or a sense of safety, all versions of which they often find in gangs. In a somewhat distorted way, some gangs are meeting the baseline needs identified by psychologist Abraham Maslow (*Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs*) which includes a sense of protection, love, food, clothes and shelter, which some youth may not get otherwise. Psychologist Yasser Payne describes gang life as “a space of resistance, comfort, and fortitude developed by young men to move and negotiate

through the throes of inadequate educational and economic opportunity” (in Rios, 2010, p. 26).

III. Case Studies and Program Assessments in the Literature Review

Gangs are not a new phenomenon and therefore, there have been a multitude of programs that have been developed in search of a solution to this perceived problem. These programs are well intentioned, but primarily approach their mission from a deficit-model, “defin[ing] participants by their problems and [seeking] to ‘fix’ them” (Bloom, 2010, p. 13). Organizations are often attempting interventions with the goal of eliminating gangs altogether, but not necessarily some of the main root causes such as poverty, structural racism or inequality. It is because of this that psychologist and gang researcher Dr. Rolf Loeber states that,

“evaluating youth gang interventions is a complex undertaking. Not only must these programs prove that gang dissolution and diversion are taking place, but also delinquency prevention or reduction... (which means that) measurement problems abound...therefore, comparing study results is problematic. Most important, very few rigorous evaluations of *youth* gang programs have been undertaken” (in Loeber, Howell, 1998, p. 285).

With these caveats in mind, I review the existing literature.

National Assessment of Youth Gang Programs

There has only been one national survey conducted assessing youth gang prevention programs (in Loeber, Howell, 1998, p. 296). Surveyed by sociologist and long-time gang scholar, Dr. Irving Spergel, and his colleagues, were 254 respondents, 45 communities and 6 special program sites (in Loeber, Howell, 1998, p. 296). The following are the findings of this assessment along with the programs that have historically shown the most promise from which we may be able to learn some best practices.

The following programs have also been evaluated by the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) CrimeSolutions.gov. NIJ uses research to rate the effectiveness of programs and practices in achieving criminal justice related outcomes in order to “inform practitioners and policy makers about what works, what doesn't, and what's promising in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services.” (NIJ, 2016) The following programs are also cross-listed in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s “Model Programs Guide (MPG).” (OJJDP, MPG, 2016)

Chicago Area Project, Chicago, IL

The Chicago Area Project (CAP) established in the 1930s, created by psychologist Clifford Shaw, “was designed to implement the community organization theory... ‘on social disorganization,’ proffering the notion that community organization could be a major tool for reducing crime and gang problems” (in Loeber, Howell, 1998, p. 286). Among the strategies implemented by CAP was the “curbside counselor” which consisted of members of the community, including “reformed ex-convicts,” who were able to speak with gang-involved youth and “effectively advise the boys in local language and manner to pursue paths to appropriate legitimate behaviors” (Bates, 2013, quoting Dr. Spergel, p. 131).

Although this project was headed in the right direction as it “emphasized local community responsibility for addressing the delinquency problem, it did not address external citywide, governmental, and commercial factors that might have created conditions responsible for local problems” (Bates, 2013, quoting Dr. Spergel, p. 131). CAP “claimed to be successful even though there was an absence of rigorous evaluation results” (in Loeber, Howell, 1998, p. 286).

House of Umoja, Philadelphia, PA

In the 1960s, the House of Umoja was created with the goal of reducing youth gang violence in Philadelphia, PA. Their approach consisted of “provid[ing] for black gang youths altruistic, extended-family values based on African culture” (Fattah, 1987, p. 37). According to an evaluation from the OJJDP, through “re-parenting” (adults who act as parents, giving youth unconditional love, clear standards of behavior, and constant availability) and by providing role models, the House of Umoja has successfully transformed hundreds of frightened, frustrated, and alienated young minority males into self-assured, competent, concerned, and productive citizens.” (OJJDP, 2016) Although this organization tapped into culture, a critical component of identity and self-esteem, it failed to create “a model to work in different settings, ... [with] underlying principles and techniques that do not rely on the charisma of a particular individual” (Fattah, 1987, p. 41). This program also may have been heading in the right direction, but if a program is focused on a single person, a charismatic leader, it is not necessarily viable or scalable. The notion of “*la cultura cura*,” (culture heals) (Acosta, 2015, p. 15) from the ground-breaking work over the last three decades of organizations like Barrios Unidos in Santa Cruz, CA, is one that can be the “foundation of well-being for individuals, families, communities and society alike” (Acosta, 2015, p. 14).

House of Umoja was evaluated by Robert L. Woodson in his book *A Summons to Life: Mediating Structures and the Prevention of Youth Crime* (1981). The results of the study showed that House of Umoja was able to “effect truce among warring gangs; [and was an] effective sanctuary” (Loeber, 1998, p. 287) for youth in crisis. Woodson’s assessment concluded that the “truce and other House of Umoja activities were instrumental in reducing the number of gang deaths in the city from an average of 39 per year in 1973, to 6 in 1976, and to only 1 in 1977.” (Loeber, 1998, p. 287)

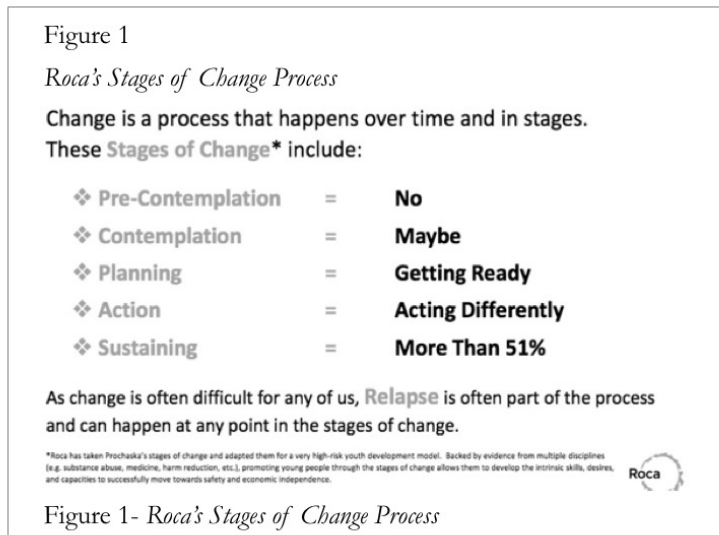
Project BUILD, Chicago, IL

Project BUILD (Project Broader Urban Involvement and Leadership Development) established in the mid-1980s, utilized yet another method, the incorporation of schools, necessary when working with youth who are gang-involved, since a large part of a young person's day is spent within them. They "provided gang prevention curriculum and an after-school program" component which began to address the issues behind the youth's involvement with gangs. This program was "evaluated rigorously, and shown to have promise" (Stinchcomb, 2002, p. 33). The evaluation of the program incorporated a "nonequivalent comparison group" design, in which three pairs of public middle schools were matched on the basis that the same gang actively recruited members from both schools in a pair. One school in each pair was randomly assigned to be an experimental school, and the other was designated as a comparison school (in Loeber, by Howell, 1998, p. 287). According to OJJDP the program also targeted youth, "who were detained at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center in Chicago, Illinois, and who were enrolled in the school on the premises." (OJJDP, 2016, Programs 45) The evaluation study conducted by Lurigio and colleagues (2000) "found that youths who participated in Project BUILD had significantly lower rates of recidivism compared to non-Project BUILD youths" (OJJDP, 2016, Programs 45). The only challenge here with a program that is school based is that many youth, at the middle school and high school age level, may have already dropped out/(been)pushed out and may not necessarily want to return to a campus to be part of any program due to the "school wounds" that they may carry.

Roca, Chelsea, MA

A more current case study can be found in Chelsea, MA. Roca, a youth development organization founded in the late 1980s, claims to “serve the hardest to serve” (Bloom, 2010, p. 14) 28 years later in 2016. This organization has been deemed successful in large part because it has created a “theoretical shift that emphasizes engagement over social control” (in Rosenfeld, 2010, p. 100). According to a paper commissioned by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, there are four major aspects of Roca’s framework that has enabled this organization to continue their work with gang-involved youth. Through their “relentless outreach,” (Bloom, 2010, p. 14) Roca is determined to target and actively recruit gang-involved youth via their presence in the streets. They have implemented a “highly individualized, youth-centered support [intake] process” and go beyond by “establishing credibility” and creating a “safe-haven with strong, caring relationships” (Rosenfeld, 2010, p. 100). Once these young people, who are considered “high risk” are recruited and brought into a safe haven from the streets, Roca implements “wraparound services as part of a clearly articulated plan,” (Rosenfeld, 2010, p. 100) which in essence means that youth set goals for themselves, identify the support they will need and are closely monitored by an adult advocate within the organization. Part of what attracted me to move 3,000 miles to do my residency at Homeboy Industries is the direct alignment with the philosophy of Roca; it is what founder Gregory Boyle and Shirley Torres always say, we seek to always build with those “least likely to succeed.” In October of 2015, Shirley Torres and I were able to visit Roca and learn about its four-year program that includes a six-month period during which youth are basically telling mentors to “f-ck off.” They build that in to the program in a stage they call “pre-contemplation” as Roca has taken Dr. James Prochaska’s stages of change and adapted them for a very high-risk youth development model. See Figure 1, below, taken

from Roca's Early Stage Growth Plan (Roca, 2013, p. 4). This pre-contemplation stage may in fact be Roca's answer to the conundrum that Homeboy Industries faces in reaching youth who may not yet want to be reached.



Homies Empowerment, Oakland, CA

In this section, I have also included the Homies Empowerment Program, which was evaluated by the *Cause Data Collective* as part of the best practices for the Latino Men and Boys Oakland Project in conjunction with the California Endowment's statewide effort to evaluate successful programs working with boys and men of color. Researchers "cited the transformative power of actively helping others in the community, through activities like organizing free breakfasts for Latino day laborers" (Daza, 2010) as part of the work of Homies Empowerment. This is not to assume that Homies Empowerment is a national model, but rather it is an opportunity to share some of the work that I have been a part of, both its strengths and shortcomings.

Homies Empowerment begins by pairing gang involved/trauma impacted high school aged youth with role models (Homie Mentors) who have either been in gangs or can understand the need to be in gangs and the resources that young people get out of gangs, such as a second family unit, a sense of belonging, protection and camaraderie. These Homie

Mentor teams serve many roles from best practices research including the “curbside counselor” (CAP) as a Homie Counselor, the Homie Educator (Umoja), with a paradigm shift (Roca) that values gang involved youth and does not demonize or pathologize them. They are not the big homie from the block, but they are people from similar neighborhoods, and backgrounds who have learned to navigate multiple systems and have been successful at them. Many of them are either in college or have recently graduated. Evaluators from Oakland’s Data Cause Collective have named Homies Empowerment a “model to build on” in particular the “La Raza History Classes and Homies' Dinner [which] bring together youth from different gangs for Latino cultural programming, academic support, therapeutic discussion, and community volunteering (including student initiated programs serving Oakland's day laborers).” (Flores, 2010, p. 12)

The model has been best implemented through the vehicle of an after-school community-based, wrap-around services program at three high schools (Arise High, Fremont High, and Castlemont High) for in-school and out-of-school youth. In that space, students meet weekly in Ethnic Studies, Self-care, the Leader Within classes, and Young Womyn/Men’s Circle. They are involved in civic engagement programs with paid internships that address some of the root causes that young people face in their neighborhoods. The youth also attend weekly Homies Study Tables, Homies Counseling and Unity Dinners. The shortcomings of the program include that it is school-based, even though the Homies Dinners are in the community, and that the current model, exclusively volunteer-run, was not sustainable.

In summary, pictured below in Figure 2, none of the organizations studied included all of the strategies that have been deemed successful, but all five of the organizations have modeled parts that they have incorporated into their strategy.

Figure 2
Youth Development Best Strategies
 Organizations evaluated in Review of Knowledge for Action

Organization	Curbside Counselor	Ethnic Studies	Community Involvement	Youth Dev. Focus	Address Systemic Issues	In Schools
Chicago Area Project, IL.	√					
House of Umoja Phil., PA, Project BUILD Chicago, IL.		√		√		
ROCA Chelsea, MA.	√		√	√	√	
Homies Empowerment Oakland, CA.	√	√	√	√		√

Figure 2- *Youth Development Best Strategies*, C. Cruz, 2015

Seemingly, from the case studies, I learned that addressing gangs through the “implement[ation of] theoretical interventions that rely exclusively on intuitive, emotional, political, or fiscal support” (in Stinchcomb, from Knox, 1994, p. 37) is like putting a Band-Aid on a deep, open wound as it would not be providing for the necessary treatment to heal. Thus, even if counselors, culture and schools are involved as seen in the previous cases, without both the youth and their micro and macro needs and contributions being acknowledged, these programs cannot be successful.

Holes in the Assessments and Literature Review for the Target Population

In order for programs to be successful at reaching and having a profound effect on the lives of Latino gang-involved/trauma impacted youth, they must address the social and economic conditions that surround them. There have been many publications written about gangs and youth involvement in them, yet there is not much information available focusing

on the proposed target population. Of the 1,170 journals, 1,010 were empirical articles, less than 30% included Latino youths living in the United States or Puerto Rico, only approximately 6% reported results for Latino youths, and less than 3% focused exclusively on Latino youths” (Rodriguez, 2004, p. 9). Judging by the availability of resources, it is evident that Latino youths are not a priority among the interests of youth development researchers. Although 1,010 empirical articles were published in six youth development journals, only 62 reported results for Latino youths, less than half (26) of which focused on issues related to Latino youths exclusively. In addition, the studies in the youth development journals that were Latino youth-centered were overwhelmingly deficit-oriented. The articles were largely reporting issues related to sexual activity (23%), substance use (17%), depression (17%), and issues related to negative peer pressure or deviant peers (17%). This means that a great majority (74%) of the studies were unable to address and/or evaluate the assets that youth and their communities can contribute including, but not limited to, community cultural wealth, ethnic identity and pride. Dr. Patrick H. Nolan, Founder of the Youth-Nex Research Center at the University of Virginia wrote in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* that “there are also few examples of longitudinal studies of positive development of this population [Black and Brown youth] and few that consider multiple protective factors simultaneously.” (Nolan, 2013, p. 289) In the systems recommendations offered by community elder and veteran educator Jerry Tello along with researcher Frank de Jesús Acosta, documented in their article “Lifting Latinos by their Rootstraps,” for the book “Latino Young Men and Boys in Search of Justice,” (Acosta, 2015) they call upon the field of research under the guise of Boys and Men of Color (BMoC) to “shift from the present deficit-based paradigm that is dominant in the field to one that is healing informed, through

strategies that place the individual, family and community as the priority in the implementation of healing and restorative strategies” (Acosta, 2015, p. 17).

IV. Youth Development vs. Intervention

Youth development differs from intervention because it seeks to empower young people and “aim[s] to use highly participatory, youth-driven processes to help young people strengthen positive attitudes, skills, and behaviors that improve functioning across a range of life domains” (in Morton, by Jennings, 2006, p. 2). Youth development shifts the focus from that which blames youth for what seems like poor choices being made, such as becoming affiliated with gangs, to that which recognizes a young person’s individual and his/her community’s experience and contributions and seeks to provide the support that is lacking. This results in empowerment rather than alienation, accusation and punishment.

Become Familiar with the Community

Before anyone attempts to create a program that will effectively engage youth involved with gangs, they may seek to familiarize themselves with the community that the youth grew up in, and in most cases is all they know. If one is unaware of the existing conditions causing its members to feel the need to become involved with gangs, one will be unable to completely understand what the real needs of the community are. Stinchcomb states that there are a series of steps to follow when looking to create an effective strategy. These steps are to “analyze community needs [and strengths], develop an appropriate conceptual framework, incorporate[e] macro and micro strategies into a comprehensive program design, and review the results of preceding research in order to identify what relevant approaches that have demonstrated success elsewhere might be applied locally”

(Stinchcomb, 2002, p. 37). From this viewpoint, we can see that the starting point is a broader analysis of the community.

Rethink our Thinking: Deficit to Assets

When performing this study and getting to know the physical community that the youth grew up in, abandoning the “seriously limited” (Rodriguez, 2004, p. 112) deficit model thinking is key because it does not account for the assets that these young people possess, and can lead to a diagnosis that merely treats symptoms, and sees the youth as needing to be fixed, and not as fixers themselves. However, it is possible that even adults who grow up in that same neighborhood, and return to engage youth there, still may not see their own location through an asset lens. In Appendix K there is a visual representation of that juxtaposition. Youth from the Ramona Gardens public housing neighborhood of Boyle Heights painted two murals, the first depicting how others see their neighborhood, and the second, how they see their neighborhood. In the first mural, graffiti, alcoholism, a liquor store, and hyper policing are prominent. On the other, the second mural shows an empowered child planting food, folks with tattoos making peace treaties, and kids playing basketball. In the same housing projects both murals may be true, it just depends what we choose to see.

Many of the positive attributes and core values that guide most gangs go beyond the physical space and are deeply rooted in their cultural background. Thus, in order to fully understand a young person’s motivations for becoming affiliated with gangs, one should study both the youth’s ethnic background, not to stereotype and overgeneralize, but to appreciate the community cultural wealth that they possess.

Community Cultural Wealth and Ethnic Identity

Identity is largely defined by one's ethnic and cultural background and when valued and properly taught, it can be a tool for empowerment and resiliency. Various scholars have argued that "ethnic identity is an important precursor to understanding Latino youth development" (in Rodriguez, by Neimann, 1999, p. 108). Veteran educator and therapist, Jerry Tello, co-founder of the National Compadres Network, notes that in the literature some of the positive traits that come up for Latino youth include;

“respeto, familismo, personalismo, and colectivismo.

Respeto refers to the ways in which all relationships are informed by a mutual respect towards one another.

Familismo highlights the importance of the family.

Personalismo emphasizes the value of establishing intimate and meaningful interpersonal relationships.

Colectivismo highlights the ways in which interdependence and working collectively are key to positive development and to reach goals for the common good of the entire family" (in Tello, by Falicov (1998), p. 802).

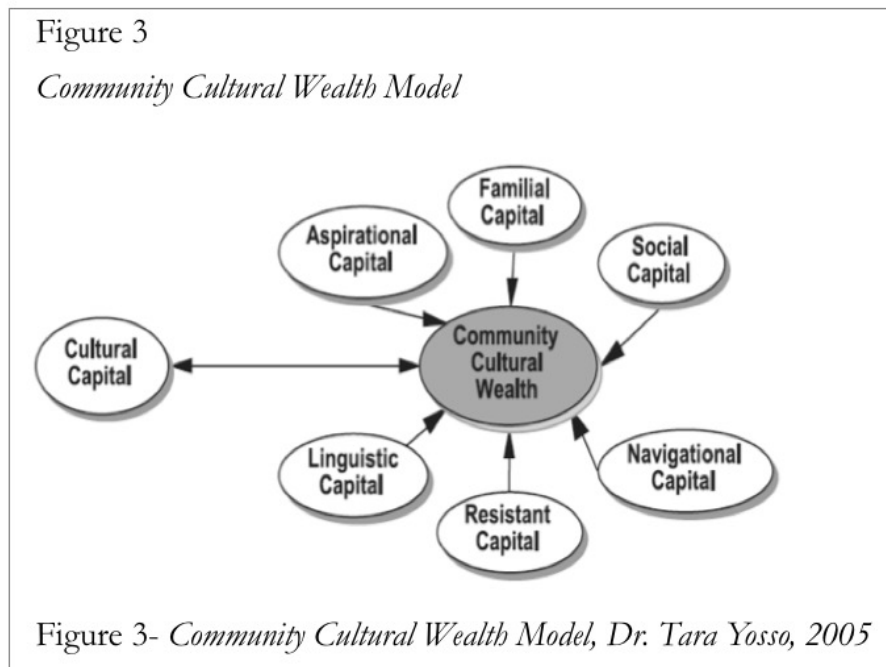
Psychology professor Jean S. Phinney states that adolescents with positive ethnic identities more effectively handle negative stereotypes and prejudice instead of internalizing negative self-perceptions (in Rodriguez, by Phinney (1993), p. 112). Longitudinal research coming out of the University of Arizona acknowledges that students at Tucson Unified School District who were enrolled in Mexican-American Studies programs scored on average "one third higher on the Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS)" (Cabrera, 2014, p. 1098) than students who were not in enrolled in any ethnic studies programs.

One's ethnic background is directly linked with one's culture. According to Dr. Tara Yosso, when assessing an individual's assets, his/her "community cultural wealth" (Yosso, 2005, p. 75) must be properly accounted for. "Community Cultural Wealth is an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (Yosso, 2005, p. 77). In this

model, there are six forms of capital that are presented as wealth: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial and resistant. They are defined as follows:

- *Aspirational*: ability to hold onto hope in the face of structured inequality and often without the means to make such dreams a reality.
- *Linguistic*: intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style.
- *Familial*: community history, memory and cultural intuition. ‘Extended family’, which may include immediate family (living or long passed on) as well as aunts, uncles, grandparents and friends who we might consider part of our *familia* [or tribe]. [The extensive] funds of knowledge within Mexican American communities.
- *Social*: networks of people and community resources. *Mutualistas* or mutual aid societies are an example of how historically, immigrants to the US and indeed, African Americans even while enslaved, created and maintained social networks [including gangs, tribes and kinships].
- *Navigational*: skills of maneuvering through social institutions; resilience that has been recognized as ‘a set of inner resources, social competencies and cultural strategies that permit individuals to not only survive, recover, or even thrive after stressful events, but also to draw from the experience to enhance subsequent functioning.’
- *Resistant*: refers to the knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality [such as youth rebellion]. (Yosso, 2005, p. 77-79)

Studying this model (Figure 3 pictured below) enables us to begin to understand the



wealth of resources that the youth, and the communities they come from, carry. For example, many people who may not have lived in deep poverty may look at the youth whom they perceive as impoverished as *pobrecitos/as* (those poor kids). This may foster a sense of sympathy for what they have to carry; however, many folks may fail to also see the aspirational capital that youth hold onto amidst the challenges that may exist. The late rapper Tupac Shakur phrased it as “making a dollar out of 15 cents.” This form of wealth may be hidden from the gaze of some adults who have labeled youth in poverty as mere “victims” needing “rescue.”

The cultural wealth model allows us to see where the need (and search for if missing) of a family bond, even in gangs, may come from, as *familial capital* is an important form of wealth. We may also consider reframing the concept of will-full defiance, where youth act out in school potentially leading to thousands of expulsions, and possibly see some of that behavior as a form of *resistant capital* when youth may stand against “the cultural knowledge of oppressive structures” (in Yosso, by Pizarro, 1998, p. 81). In other words, some youth act out in history class because they have a genuine reason to oppose what what Dr. James Loewen calls the “lies my teacher told me.” Youth find creative ways to rebel and don’t want to be taught a false history that leaves their own peoples contributions out of the official textbooks.

As part of Latino/a/x⁶ (Indigenous) communities’ cultural wealth, therapists, like Jerry Tello, have advocated for youth development agencies to employ the “*La Cultura Cura*”

⁶ Latino/a/x: is an umbrella term enveloping Spanish-speaking peoples from 20+ countries. The term Indigenous honors Native roots and includes people that speak other languages such as Nahuatl, Quechua, Tzotzil and others. Many prefer the term “Latinx” where the “x” embraces the multiple identities of a very diverse peoples. “Latinx” has emerged as “gender-neutral and non-binary term” (Rosa, 2016, p. 106).

(Culture Heals) framework. *La Cultura Cura* integrates sweat-lodge ceremonies, rites of passage, and the strengths of the youth's indigenous culture as ways to help teens who have been "traumatized, demonized, vilified and convicted at birth [as they] heal and become the noble person they were born to be" (Galvis in Acosta, 2016, p. 27). George Galvis speaks about the marriage between community cultural wealth and attachment theory. He states that a fundamental teaching of "*Cultura* imparted to a young child is inter-connectedness and belonging to all in the human family- in the Mayan tradition this life tenet is called 'In Lak'ech Hala Ken' (I am the other you and you are the other me)." These concepts have been a part of Latino/a/x and Indigenous cultures for millennia. Building on those, truly values the assets that youth carry.

VI. From RK to A: Taking the Review of Knowledge to Action

With a youth empowerment approach and an assessment of best practices in this review (R) of knowledge (K), now the action (A) takes place in a strategic project focused on the co-creation of a youth services committee that can develop a unified system of care for young people, and carry out the work across two agencies at Homeboy Industries.

In order to engage in the work, I landed at Homeboy Industries in a listening campaign. I spent the first two-months of my residency doing whatever it took to build with folks and be clear that I was not coming in to "fix" them. I understood that previous doctoral students from other campuses had utilized Homeboy Industries and have not really been in partnership with them.

Through a collaboration with Shirley Torres, I was able to sit in on multiple leadership committees including the Homeboy Industries day-to-day operations council, the executive council that oversees all of the departments, and the board of directors. She made

my entry into the organization an easy one, however, I had to come prepared to listen, listen deeply, at all meetings, and be ready to say yes to all, or most, opportunities. This was important because I wanted to model that I was there first and foremost as a student, and that I was not there to give my opinion or to fix things. The opportunities to say yes came quickly. During the second week, I was asked to be a substitute teacher for a staple class, Homeboy 101, for the director of mental health services, Fajima Bedran, who was out on an emergency. I am not sure why they asked me, but I am very thankful that they did. This gave me an entry point into working with the trainees. One class turned into four. That opportunity allowed me to listen to the trainees, the youth and adults that walk into the building of Homeboy Industries seeking a job and/or some form of support. One of those trainees, 18-year old Carizma, noted that washing windows daily can take its toll. I asked her if she would train me, and she asked me to show up extra early, to do what she does. In doing so, I gained a greater appreciation for what the trainees do at Homeboy Industries. During the course of the year I was able to get to know Carizma and she shared some of her dreams with me; which included starting a water campaign to bring clean water across the country to Flint, Michigan to an area that was devastated with polluted water for its residents. I felt honored to get to hear her dreams, and together, we sought to make them a reality. This became my approach at Homeboy; to listen, to say yes, and to speak very little at meetings, until I had hopefully earned the opportunity to do so, or was asked to.

It is that approach that informs my initial theory of action to engage in the work.

VII. Theory of Action

If, I listen deeply with the intent to understand, and

If, I look at everything at Homeboy Industries from an asset-based perspective, and

If, I approach my work with the awe of what the trainees and staff carry⁷ and the resiliency by which they operate with, and

If, I then take the following steps to assess the youth educational services at Homeboy Industries:

conduct 1-on-1 interviews with department heads
from case management, navigators, mental health,
education, and with listening to the youth, and

If, *we*, members from Learning Works and Homeboy Industries,
collectively create a new youth services committee that works together,
and produces a strategic plan with timetables, benchmarks, ownership and a realistic
implementation plan,

Then,

the listening campaign, along with the interviews, assessments and research,
and the *collective ownership* of the youth services committee (YSC),
will allow *me* to effectively fulfill my strategic project,
and will allow us, the YSC, to *build* both a team
and a comprehensive system of care for youth at Homeboy Industries.

⁷ Carry: Refers to the potential for staff to carry multiple forms of secondary and vicarious trauma. The staff support clients who are dealing with multiple levels of complex trauma ranging from entrenched poverty, homelessness, systemic violence, gang warfare, separation from families, incarceration and much more.

Strategic Project

Based on my initial theory of action and taking a deep listening approach for the first two months, the strategic project began to crystalize when Homeboy Industries decided that it needed to pay closer attention to how it was serving youth. The agency received a Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) contract earlier in the year (2015) from the city of Los Angeles to work with youth coming out of camp (juvenile hall), and it was then that the HBI leadership was driven to evaluate both its strengths and areas of growth in this field. In order to gain a collective, yet department-specific compilation of ideas, Shirley Torres asked me to sit down with everyone who serves youth: case managers, therapists, educators, chasers and navigators. The purpose was to learn from them what is working, what can be improved, and to gage their ideas for what could be created. This began with a list of 18 potential interviewees and it expanded to capturing 40 different stakeholders. Appendix B includes the full list of interviewees.

Description

The strategic project focused on an in-depth analysis, evaluation, and co-creation of a newly revised educational/youth development plan that helps *fulfill the vision of Homeboy Industries* as they strengthen their ability to “train” and “support” all youth who walk through their doors. The goals are to develop a methodology for youth development steeped in best practices, which is why the theory of action is focused on such topic; then, it is to build a team to propose and implement a sustainable plan with metrics.

My Role

My role began as a learner, researcher, and team-builder. I chose to taken on no formal title purposefully, except for one of a learner and supporter of the organization. I have been welcomed to a community of kinship, and with their leadership and all of us working together, we will get to a place of self-assessment, reflection, experimentation, and transformation to co-create a youth development and education strategic plan.

Solidifying the Strategic Project

Process

The strategic project is broken up into two phases; Phase 1 took place from July-January 2016 where I assessed what exists at Homeboy Industries to support youth. Phase 2 took place from February-May 2016. During that time my charge was to facilitate the creation of a youth services committee that would help carry the work forward with leaders from Homeboy Industries and Learning Works.

As part of Phase 1, I was initially to conduct 18 one-on-one stakeholder interviews. Shirley Torres generated that list based on the people in the agency that were overseeing support systems for serving the youth at Homeboy. Initially, there were no youth on that list. I realized that it was vital to hear from them and when I mentioned it to Shirley, she suggested conducting a specific youth focus group which proved to be of utmost importance. I was also able to conduct 1-on-1 interviews with youth and with other stakeholders who provided vital information for the strategic project. In all, I was able to conduct 29 one-on-one recorded interviews. Each interview lasted an average of thirty minutes to an hour.

Shirley Torres and I co-created the following six questions:

1. What **systems are there in place** at Homeboy Industries to support young people?
2. What is **working well** at Homeboy Industries to support young people?
3. What **needs improvement** at Homeboy Industries to support young people?
4. **How are youth needs different** from the adults that we serve at Homeboy Industries?
5. **How can we build on the strengths** of Homeboy Industries to grow a program that directly speaks to young people?
6. If you were able to create a **model youth empowerment program what would it look like** (include)?

The thinking behind these questions served a three-fold strategy; to keep the questions open enough that each interviewee would take it in the direction she/he saw fit, to gauge what works and needs improvement (according to the stakeholders), and to capture the dreams and wisdom of all the people being interviewed. Most interviews were to take place in either Shirley Torres' office or at the Learning Works sites in Pasadena and Boyle Heights. However, some folks requested even more privacy because Shirley's office has a glass door, and folks wanted a place that felt more secluded to them. Theresa Karanik, who is a therapist at Homeboy, was nice enough to lend her office space so that we could have privacy during the interviews. The therapist rooms are considered sacred space at Homeboy, and that space truly lent itself to creating the best environment for people to open up. At the beginning of every interview, I explained to each participant that I was a student coming from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and that I wanted to learn what exists at Homeboy Industries to support the youth, and their own thoughts on developing a youth empowerment program. I asked each participant to fill out a brief waiver/release form (Appendix I). Each participant took the time to read the release form, ask questions, and when ready, signed it. Only one participant out of 41 candidates declined to be interviewed. He did not want to be recorded and just wanted to talk and share with me some of the

things that he does to help young people be able to open up. The other 40 participants all signed the release form, and I shared with them that we would keep the first four questions anonymous, unless they asked us otherwise, and that the last two questions we wanted to credit them with their great visions for what could be included in a youth development program. It is worth noting that after all of the interviews were completed, Shirley Torres and the founder of Learning Works, Mikala Rahn, felt that it would be best to keep everything anonymous, that way we would not tie a particular dream to a particular person.

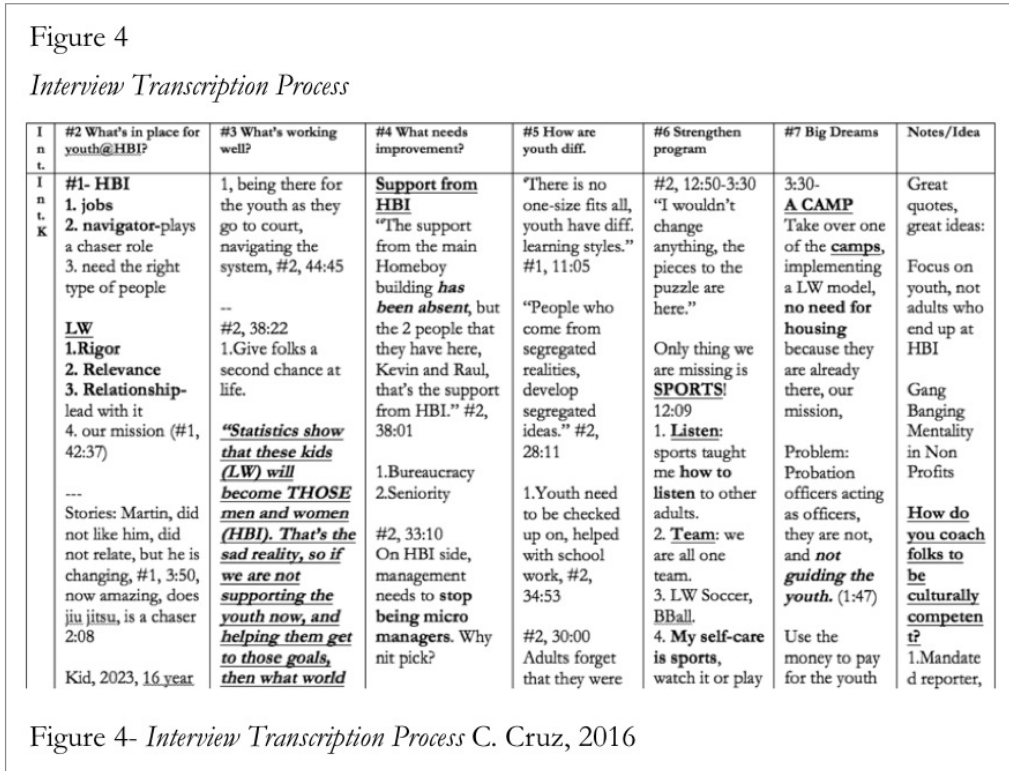
Before starting each interview, I always asked permission if I could audio record, and only 2 participants were apprehensive about the recording. One asked, “what is the recording going to be used for?” I stated that the recordings allowed me to capture everything they shared, and would allow me to quote them accurately. One of those participants stated, “F-ck it, I don’t care if you record or not, I have a lot to say.”

In the end, my interviewees consisted of 13 youth/trainees, 9 council members/directors from both agencies, 5 navigators, 4 teachers, 3 chasers, 3 case managers, 2 therapists and 1 business manager. 21 of those interviews are with Homeboy Industries staff, 6 are staff from Learning Works, and as aforementioned, 13 are youth/trainees (2 of which are also considered Homeboy staff).

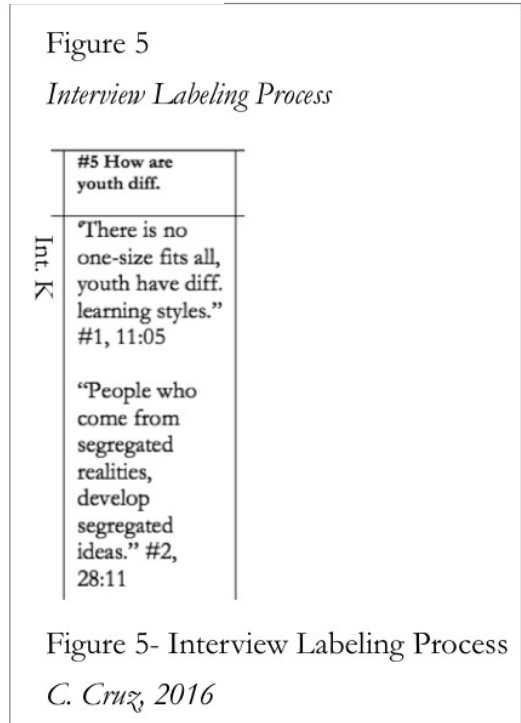
After completing the interviews, I went through the process of transcribing each interview and began looking for patterns. I have attached a sample of the coding notes in Appendix H.

Below you will see in Figure 4, an example of the form I utilized to synthesize the transcription of every interview. The form is broken down into 7 columns, the first 6 are created to capture the answer to the first 6 questions. The 7th column allows for the ability to

capture notes and ideas that either came up during the interview or that the interviewee brought up that didn't quite fit in any of the 6 questions.



Each quote is labeled with an audio tape # and a time stamp. For example, pictured to the right in Figure 5 is interview labeled K. The labeling system allows me to know who this stakeholder is without revealing their identity. If you notice, the second quote in column #5 reads "people who come from segregated realities, develop segregated ideas. #2, 28:11." The #2 signifies the second audio tape for interviewee K.



The 28:11 is a time stamp so I can easily retrieve or go to that quote in my audio tapes. In order to best understand that quote, this interviewee was speaking about people who have been incarcerated for a long time, purposely segregated in prison, and then develop segregated ideas about working or not working with other racial/ethnic groups. This note-taking system allowed me to capture quotes that I could use throughout the capstone without having to transcribe every single interview word for word. I listened to every minute of every interview very carefully, and paused the tape to transcribe meaningful quotes that stood out during the interview as each participant answered the questions to the best of their abilities.

After transcribing all of the interviews, my next task was to prepare a report synthesizing all of the findings, initially for the leaders of Homeboy Industries and Learning Works. Then, we strategized as to the best way to present it to the agency. The goal is not to present a plan that I create, but rather to show them the data that has been collected, and establish the organizational conditions for people to be able to work together, across departments and agencies, to generate co-ownership for the development of “a coordinated system of care to support young people” (Torres, 2015).

Below, you will find the initial results of the stakeholder interviews. Part of the task in presenting this information is to stimulate collective ownership for the creation of a working committee that can look at all of this data and develop a working plan together. Dr. Margaret Wheatley argues that the next step is to, “set a clear intent, to agree on how they are going to work together, and then practice to become better observers, learners, and colleagues as they co-create with their environment” (Wheatley, 2006, p. 46). Wheatley mentions that an important part in the next steps is to involve many people (Wheatley, 2006, p. 67) and that a “tried and true maxim of my field of organizational behavior is that people

support what they create” (Wheatley, 2006, p. 68). That is why co-ownership is key. In order to develop that co-ownership, people “must interact with it [data]: we cannot talk people into our version of reality because truly nothing is real for them if they haven’t created it” (Wheatley, 2006, p. 68).

Results

In synthesizing the forty stakeholder voices, I have identified six major recurring themes from the interviews: basic necessities, attitudes or beliefs about youth, prioritizing youth, institutional culture, programming and curriculum, and logistics. The following sections are accompanied by Figures 6-25 included in Appendix J. Those figures which are imperative to illustrate are highlighted below.

Basic Necessities

When interviewees were asked about the systems in place at Homeboy Industries to support the youth (question #1), 35% (14 out of 40, 8 out of those youth) noted that employment was vital. An adult respondent spoke about jobs as a potential “carrot” for those youth who are actively gang-banging; when you put “money in his pocket, a reason to get up in the morning, a reason not to gang bang at night, a reason for his mom to be proud of him. That’s an attraction.” (Interview C, personal communication, November 23, 2015). One of the youth respondents stated that, “the job was key cuz (because) I just had my kid so I needed money at age 17. Working for Homeboy and going to school here (Learning Works) was a great deal for me” (Interview B, Respondent C, personal communication, December 2, 2015). Even though education, via Learning Works, came in only one vote behind with 32.5% (13 out of 40, 11 of those are adults), one youth admitted that they

initially only cared about the paycheck. “At first I only cared about the job, but now I care about school, too” (Interview B, Respondent H, personal communication, December 2, 2015). Most adult interviewees did not only address the personal needs of the youth, but they also talked about a desire to give raises⁸ to the staff that work directly with youth, so they, too, could financially meet their own needs. This did not come up from any of the youth respondents. In the final question, when asked about what a model youth program would look like, the respondents dreamed out loud about a program that had an emergency fund,⁹ to cover basic needs like rent and food. They even spoke of an endowment¹⁰ to support young people as they go off to college and have new expenses such as books and study materials. The youth themselves also spoke about building a center where they had a place to sleep as many shared that they found themselves going from couch-to-couch just to get by from day-to-day.

Attitudes or Beliefs about Youth

As interviewees identified support systems for youth that are working well (question #2), Learning Works came in second place with 20% (8 out of 40). Interviewees brought up the practices that take place inside of the school building on First Street, primarily guided by the school’s eight principles, which can be found in Figure 8 pictured below. Moreover, one respondent described falling in love with Learning Works after reading its principles.

⁸ It is worth noting that Homeboy Industries was able to give 2% raises across the board in March of 2016 to its staff.

⁹ Emergency fund account: Currently, staff go out of their own pocket to support some of the extra needs of students. For larger needs, such as paying their rent, the youth are able to speak to Father Greg or their case managers for assistance.

¹⁰ Endowment: Some adults mentioned scholarships or an endowment and although youth respondents did not name it an endowment, they also spoke about having money available to pay for college expenses.

Learning Works' Guiding Principles

As one adult interviewee acknowledged, “our kids are seen as adults because they live adult lives, and have adult responsibilities, that’s why we don’t make many concessions for them, but they are emotionally children” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015). Another respondent remarked that “the dreams of our youth have been demolished, so we can’t receive them with all these expectations, we have to receive them and meet them where they are at” (Interview RR, personal communication, September 6, 2015). Several of the interviewees

mentioned that this fundamental understanding represented in the school’s principles, guides their approach. One youth interviewee, who preferred speaking in Spanish, simply said, “*aquí agarras cariño!*” (Interview M, personal communication, October 12, 2015), loosely

translated, “here you get care (love).” Another respondent highlighted two of the school’s principles stating that “forgiveness and a fresh start are very important for this particular population” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015). Yet another principle, irrational commitment to students, was represented when a student respondent shared that Learning Works does not “pick and choose students” and said a former school “didn’t want to enroll criminals...[so] they got rid of me” (Interview B, respondent B, personal communication, December 2, 2015). When asked how youth needs are different

Figure 8
School Principles

Our Principles

Fresh Start
Forgiveness and Unconditional Love
Safe Haven
Reality and Potential
Desire to Give Back and Be Heard
Honesty
Joy & Fun
Irrational Commitment to Students



Figure 8- *School Principles*, Learning Works, 2016

than adults', 27.5% of the respondents (11 out of 40, 9 of which were adults), spoke about the notion that youth deserve to be given more chances which include having patience and offering grace¹¹ to them. The youth didn't use the word grace, but they spoke about wanting adults to give them more chances. Finally, receiving 10% of responses was the notion of taking a harm reduction approach¹² when supporting young people.

Youth Voices

Various interviewees discussed the need to listen to the youth, with 9 out of 40 respondents (20%, 5 adults) mentioning that youth want to be "heard and in control." One youth interviewee described being silenced in the classes at Homeboy:

"The classes for drugs and for anger (management) should come to First Street [High School]. They need to get our point of view from it and not just the adults. They ask our opinion, but when we give it they just say we are *youngsters* and don't know what's up. They need to understand that we go through stuff, too" (Interview LL, personal communication, October 12, 2015).

Youth further described the need for their voices to be heard in terms of therapy. One interviewee said, "They choose a therapist for you, most are volunteers, but the ones I connect with, they don't even put me with. Why do I always get the volunteers?" (Interview O, personal communication, September 24, 2015).

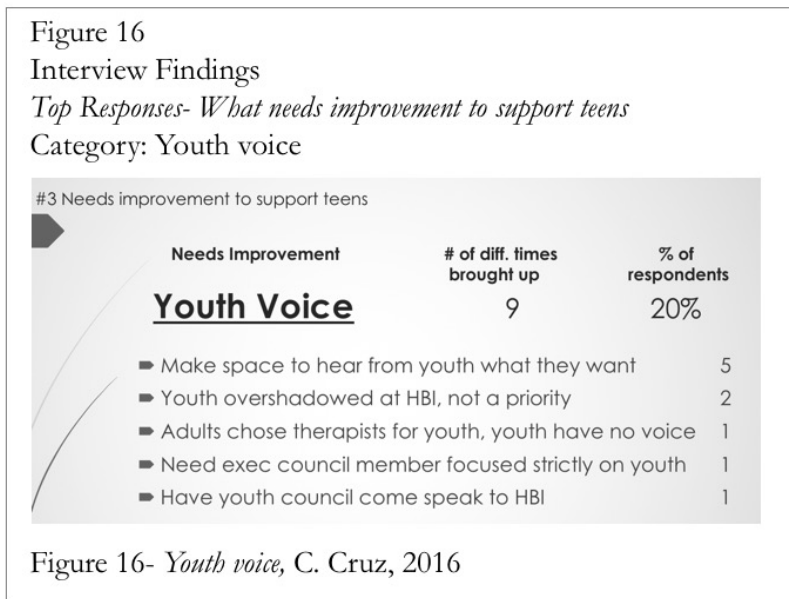
When asked what needs improvement (question #3), many of the adult respondents agreed that youth voices had to be valued more. One respondent described as follows how crucial it is for these "in-crisis" youth to be heard:

¹¹ Grace: At Homeboy Industries the hope is that grace is given to all, meaning that the love and favor of God be extended to all who walk through their doors.

¹² Harm Reduction Approach: "Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs." (Harm Reduction Coalition)

“If I am one of these youth, I got the sense to do whatever the f-ck I want, and being from a barrio, I’m powerful now. I can make things happen. Try that again and I’ll f-ck you up. I finally feel powerful, finally... [maybe that is] why most kids don’t come here because you gotta’ give up your power again” (Interview X, personal communication, August 26, 2015).

Another adult acknowledged that “youth [are] always told what to do, so they need a space where they feel welcomed, their own space, where their voice truly matters” (Interview V, personal communication, August 31,



2015). In Figure 16, pictured above, interviewees expressed the need to craft spaces to hear directly from the youth in order to learn about their needs and points of view. Two interviewees noted that a youth council is forming at Learning Works, and that they hope that the group can speak to both agencies to inform the adults of youth’s needs.

Prioritizing Youth

Another suggestion, brought up by several respondents, about what needs improvement to support young people at Homeboy Industries is the fact that youth are not necessarily a priority. When asked what systems are already in place at Homeboy (question #1), a respondent said that although there are many services offered by HBI, that their focus has shifted over time toward adults and that the distance between the two sites [1.7 miles] has created a sense that “youth are out of sight, out of mind” (Interview N, personal

communication, October 8, 2015). Another respondent said that, “we haven’t been youth driven [in a while], we have a lot of room for improvement” (Interview Z, personal communication, August 26, 2015). Several interviewees expressed an urgency to bring the focus back to the youth. One interviewee stated that “statistics show that these kids [at Learning Works] will become those men and women [at Homeboy Industries]. That’s the sad reality, so if we are not supporting the youth now, and helping them get to those goals, then what world are we creating?” (Interview K, personal communication, October 13, 2015). One respondent felt that the “youth haven’t been a senior management priority. We need an advocate at the executive level, otherwise we are just babbling” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015).

Age-Appropriateness and Emotional Safety

Many respondents spoke about the lack of age-appropriate spaces for the youth. Though none of the interviewees expressed that this was done intentionally, some believe that the culture created at Homeboy Industries makes it a purposely safe space for previously gang involved, tattooed, older men, but that may not be the same space that *young* men and women need to thrive and feel safe in. Multiple respondents spoke about how Homeboy Industries is not necessarily a “developmentally appropriate place for children” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015). One of the respondents stated that “kids are overshadowed at HBI. There are grown a-s men who are coming out of prison which makes for an intimidating place for a youngster” (Interview Ñ, personal communication, October 8, 2015). One interviewee said that most of our youth “already have bad habits, and being around adults only makes it worse” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015). Another interviewee said that these agencies should

even go a step further in age-appropriateness and not lump all youth into just one group. “We have 16-19 year olds with really crazy lives that I would not want influencing our 14 year olds” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015). Not everyone felt that way, however, as two adult respondents talked about how the older homies could potentially be a positive influence on the younger ones.

Changes from Within

Many interviewees said that there are programs already in place at HBI that could be very successful with the youth if only they were adapted to meet their specific needs. They mentioned that “kids have adult problems [here at Homeboy], but we must still remember that they are still kids” (Interview I, personal communication, October 14, 2015). Multiple respondents identified an example of a best practice already existing at Homeboy Industries, Secure Base, which could be easily tailored for youth. Currently, Secure Base is a coordinated support strategy where a case manager, mental health therapist, and a navigator all form a united base of support for trainees that walk into the building. One interviewee said, “we know secure base works. It’s about holding folks, checking in, with [the] navigator present. We desperately need some [secure base] for the youth” (Interview G, personal communication, October 21, 2015). Another respondent said that “youth never get to be in control, that’s why secure base is powerful because they get to lead it” (Interview G, personal communication, October 21, 2015). Others expanded on that idea to include a teacher into that secure base as critical for the support of the youth.

Another potential change that came up in the interviews could be made to the 18-month trainee program which is geared toward adults as it is largely structured as a job-preparation program with wraparound support services. One respondent shared that they,

“would create an 18-month model for youth. The youth model would have their own classes like substance abuse, domestic violence, Al-Anon, co-dependency, relationship building, and even Homeboy 101 for youth. Also, there would be a school component. They might attend classes [at Homeboy] after-school, or during school if we can work with Learning Works to count some of these classes for credit” (Interview U, personal communication, September 1, 2015).

Institutional Culture

Many of the interviewees spoke about the importance of being well-prepared via professional development and having a supportive approach when working with this “population” of youth.

Support and Healing

When interviewees were asked about what support is currently in place for youth that is working well (question #2), Learning Works’ chasers received the most votes with 35% (14 out of 40, 9 of them youth) of respondents bringing it up. One youth interviewee talked at length about the infinite patience that a particular chaser had, “even if I came high as f--k, he’s like, ‘gotta sit there and do it (the work), better do it’” (Interview B, respondent C, personal communication, December 2, 2015). This respondent expressed astonishment that the chaser never gave up. It was noted that prior to Learning Works, this respondent had attended four other schools where “nobody gave a f—k [about me].” One of our interviewees highlighted that “no other school has a position that will literally chase kids” (Interview Q, personal communication, September 8, 2015). Another respondent mentioned that the chaser was “annoying, pushed me, I used to hate that sh-t [getting texts from them all the time], but then I realized they actually care” (Interview B, Respondent H, personal communication, December 2, 2015). It is also worth noting that from the staff at Homeboy Industries and Learning Works, what came up the most during these interviews in terms of

what is in place to support the youth were therapists at 22.5% (9 out of 40 respondents, 3 of them youth).

Clecha

The term *clecha*, which educator and gang researcher Dr. Giovanni Triviño describes as, “Chicano slang for education or being schooled in an informal way,” (Triviño, 2008, p. 60) came up in several interviews. Sometimes youth are described as “hardheaded,” “rebellious,” constantly “experimenting,” “trying to fit in,” and are often “powerless in a desperate situation.” Thus, a respondent mentioned that *clecha* was an approach of “correcting” and “schooling” that some of the “big homies” use, but that is not always “the best approach” for the youngsters (Interview V, personal communication, August 31, 2015). One of the youth respondents agreed, eloquently stating, “I get why they [adults] do it, but if you keep pushing them [youth], like a buzzer, and after a while you are just holding the buzzer, buzz, I’m pretty sure we are going to get irritated. Can you stop? Too much nagging is not good for somebody. You are now giving us stress!” (Interview LL, personal communication, October 12, 2015). An adult interviewee said that this approach was ineffective with the youth because “in camp [juvenile prison] that’s all they do is tell the kids what to do as they are barking at them. The approach from some staff [here] is triggering. Youth need a [new] nourishing way” (Interview RR, personal communication, September 6, 2015). Adult “advice,” or as many youth respondents called it “nagging,” is seen by 10 out of 40 (25%, an even amount of adult and youth interviewees) respondents as its own form of stress. 9 out of 40 (22.5%, 8 of 9 were adults) respondents also spoke about the brain of adolescents not being fully developed; therefore, though some adults want to dedicate time to talking with the youth hoping that they learn from the adults’ mistakes, 5 out of 40

(12.5%, all adults) interviewees stated that youth require not only more attention, but also more intention(ality), and support.

Communication and a Uniformed Approach

Various interviewees mentioned that the difference in approach with their shared clients has created tension amongst the two agencies (HBI and Learning Works (LW)). Many interviewees spoke about how different departments, at HBI, are not necessarily on the same page, are not working as a unified whole, and that would make it difficult to have a cohesive plan for youth development if multiple departments and two different agencies must carry it out. Moreover, the respondents described the difference in approach that can also be seen among adults within HBI: homies who lived the life [of gang-members and those formerly incarcerated] and are a part of the staff, and those staff members who instead went on to earn college degrees. They both have expertise to share, but based on that difference, as one respondent stated in Spanish, “*no estamos caminando juntos*” (We are not walking in a unified way) (Interview V, personal communication, August 31, 2015). Multiple respondents spoke about the apparent contradictions between the spirit of Homeboy as experienced by the trainees compared to that by some of the staff. One interviewee observed that “for such a loving place, the energy can be extremely negative (at times), backstabbing, and talking behind people’s backs” (Interview P, personal communication, September 8, 2015). Another respondent, albeit a very disgruntled one, spoke about how “this place isn’t welcoming. My team tried to run me out. I think HBI is just another form of a gang. It started this way, it’s run this way, you have shot callers. It’s a trust issue and abandonment” (Interview U, personal communication, September 2, 2015). However, it is worth nothing that the

overwhelming majority of the interviewees did not speak about Homeboy Industries that way.

Various respondents mentioned that a clear, concise, and uniform approach across agencies would be more effective when working with youth. Three respondents shared the example of how the difference in approach causes a clash in policies, such as around issues of “substance (ab)use” and “use.” They said that Homeboy Industries takes recovery as a matter of life and death and thus has random drug testing to ensure that the trainees are moving forward with their treatment plans. Learning Works, on the other hand, does not drug test, respecting that youth maybe self-medicating for a myriad of reasons, and they know that under ED (education) code law, the school is “protected around searches and all that stuff” (Interview A, personal communication, December 17, 2015). Where it becomes a gray area for many of the respondents is that some youth play multiple roles at First Street which is a shared space between Homeboy Industries and Learning Works; they are both a Learning Works student who will be welcomed no matter what, even if they are under the influence of marijuana, and they are also a Homeboy Industries staff member who cannot come under any type of influence to work. According to various interviewees, this difference in policy has made it difficult for students and staff to navigate. This discrepancy in approach was also described in terms of supervisors. One youth stated,

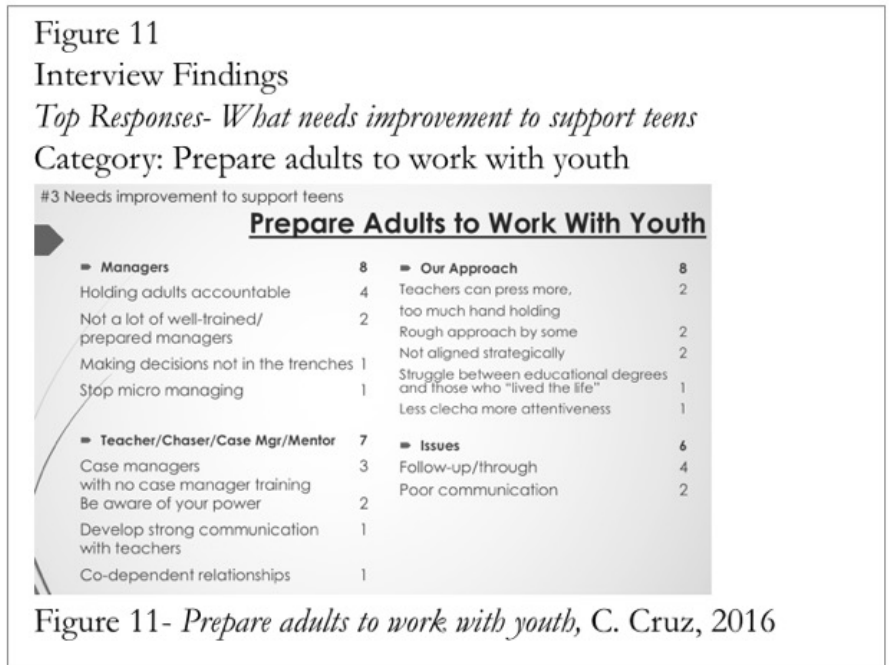
“I have too many bosses. One tells me to do it this way, the other that way. My case manager says this, my teacher says that, my navigator says this, my therapist just listens, and then there’s other people telling me that I’m just f-cking up. They’re all telling me what I should do. Make it just one” (Interview B, Respondent H, personal communication, December 2, 2015).

Many of the adults agree. One stated that, “we have too many approaches, we need one common way to address youth” (Interview V, personal communication, August 31, 2015).

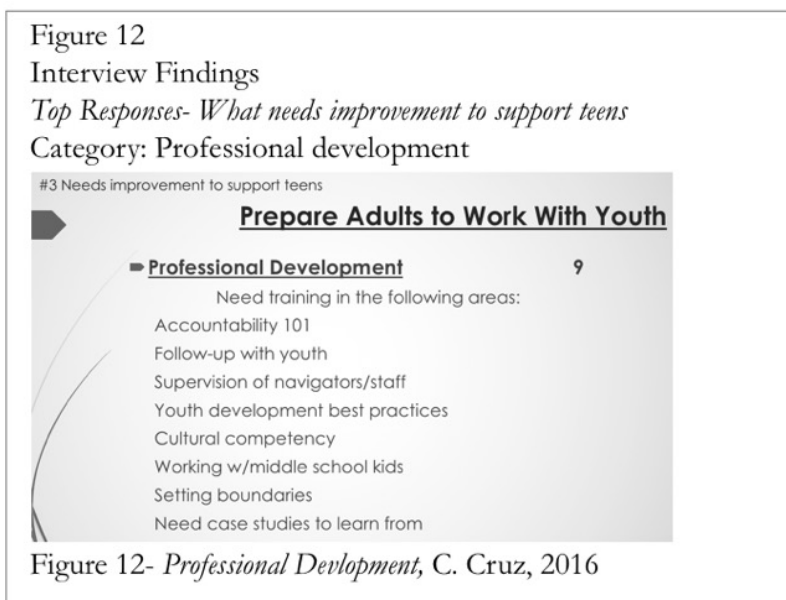
Professional Development

Figure 9, in the appendix section, shows that 65% (26 out of 40, all adults) of respondents want to ensure that in addition to having a uniformed approach, that adults are adequately prepared, specifically when working with the youth.

Pictured to the right in Figure 11, is the breakdown of what the stakeholders meant in terms of that



preparation needed for adults. Eight interviewees raised the need for professional development for managers in the areas of accountability, training, decision making and micro-managing. Seven interviewees spoke specifically about issues related to case managers,



teachers, and mentors and how that may impact negatively on the youth. Nine of those respondents, as pictured on the left in Figure 12, spoke about various types of trainings including

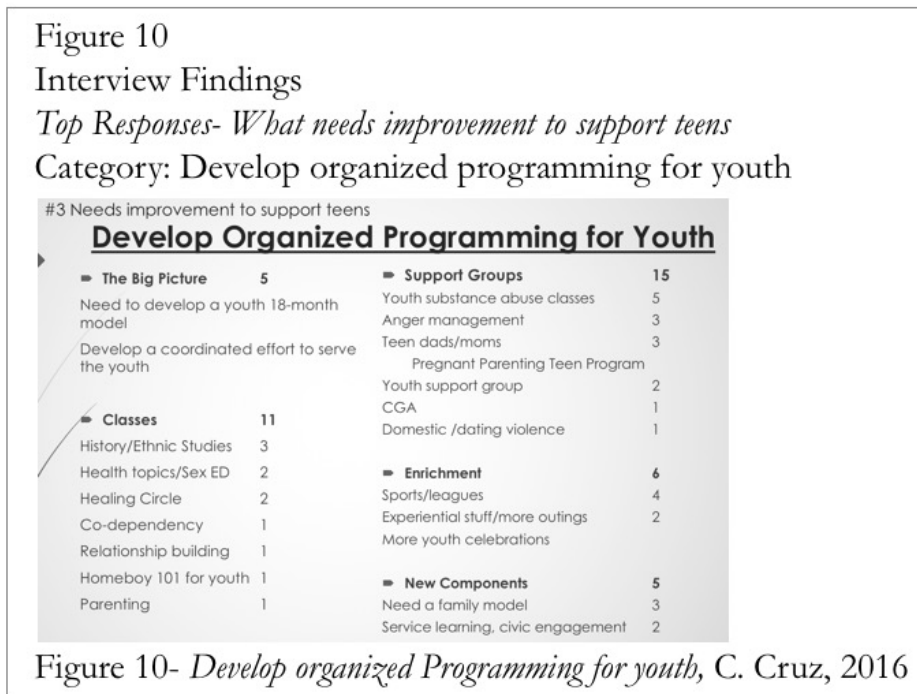
accountability, follow-up with youth, supervision, youth development best practices, which included some theoretical frameworks. The interviewees spoke about the need for cultural competency, in particular, in the field of mental health.

The issue of accountability came up in many interviews. One respondent felt that it could be achieved if all adults were trained to have a uniformed approach and held to the same standard when serving the youth. “We have to create accountability to the community. You have to be able to hold somebody accountable. The staff has to be held accountable. We need trainings on what accountability looks like and what happens if someone is not living up to that” (Interview W, personal communication, August 31, 2015). They mentioned that it may be helpful to learn best practices when it comes to working with younger aged youth (middle school kids), setting boundaries, and a desire to utilize case studies to unpack scenarios in a unified way.

Establishing boundaries was also an issue that came up in multiple interviews. Though chasers came up as a very powerful support for the youth, multiple interviewees responded to the question of how to strengthen the program (question #5) by identifying the need for training to know how to set clear boundaries between themselves and the students. Interviewees noted that most chasers are very close in age to the students and the lines between chaser and friend often times appear to be blurred. Interviewees mentioned that some case managers also struggle in this area. One of those respondents stated that, “we put case managers and others in positions they shouldn’t be in. Six months [of] sobriety doesn’t mean you should work with youth” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015). These respondents said that professional development across the board could train adults to better understand their roles.

Programming and Curriculum

A total of 70% (28 out of 40, all adults) of interviewees brought up the need to



develop organized programming for the youth as seen in Figure 10, pictured to the left. The respondents spoke about creating the types of classes, support groups, enrichment and potential new components that

youth need that could be added to the organization. A respondent said that we should “start with specific programming like enrichment, wellness, and life skills because youth-centered programming would be key” (Interview H, personal communication, October 15, 2015).

Adult Opinions

While a majority of those interviewed agreed on the need to have youth-centered programming and curriculum, the responses on how to best go about this differed between adults and youth. Ethnic Studies was brought up by 17.5% of respondents as a crucial part of the curriculum. An adult respondent said in Spanish that the youth “*estan perdidos.*” (are lost). This respondent went on to add that the youth have “no history, no knowledge of self.

Tell me, where does self-esteem and pride come from? They are lost in terms of who they are” (Interview I, personal communication, October 14, 2015). Another adult interviewee candidly spoke about how that dysfunction is a form of mental slavery and that we need to get “prison out of our brain” (Interview F, personal communication, October 25, 2015). They mentioned that part of re-entry into society is “reprogramming your brain from the bigotry taught in prison.”

“We are taught not to like certain nationalities; we need to teach each other’s histories. As African-Americans we don’t know our own culture. Latinos are also calling other Latinos wetbacks. When you learn your history, your culture, you don’t adopt bigotry!”

(Interview F, personal communication, October 25, 2015).

Additionally, the following suggestions were brought up: a 12-step program for teens (17.5%), healing circle (15%) and an intergenerational support group pairing older homies (OGs) with younger homies (10%). Even when thinking about curriculum, adults spoke about the power of creating a space for young people to support each other in their own process of healing, which could possibly include a 9th grade academy. In that space, they can,

“share their hopes and dreams, but first they may have to open up about what has been crushed, and then be brave enough to be vulnerable. They do that sometimes in Homeboy 101¹³, but the older homies dominate that space. Youth need their own space for that.” (Interview H, personal communication, October 15, 2015).

¹³ Homeboy 101: Is an introductory life skills support group class facilitated by the navigators, where new trainees are both inducted into the therapeutic community of Homeboy Industries, and they go through a 12-week series ranging in topics from self esteem to cognitive reframing.

Youth Ideas

The responses from the youth were different. At the top of their responses were creative [fun] adventures which received 12 out of 40 votes (30%, 9 from the youth). Figure 18, pictured to the right, shows that interviewees also spoke about expanding the art academy (25%), more trips (20%), and parenting classes for teens (17.5%).

Figure 18

Interview Findings

Top Responses- Building on the strengths of Homeboy to grow the program

Category- Expand the following programs



Figure 18- *Expand the following programs*, C. Cruz, 2016

The most popular response, from both youth and adults, was sports; 40% (16 out of 40) spoke about developing sports, both in physical education and teams. The interviewees spoke passionately about the impact it had on their lives. Certain responses were presented in a way that proposed possible peace efforts that young people can be a part of through sports with potential rival enemies. An interviewee shared a positive experience with sports:

“Man, I remember handball tournaments with my worst enemies. Or boxing, fighting with gloves is way different than shooting bullets. We would kick each other’s a-s in the ring and gain mutual respect for fighting each other that way”

(Interview Ch, personal communication, November 2, 2015).

Other respondents acknowledged the importance of sports in the lives of the youth. “See, we need the Homeboy basketball team back. We used to play other teams at the park, but we rolled deep together. Youngsters want to be part of something, and teams give ‘em that” (Interview E, personal communication, October 27, 2015). Another interviewee talked about

how it was “through sports that I learned how to listen to other adults” (Interview W, personal communication, August 31, 2015).

Right behind sports was music; 35% (14 out of 40, 9 were youth) of the respondents spoke about creating a recording studio and a music program. One of the navigators spoke about the impact that the youth felt when they went in to the recording studio together. “One youngster pumps up the other youngster, and like therapy, they get so much off their chest.” (Interview E, personal communication, October 27, 2015).

Because only 5% (2 out of 40) of respondents believed that youth jobs were working well, when speaking about programming, many respondents, both youth and adults, provided ideas about how to improve the employment opportunities for youth. An interviewee described that “[s]ome youth are on such a high from graduation, and Monday morning it’s a huge downer to be cleaning windows and wiping toilets all day long” (Interview T, personal communication, September 1, 2015). A respondent said that receiving the first check, felt “like a boss” (Interview B, Respondent L, personal communication, December 2, 2015); however, many respondents also dreamed of new social enterprises, such as a youth run skating rink and café, a movie theatre, and a young women’s empowerment culinary academy.

Logistics

The interviews revealed that as much as this organization runs like a well-oiled machine, there are improvements that can be made that could result in great impacts.

Peoplepower

Almost half of those interviewed, 47.5% (19 out of 40, adults), spoke about the different types of supports that youth need. In order to achieve their goal of creating a

stronger support system for the youth, these agencies would need more funding and that has been an issue in the past. If funding were not an issue, 40% (18 of 40, 11 adults) of respondents spoke about possibly increasing the staff. They expressed the need for more tutors (10%), of expanding the mental health department to include more male practitioners and people of color with a specific youth focus (10%), and of developing a mentorship program (7.5%), among others. Some said that there is a need to find a grant writer to focus specifically on the youth so that they could afford to have a full-time youth employment counselor (17.5%). If they had more people power, some respondents said they would add someone who could navigate relationships, including with families and multiple agencies such as the probation department. Furthermore, one interviewee mentioned that our school “is our anchor, that’s great, but they have limited hours, shut down in summer time, and it’s not a full year program so we need to support the youth even more” (Interview J, personal communication, October 14, 2015). Others noted the efforts of staff members attempting to keep the school open for part of the summer at least for recreational purposes with their own funds.

Facilities

I. Location

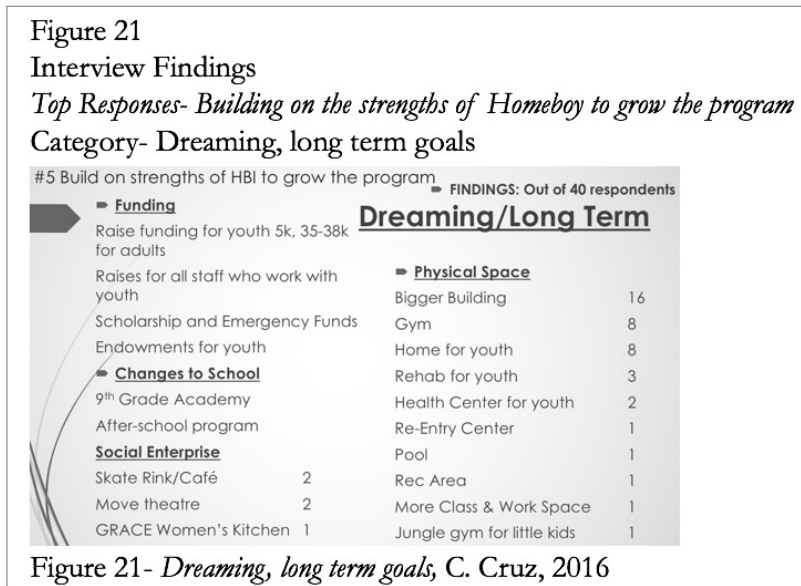
The vast majority of youth said they “feel better at First Street (Learning Works)” even though it is in a barrio of Boyle Heights that is not safe for all of the youth. They explained that it is because at least they get to be with “people our age out here.” (Interview S, personal communication, September 2, 2015).

II. Building

Whereas the Homeboy Industries building is in great condition, six respondents (Figure 15) pointed out that the building on First Street is in desperate need of repair. One interviewee stated the need for a “new electrical unit, new roof, auto back gate, new front and back doors and enhanced security is key¹⁴. The front door is still boarded up with wood [to this day]” (Interview L, personal communication, October 13, 2015). Another respondent spoke about the “temperature extremes” (Interview K, personal communication, October 13, 2015) that are so intense that it made it impossible to have infants there in the day-care program because it would affect their health. Some respondents mention that this directly impacts the various teen parents that attend the school, but desperately need day-

care in order to be able to do so. Overall, respondents related the importance of fixing up the building to the youth because that is where the school is housed, and the much needed upgrades can

impact youth outcomes tremendously.

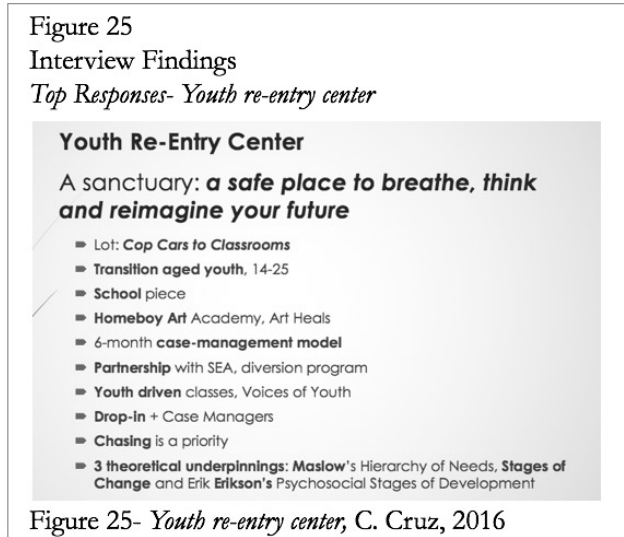


¹⁴ Learning Works secured funding to fix some of these things during Spring Break and the rest during the summer once school lets out; however, because they do not own the building, many upgrades cannot be due to the refusal of the landlord.

Some respondents went beyond improving the existing building and, in question #6, envisioned the possibilities. In Figure 21, 16 out of 40 respondents (40%, 10 adults) spoke about expanding the physical space. The top two uses for the additional space are to create a gym for the youth (20%) and a group home (20%). The respondents, 9 of them, unpacked what a youth home would look like in Figure 23. One interviewee asked us to imagine a place where “people [youth] would have their own space, their own kitchen and living room” (Interview S, personal communication, September 2, 2015). Other respondents added that it would be a place for “those out on the streets,” a place for “sober living,” for “foster care youth,” and possibly their families, so they, too, could have a “place to rest.” 12.5% of respondents, mostly youth, also spoke about creating a full-time day care on site.

In addition to a youth home, other ideas that were brought up, in Figure 22, range from a youth rehabilitation or re-entry center (from incarceration) to social enterprises. A “vibrant” youth center, was described by 16 out of 40 (40%) respondents as follows: “first-class,” “state of the art,” “2-story complex,” “Homeboy youth recreational center,” with “peaceful water fountain and trees,” called “The Spot,” where “future youth” from different hoods could “put their walls down,” in an “art-filled,” “open late,” drop-in center with homie “engineering classes,” a “recording studio,” “a place for teen parents,” and a “youth-run movie theatre and café.” One respondent went on to describe this center as a place to welcome youth that are coming out of prison, out of cages. This interviewee called it “a sanctuary, a safe place to breathe, think and reimagine your future” (Interview A, personal communication, December 17, 2015). Pictured below, in Figure 25, is the vision for the youth re-entry center which would include a “school,” focused on “transition aged youth,” with a “Homeboy Art Academy,” a “case-management model,” with “chasers,” where there

are “youth-driven classes,” and it becomes a “diversion program” focused on derailing the school to prison pipeline.



Analysis

After identifying the resources and services available at both agencies and giving its stakeholders the opportunity of evaluating them, for any agency seeking to improve, it is just as important to note its challenges. The purpose of documenting what multiple stakeholders recognized as challenges is not to tarnish the name of an organization, but to allow people an opportunity to share their opinion, and together search for solutions to complex problems.

The process of interviewing and listening to forty different stakeholders was not as easy as having six questions on a clipboard and pressing record. In order to get in-depth answers, it was critical to build rapport, develop initial trust, and be willing to go where the interviewee wanted to take the conversation. Many of the interviewees just wanted to be heard. It is clear that they love Homeboy Industries and Learning Works. It is because of that love that they want to see these agencies operate in the best possible way. During the

interviews, a ton of ideas came up that will be worth exploring for the youth services committee as it develops.

Basic Necessities

Homeboy Industries is dedicated to working with the most marginalized of populations, youth deep in-crisis dealing with issues such as gang violence, homelessness, teen parenting, deep poverty and much more. Thus, like Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" describes, the basic physiological needs of the interviewees impacted some of their responses. When asking the first question (what systems are there in place at Homeboy Industries to support young people), it was no surprise that employment came up repeatedly; after all, HBI's tag line was for many years "Jobs Not Jails." However, I did not expect for the youth stakeholders to speak so much about getting their first paycheck. Many spoke about the impact of a job in their lives which is critical for many of them who, before considering an education or other forms of self-improvement, must meet their basic material needs. Right away, the findings from this first question brought forth stakeholders' priorities in a youth program, primarily a job and a therapist, and yet neither one of these showed up in the review of knowledge for action as keys to a successful youth development program. In the review of knowledge for action (RKA) there was an emphasis on healing and on the need to unpack the complex trauma that youth carry. I didn't think, however, that the youth would bring up therapy as much as they did. In terms of youth jobs, this finding potentially impacts the review of knowledge for action and Figure 2, as it may be worthwhile to include employment and some of the vital wraparound services, like therapy, that multiple stakeholders deemed as key.

Attitudes or Beliefs about Youth

Homeboy Industries works with a wide range of ages, yet most of the clients within HBI's main site are adults. Father Greg believes that the vast majority of the youth who walk in the doors of Homeboy Industries receive what he calls the "red carpet treatment." If they need a job, they can literally start tomorrow. Then again, since the youth who come to Homeboy are school-aged, they are not at Homeboy's main site, but spend most of their time at Learning Works, the high school. This means that compared to Learning Works, Homeboy's main site does not have as much day-to-day experience working with youth as they do with adults.

Where the lack of direct experience with the youth showed itself the most during the interviews was in the understanding of the inherent differences between youth and adults, as seen in question #4. Some adults that can relate to the youth can do so because they have been through similar experiences and have gained valuable knowledge along the way. However, each individual's life is never exactly the same as another's and what came up in various interviews is that youth often feel as though they become voiceless, not even having any agency to choose the therapist they believe could best help them. Paraphrasing one of the youth, they want to be asked what they need, not told what to do. The significance of this finding is that youth want their voices and opinions heard to inform the practice at both agencies.

Prioritizing Youth

When asking the interviewees the question of what needs improvement to support young people at Homeboy Industries (question #3), most went beyond the perceived voicelessness of youth; instead, there was a general feeling that youth are not necessarily a

priority. As Homeboy's clientele has changed, the organization has as well. Growth, combined with the fact that HBI no longer runs the high school on site as it once did, has inevitably transformed the agency. It is also now geared more towards adults because, like Father Greg says, this agency exists "not for those who need help, but for those who want it," those who are ready to change.

A difference in opinion amongst adults about where the space for the youth should be was highlighted during the interviews. The respondents mentioned that some adults are concerned with the age appropriateness of spaces and believe they should not be in spaces where they can be negatively influenced by the big homies who have gone through much more. Along those lines are the concerns that in the spaces that are dominated by adults, youth are seen as kids and as a result their opinions are undermined, they are talked down to, and constantly overwhelmed with *clecha*. On the other hand, others mentioned that those who advocate for having the youth and adults in the same spaces see the possibility of intergenerational learning. It appears as though in addition to this learning, they advocate in this manner because they see that if the youth are primarily spending their time away from the main site, it is easier to neglect their needs.

Nonetheless, several interviewees expressed an urgency to bring the focus back to the youth while they are at Learning Works so they do not become the adults who will need the services at Homeboy in the future. The hope expressed in the interviews is that although the youth's lives are difficult, they are "less bitter" than those who have spent a long time in prison and can benefit a lot from more intentionality and focus on them. Thus, it appears as though a challenge for HBI when prioritizing youth, according to the interviews, is that big changes have to be made and must come from the executive level.

Interviewees suggested that a way that youth could be prioritized by HBI leadership is by creating spaces for them that are emotionally and developmentally appropriate. Many respondents spoke about the differences between how the youth feel at the Homeboy Industries main site on Bruno Street and the Learning Works site on First Street. It turns out that youth want to be at Homeboy on Bruno Street because that is considered the mothership, that is where Father Greg and many of the services are, but they also want to be around people their age. It ironically appears as though Homeboy Industries has sought to carve out safe spaces for adults and for youth by separating them, yet that has possibly created an unintentional neglect of the aspects related to the youth (from the building they spend most of their time in, to the services and funds allocated to address their specific needs). This is a harder challenge to mitigate, and one that will be an adaptive challenge for the youth services committee to further examine.

Several interviewees stated that although youth do not currently appear to be a priority, there are simple changes that can take place to address this. When asked what is working well, many interviewees mentioned that there are existing programs and services at Homeboy Industries and Learning Works that are successful and that could be adapted to meet the needs of the youth. They talked about how you can build in power and control into the systems of support at Homeboy Industries. Shirley Torres recently wrote a position paper for the organization entitled “Transforming Lives Through Purposeful Activity” in which she summarizes the work of the re-visioning committee and states that the primary goal is “one coordinated system of care.” (Torres, 2016, p. 2) Based on that goal, “in the new model every trainee is afforded a home/secure base- a safe place that offers a roadmap to recovery with the support of a multidisciplinary team throughout the entire program” (Torres, 2016, p. 2). This is valuable insight because that goal and model will prove as its

own roadmap for the work of the youth services committee to see if secure base, in its current configuration, is the best way to support young people at Homeboy.

Institutional Culture

As an institution, Homeboy Industries values change and second chances and while it may not seem like they are focusing on youth specifically, they have demonstrated that they understand what the youth experience. HBI knows that their clients have gone through, survived, and may still be living through difficult circumstances. However, adults who work in different degrees with the youth have developed different approaches. Some adults understand that the youth are still young and thus have more patience, while others want the youth to be just like adults because they lead adult lives. There are also others, primarily big homies, who in their hope to prevent the youth from repeating mistakes, offer constant earfuls of *clecha*. Therefore, because all these approaches and their effectiveness are so varying, many of the interviewees spoke about the importance of all adults being well-prepared (via professional development) and having a supportive uniformed approach when working with this population.

Although some adult-youth relationships, such as that with chasers and therapists, came up often during question #2 (what is working well at Homeboy), there were others that were not as successful, specifically those who were considered excessively authoritative or unprofessional. An insight that came directly from the youth in question #3 (what improvements need to be made), is that the protective instinct that adults feel toward the youth, like that from parents, can at times be delivered as *clecha*, and that was widely regarded as ineffective “nagging” and its own source of youth stress. Other interviewees equated the way youth are spoken to by some adults, when done in an extremely firm manner, as a

demeaning practice that mirrors what takes place for many youths when they are incarcerated. So, initially when I heard an adult respondent speak highly about chasers and therapists, I was curious to hear the youth perspective; it turns out that both were highly regarded by the youth as well. Adults at both agencies undoubtedly seem to care about the youth, however, what appeared to set these two groups of adults apart was that the positive relationships were an example of holding the *corazón* of young people manifested in the form of chasing or listening *con cariño* at Homeboy Industries/Learning Works.

As effective as the chasers and the therapists were considered by adult and youth respondents alike, a general consensus that professional development, preferably taking place consistently, is needed. Because of the intrinsic complexity of HBI's clientele and the organizations tendency to grow from within, many interviewees mentioned that professional development would help address issues, such as setting boundaries and accountability. Some respondents mentioned that clients who receive job training and attend self-improvement classes are often promoted to positions within the organization so they can serve as examples for others. It is possible that part of the practice of Homeboy is to find positions where homies can shine as the community of kinship grows after their 18-months with the organization has come to pass. However, having homies or other adults as case managers may or may not be the best fit for the youth as they also need working professionals that can draw proper boundaries, and are properly prepared to understand youth development best practices. Nevertheless, it is worth considering the power of having homies be case managers, and what they have to offer in helping others as they walk through the doors. A homie pipeline into case management master's degree programs as well as a pipeline of homie therapists could be very powerful for the future health of Homeboy Industries and the larger community as well. In the meantime, the professional development department

may provide an answer for Homeboy Industries to support the homies and to support those with college degrees, as everyone may have something to learn. As part of my research, upon visiting Roca with Shirley Torres, I learned that they have an entire professional development department dedicated to the on-going, weekly development of their staff, an interesting idea that may be helpful to implement at Homeboy.

The difference in approach to issues such as drugs brings up another adaptive challenge for both agencies. Both places care deeply for the youth, but they see issues such as this from different sides of potentially the same coin. This may provide for an interesting case discussion that the youth services committee can take on, so that both agencies can begin to see each other eye-to-eye on this complex issue.

Programming and Curriculum

The agencies' programs and curriculum were identified by various respondents as technical fixes that could result in vast improvements, however, as expected, the responses from the youth differed a lot from those from adults. In question #5 (building on the strengths of Homeboy to grow the program) for example, sports received the highest number of responses. Interviewees spoke passionately about the impact sports had on their lives. Certain responses went as far as to depict the role of sports as a possible tool in peace efforts with potential rival enemies that young people can be a part of or as a possible safe haven that provides acceptance for the homies who are often alienated (due to their appearance or background). Sports did not come up much in the literature, but its perceived importance may impact a direction that the youth services committee may take as they consider the possibility of Homeboy sports.

Employment was brought up by most respondents as both a significant program in place, but also one that needs improvement. Various respondents agreed that youths feel discouraged when they struggle to graduate from high school, a great achievement and the first of its kind in many of their families, only to then be quickly transferred to an entry-level janitorial job at Homeboy. Homeboy Industries is a leader in the field of social enterprises; and youths are looking to education precisely as their path beyond janitorial work, not because it is demeaning, but because janitorial work does not require a high school diploma. If employment is such an important and vital “carrot,” it might be worth it for the youth services committee to invest time in finding out what the stakeholders would consider to be the meaningful youth jobs at Homeboy Industries.

Although the response which received the most votes, youth want a fun, creative adventure is one that was to be expected, surprisingly, activities like fieldtrips and the art academy were spoken about much less than relationship building. Popular wisdom may argue that what youth need are activities, but what many of these stakeholders were offering is that it’s not about the activity per se, but about the *corazón* that healthy adults can utilize to mentor with *cariño* to young people. This may be a situation where it is a both/and (we need engaging activities, and extremely supportive adults that will pay very close attention to the youth and speak to their heart) in order to truly support the development of young people. This may appear obvious; however, due to the complex trauma and disrupted attachment that many youths carry, the role of *cariño* cannot be understated.

Research in the field of ethnic identity and ethnic studies supported adult respondents’ concerns. Therapist and veteran educator, Jerry Tello, has made “*Entendimiento: Understanding of Their Sacred Purpose*,” (Tello, 2010, p. 811) one of the four core teaching principles of his *Joven Noble* youth development curriculum acknowledging that historical and

ethnic awareness of self is a key developmental principle for the healthy development of Latino/a/x and Indigenous youth. He affirms that if a young,

“person only has a negative view of himself/herself, his/her history and his/her culture then he/she has no avenue for growth and development. He/she must understand the history that has led to the creation of his/her present situation and in this process (narrative reprocessing) and with the proper guidance he/she will be able to separate pain and dysfunction from the true essence and teachings that can lead him/her to manifest her/his “Sacred Purpose.” (Tello, 2010, p. 811)

Logistics

With an organization as complex as Homeboy Industries, the detailed coordination of people, facilities, or supplies becomes even more important. Logistics allow its leaders to act with a strong sense of urgency, but prevents them from operating in a constant triage mode.

A major issue that was brought up during the interviews as one that affects this coordination is funding. The interviewees mention that even if they recognize the needs of the youth, they are not always able to make the necessary improvements because the money is simply not available. This information was not surprising because in my research I found that five years ago, during what the Los Angeles Times called “one of the worst economic downturns since the 1930’s” (Becerra, 2010), Homeboy Industries was forced to lay off “300 people, including all senior staff and administrators” (Becerra, 2010). The combination of the recession, the challenge of raising \$5 million annually for operational costs, and the fact that “the people Homeboy Industries helps have always been a hard sell” (Becerra, 2010), all contributed to this trying period for the agency. However, over the last 5 years, Homeboy Industries has not only found a way, but they are now meeting payroll every month, and figuring out ways to give their staff raises. They have also grow their annual budget to over \$15 million per year.

Based on the findings, I realize that there are technical fixes that the youth committee will be able to address, such as modifying the curriculum to include more sports and music, yet there are also more adaptive challenges, such as shifting adult culture, that will be more difficult to take on. Now, it is critical for the youth services committee to sit with this data together, to make meaning out of it in a way that can bring folks together and creates co-ownership for the authoring of the youth development strategic plan of action. Before doing so, it is worth summarizing the results and analysis in a clear and concise way. In the spirit of the Homeboy Bakery, here are the Takeaways “Baker’s Dozen” (13).

Takeaways

1. Therapy matters to young people
2. Meaningful jobs are key
3. 1.7 miles (apart) means youth may be out of sight, out of mind
4. Need age appropriate spaces
5. Need youth voices at executive level
6. Create secure bases and 18-month model
7. Say no to *clecha*, yes to *corazón*
8. Staff need consistent training and support
9. Do I come high? Let’s unify our policies
10. Sports to Ethnic Studies, youth programming is needed
11. Show me the money (for youth programming and wrap-round)
12. The stance [we exist not for those who need help, but for those who want it] may work against us (youth); so now what?
13. We need one unified system of care

Taking the Interviews into Phase 2 of the Strategic Project

Professor of general management Mary Crossan et al’s 4I framework is very useful to help track the process of how interviewing individuals in two organizations, can then go from intuiting to interpreting, and possibly integrating and institutionalizing an organized system of care for young people. Dr. Susan Bloom also writes about how in the “process of interpretation, the intuition [one has] is discussed and refined through a social activity involving the group, producing a convergence of meaning” (Bloom, 2011, 214). It is these

social activities that I co-planned with the youth services committee to make meaning out of the data and develop a cohesive plan of action.

In Figure 26, pictured to the right, are the dates that the youth service committee gathered. In order to execute all of these gatherings and the work of the capstone, Shirley Torres requested that I create a backwards map that includes all of the deadlines. Please see Appendix F for that map.

Figure 26
Timeline
Phase 2: Plan of Action

Date	Plan of Action	Location	Details
1/29/2016	Share findings w/ leadership at HBI & LW	HBI	Present findings, strategize plan of action
2/5, 2/17	Present proposal to LW and HBI staffs	LW 1 st St. on 2/5 HBI on 2/17	Give staff opportunity to share concerns
3/4	Retreat- Youth Services Comm.	TBD, California Endowment, 2-5pm	Create norms, present findings, chart sessions
3/9	Youth Services Comm.- Session 2	LW-1 st Street Lunch session, 12-1:30pm	TBD by Comm.
3/23	Youth Services Comm.- Session 3	LW-1 st Street Lunch session, 12-1:30pm	TBD by Comm.
4/6	Youth Services Comm.- Session 4	LW-1 st Street Lunch session, 12-1:30pm	TBD by Comm.
4/20	Youth Services Comm.- Session 5	LW-1 st Street Lunch session, 12-1:30pm	TBD by Comm.
5/4	Youth Services Comm.- Session 6	LW-1 st Street Lunch session, 12-1:30pm	TBD by Comm.
5/18	Youth Services Comm.- Session 7	LW-1 st Street Lunch session, 12-1:30pm	TBD by Comm.

Figure 26- Phase 2- Plan of Action, C. Cruz, 2016

Figure 27
4I Framework

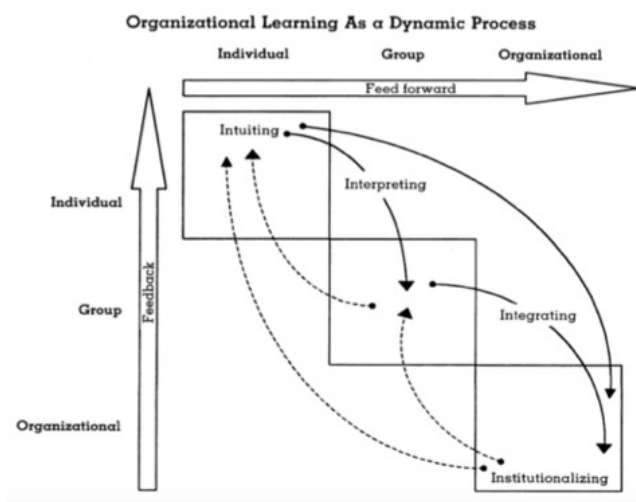


Figure 27- 4I Framework, Crossan, M. et al. (1999)

The 4I Framework developed by Dr. Crossan et al. is the framework by which I measured progress towards the action steps to achieve the strategic project. Figure 27, pictured to the left, shows a visual representation of that framework. According to the authors, the following definitions can be applied to Intuiting, Interpreting,

Integrating and Institutionalizing.

“Intuiting is the preconscious recognition of the pattern and/or possibilities inherent in a personal stream of experience.

Interpreting is the explaining, through words and/or actions, of an insight or idea to one's self and to others.

Integrating is the process of developing shared understanding among individuals and of taking coordinated action through mutual adjustment.

Institutionalizing is the process of ensuring that routinized actions occur. Institutionalizing is the process of embedding learning that has occurred by individuals and groups into the organization, and it includes systems, structures, procedures, and strategy” (Crossan et al., 1999, p. 525).

In Figure 28 below, you will find the action steps for Phase 2 and a table by which I charted my progress across the 4Is. Evidence collected regarding the progress that is taking place will be in the final 3 Is; Interpreting (collectively), Integrating and Institutionalizing the strategy to get to the youth development plan.

Figure 28

Figure 28
Assessing the Action Steps with 4I Framework

Action Steps, Phase 2	Intuiting: recognition of a pattern or possibility comes from within an individual	Interpreting: explaining, through words and/or actions, of an insight/idea to one's self and to others.	Integrating: When actions take place in concert with other members of a workgroup	Institutionalizing: the workgroup may establish formal rules and procedures, and routines become embedded
Present findings to leadership of Homeboy and Learning Works	Synthesized findings into a report.	Shared report with Founder of LW, CEO and Director of Re-Entry Services 1/29/2016	Received approval to create a youth services group across two agencies 2/2/2016	
Nominate a Youth Services Committee	Created a proposal (see Appendix G) for a youth services committee 2/1/2016	Explained proposal to Founder LW and Dir. Re-Entry	Met w/ Founder LW and Dir. Re-Entry to get it approved	There will not be an official youth services comm. approved by Founder of LW/ Dir. Re-Entry 2/5/2016
Convince Director of Mental Health to allow therapist to participate		Mtg. set for 2/9/16 1:30pm	Dir. approved participation of therapist conditionally upon my speaking with her. 2/9/16	
Convince Director of Education to allow educator to participate		Mtg. set for 2/9/16 3pm	Dir. approved participation of educator as long as the meetings are productive. 2/9/16	
Convince Director of Case Mgmt. to allow case manager to participate		Mtg. set for 2/10/16 3pm	Dir. approved participation of 1 case mgr. to participate. 2/10/16	
Have forum with LW staff to address concerns		Mtg. set for 2/5/16	Teacher and chaser shared concerns, but decided to join.	
Have forum with HBI staff to address concerns	Send invitations 2/11/16	Mtg. set for 2/17/16 11am	3 of 5 HBI staff were there, all in favor, will speak with other 2 1-on-1.	
Create 3-hour training/agenda for retreat	Send invitations, agenda			
Retreat		Retreat set for March 4 th , 2-5pm	8 out of 9 staff were there, strong retreat.	

Figure 28- Assessing Action Steps, Cruz (2016)

It is one thing to itemize the action steps above, it is quite another to try and execute them. For the first action step, “present findings to leadership of Homeboy and Learning Works,” my initial intent was to present the interview findings to all forty participants along with the leadership at Homeboy Industries and Learning Works. One of those present objected and thought that if part of their answers were to be anonymous then the interviewees should not be in the same room together. That person also raised questions around having the youth there in the room. Part of their rationale made a lot of sense so I compromised to be able to move the work forward. Instead of presenting to all 40 stakeholders, I would be presenting it to the leadership of both organizations, four individuals, and to the newly formed youth services committee that I was proposing. On January 29th, I shared the findings with the founder of Learning Works, the Director of Re-Entry Services and the CEO of Homeboy Industries. Father Greg Boyle was not able to attend due to a lot of challenges in the building that day. The presentation was received well, and three days later, I received approval to create a youth services group that would bring both organizations together and focus on youth re-entry services. Now, the task shifted to convincing the staff on both sides to work together in this newly formed committee.

In order to gain legitimacy and to have the authorizing environment needed to move forward, I enlisted the support of a leadership representative from each agency to tri-facilitate the meeting with the Learning Works staff and myself. We met on February 5th at the 1st Street site and at times the meeting was tense. One of the educators and one of the chasers shared concerns about Homeboy Industries not truly supporting the school and their perception that they were left to their own devices with the youth. The chaser went so far as to question what navigators at Homeboy Industries even do. It was important to provide the Learning Works staff a space to vent and to share their concerns. I asked that

chaser to keep in mind that this was a brand new opportunity for collaboration and that in the long run this would save him time and energy as we co-created an organized system of care for the youth. Two hours later and with some talking-through, the staff at Learning Works agreed and now it was time to approach the directors of Homeboy Industries with the proposal.

The proposal for the creation of a Youth Services Committee

This proposal as the second part of the strategic project is to create a Youth Services in Partnership Team between Homeboy Industries and Learning Works that includes chasers, case managers, navigators, and representatives from education and mental health to focus on expanding a youth re-entry program. The goals of the committee are as follows:

1. Formalizing the HBI/LW youth services in partnership team
2. Have the team speak the same language in terms of youth services/development
3. Integrate the work of the GRYD grant, Homeboy Industries and Learning Works in order to develop an organized system of care for young people

The commitment that we asked from the founding members of this committee is to attend a launching retreat scheduled on March 4th. Then, they attended bi-weekly meetings (Learning Works was gracious enough to provide lunch so that they would be 90-minute working lunches) on Wednesdays from 12-1:30pm, at the 1st Street high school site. We identified six working sessions for March 9th, 23rd, April 6th, 20th, May 4th and 18th. Ten members were nominated to be part of the inaugural youth services in partnership team. They include 2 chasers, 2 case managers, 1 therapist, 1 educator, 2 navigators and 2 program managers, one from each organization.

Issues with Implementation

One week into the efforts to create buy-in with part of the authorizing environment (the directors of mental health, education and case management), I learned that one of our case managers, who has a real knack for working with the youth and connecting with most adults, gave his two-week notice and resigned. That sent shockwaves to the plans because he was one of two members that could serve as the glue to help keep the team, made up of very different individuals, together. As a result, and thanks to Shirley Torres' advice, I met individually with each of the directors to explain the vision for the youth services committee, why it matters, and why I was requesting their blessing for their staff member to be a part of it. The first session went very smoothly, but during the second one, I received a good dose of cautionary advice, to think about as we moved forward. I was told by one of the Directors that not only is our time sacred, but that if these meetings were not always timely and productive that she could not see her staff member being a part of them. She talked about the multitude of committees that already exist, and meetings that people attend, so there is already meeting burnout in the agency. That is in fact very good advice, and part of my job was to ensure that we have agendas, that we stay on task by having folks step up to different roles from note-taker to process observer, and that we stay focused on our goals. A major part of my role became a need to help adults unpack the meetings in a 1-on-1 setting, and to understand some of the history that members of the committee had with each other.

In self-assessing the progress of the first eight tasks, as seen in Figure 28, all 8 out of 8 tasks made it to the Integrating stage because they fit the criteria of “actions [that] take place in concert with other members of a workgroup.” 1 out of 8 (12.5%) tasks reached all the way to the Institutionalizing stage with the official approval from both agencies to create the youth services committee. The next phase of the work and the evaluation includes the training of

new facilitators, the transfer of leadership, the co-creation of an organized system of care and that will be the agenda items for the six identified working sessions from March-May 2016 of the residency.

Implications for Self

First and foremost, I arrived to Homeboy Industries partly leading and partly listening through my filter based on 20+ years of experience of working with young people. It took me a couple of months to realize I was in for a rude awakening, and I still had much to learn. I would quickly unpack that my own experiences and the lens by which I was choosing to see Homeboy Industries, was at times getting in my own way. Case in point, I would observe a few classes and assume that somehow I had figured out what was taking place in that space.

At Homeboy Industries and Learning Works I was introduced to the concept of chasers and navigators, both made sense from their titles, but I did not fully realize the impact that those types of roles would have on the lives of young people. I have seen first-hand how hard it is to walk with youth, especially when they backslide, but how critical that work is, often times above all else. Those roles complement the review of knowledge for action in which the curbside counselor plays a major role in the mentorship of young people. I am still left with the tension of Father Greg's words that say that *clecha* doesn't work. So it must not be that it's the advice that young people appreciate about you, but that someone, an adult figure, actually cares enough to listen with *cariño*, and not judge. Those roles, I would learn, play a critical role in the creation of a system of care for young people. It is extremely important to think about who walks with young people everyday on their journey. The chasers and navigators are best practice models that provide "hope in the flesh"

(Torres) because they are both graduates/alumni of Learning Works and Homeboy Industries respectively. Part of the answer is that they are home grown; therefore, it is worth considering how we are creating the conditions to grow youth leaders from within.

I have learned it is critically important to be clear as to who you are serving. At Learning Works, I grew to care for all the young people that I met, although some were not in gangs or in deep crisis, but more “at-risk.” The youth services committee really struggled to focus primarily on gang-involved youth who are coming out of incarceration. They pushed back wanting to focus on any youth that walks through the doors including pregnant teens. Some might argue, well what’s wrong with that? But, Homeboy Industries is constantly reassessing if they are serving their focused clientele, in this case gang-involved youth coming out of incarceration. They do so because they realize that there are not many organizations in the country doing that type of work, and it is vitally important to stay focused. By April, the youth services committee brainstormed ways to identify a target population, those in-crisis (formerly incarcerated, gang-involved), a secondary population, those in other types of crisis, and an open door policy so that no youth would ever be turned away. It will be interesting to see how these definitions impact both organizations for years to come.

As a schoolteacher, I pledged to try to serve every child, every day. However, I have to be frank, the ones I felt most concerned for were those who were in deep crisis, who were on drugs, who found themselves absent a lot, and they always pulled at my heartstrings because oftentimes they had almost no adult who advocated for them at school. I tried to always see their resiliency and start the conversation from there. I helped co-found Homies Empowerment seeking to find another way for young people. However, our target population was never 100% clear.

For Father Greg his population is clear to him now; it is not folks who need our help, but those who want it. He also doesn't want to serve at-risk kids or be a gang prevention program. He is seeking to serve those deep in crisis but who are also ready to change. That is the conundrum that he spoke about. Many youth, however, may not be ready to change, and they may die before that day comes. I suppose I must come to terms with that, as I don't pretend to have a saviors' complex or that I would actually have the capability to save anyone. Youth save themselves. Saving is neither my path nor my approach. The organization Roca would argue that with street outreach, they target those youths who are not ready to change anyway, and assume that many will be at the pre-contemplation stage. They are prepared to get the 'middle finger' and be told to 'f-off.' So, where does that leave me going forward? In my outreach efforts, do I want to go after youth who are at pre-contemplation because too many of them are dying in the streets of Oakland? Does that approach even work? The research is split. Do I want to co-create an organization that serves youth that are ready to change? How many youths are ready to change? Also, would I want to stay with a 28-year old, well established organization, that has proven itself, and has created some economic stability to carry the work forward like Homeboy Industries, or do I want to take that chance and return to Oakland to try and start again, somewhat from scratch?

Honestly, I naively dreamed of returning to Oakland with a master plan, millions of dollars, the right team in place, and the land to build the phoenix building of the Homies Empowerment Center. What am I actually returning with? I am a few years older, slower, but maybe a bit more understanding of other points of view. Adult development concepts that I learned in the Ed.L.D. program at Harvard University did a number on me. I am now pivoting and considering working with adults, when for 21 years I only wanted to work with

youth. There is a part of me that is also afraid. I am afraid to fail, still. Father Greg would say, “anything worth doing, is worth failing at.” Sometimes I forget my mom’s own advice, “*mijo* stop staring at the 20 foot-border, and notice the invisible 21-foot ladder.” It’s there. So the implications for self are plenty. I am to carry the 21-foot ladder, build a team, focus less on *clecha*, and more on unconditional love, the kind Father Greg gives out in large doses, and have a little bit more faith. I need to identify and zero in on who I want to build with, and what kind of supports need to be in place in order to make that happen. I also have to be ok with criticism and in the future, allow for graduate students to come in to my agency and potentially interview 40 stakeholders to learn about the organization that I helped to build. Father Greg, Shirley Torres and the entire leadership at Homeboy Industries, as well as Learning Works, have shown great courage in allowing themselves to be open for folks like myself to learn from them, and possibly even challenge them a bit. Their example is an important lesson for me to take into the next chapter of my life.

Elizabeth City, the director of the Ed.L.D. program, asked us three years ago to be willing to “fail forward” in terms of taking risks as a leader in training. In an effort to go there, my committee at Harvard came up with a great idea where I could do so even more within this capstone. At the January 2016 return-to-campus-visit (RCV) at Harvard University, my academic adviser, Eileen McGowan, was able to gather committee member, Professor Roberto Gonzales, and Teaching Fellow, Pei Pei Liu, to go over their thoughts on the draft of my capstone project. At that gathering Professor Gonzales suggested that I read the Appendix Section of the book *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life* to see how one researcher was able to talk about the process of doing this work that goes beyond implications for self. Professor McGowan suggested that I also continue to integrate my voice and leadership into the capstone in a more transparent way. Upon reading the

Appendix, I understood why Professor Gonzales recommended it, as it provided a great way to speak about this residency process, this methodology, of making the residency work in a way that felt genuine and honest. As Annette Lareau, the author of *Unequal Childhoods*, states, "in this appendix I describe some of the difficulties and dilemmas that arose during the study" (Lareau, 2011, p. 345). Therefore I have included my own Appendix G entitled Methodology: Enduring Dilemmas in Residency. Before reading Implications for Site it might be worth it to skip around and go there now.

Implications for Site

It would be arrogant for anyone to try and tell Homeboy Industries, a recognized leader in the field, what to do, even worse, to try and show up to fix the organization. I am extremely thankful that the leadership of HBI wanted to explore youth development, and allowed me an entry point to offer other points of view. Some of the long term outcomes such as increases in youth development participation, leadership as measured by the number of youth enrolled at HBI, certificates of achievement, matriculation rates and recidivism rates, all matter to the organization. HBI began 28 years ago focused on youth from rival gangs and over time they have pivoted and aged with the population. Age here only means that as the youth became adults that also became the focus of the organization; they naturally grew with their clients. It may also be easier to work with adults, as one of the navigators attested to, "people like to work with the older cat more, because youngsters are more *'hard headed'*" (Interview E, personal communication, October 27, 2015). However, there's much to learn from youth development practices. Young people have a lot to teach us and so do their stages of development. Shirley Torres shared her dream of a youth re-entry center and talked about what all staff need to know;

“They need to understand Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, they need to understand Stages of Change, they need to understand Eric Erikson’s Psychosocial Stages of Development. If they have those 3 maps, we’re good. They need to understand that adolescence is where identity is crystalized. Kids are going to rebel. It is part of the crisis that every teenager in America is in, but when that happens in urbanized communities of color our kids are criminalized for being adolescent[s], and sometimes that happens by the very caretakers in which they are held, and they are ridden off, and it happens in our schools. That’s what has to make this school and this center different. To me those are the three key theoretical underpinnings that have to drive our work. These three things have to shape our methodology”

(S. Torres, personal communication, December 17, 2015).

I believe that this youth services committee holds a lot of promise for the organization. It provides an opportunity for people across multiple departments and multiple organizations to not only work together, but to do so well. Every department at Homeboy Industries has multiple strengths, but the organization struggles, at times, to work well together across departments. This committee can provide a living example for what’s possible in the ever-evolving organization. The youth services committee did what had previously not been done at Homeboy Industries, to bring together two different agencies in deep collaboration to create a system of care for young people. That sets precedent. The work truly happened when the adults learned about each other, their roles, their points of view, and where they are coming from.

Lastly, it is worth noting that Homeboy Industries currently only receives about 2% (CNN, Nov. 28, 2015) of its funding from the federal government, and Father Greg admits that it is hard to raise money. “We’re a tougher sell because they are human beings who have been to prison and who are gang members.” Therefore, having a youth focus would make Homeboy Industries eligible to receive after-school funding through sources such as the 21st Century Learning Communities grant or OJJDP (Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention) funding to continue their work. Homeboy Industries gets visited by many agencies and representatives, but that doesn’t always transfer into funding for its programs.

Getting an organized system of care right could help Homeboy Industries be sustainable for decades to come, and be able to reach more young people. Part of the work will not just be in synthesizing all of this to create a “neat,” on paper, plan of action, but in continuing to do the necessary adult development internal work so that the youth services committee gels well together. One of the keys to the future success of both organizations may be to create the conditions for adults to speak their truth, allow others to do the same, and move forward together to effectively walk with youth on the margins. Less *clecha*, and more *corazón* may be part of the recipe that enables adults to do so. The answers exist within the organizational wisdom of these two amazing places. The philosophy of forgiveness, a fresh start, and kinship may simply need to extend itself to the adults as well.

Implications for Sector

As mentioned before, gangs have been identified as a major problem for 92% of U.S. urban cities. The impact goes beyond that. We are losing too many kids, and often times our schools, as they currently stand, are ill-equipped to support them. Creating an empowering school and youth center that “stands with the demonized until the demonizing stops” would be a great step forward for the country, and possibly the world. It is also worth noting that when you stand with youth on the margins you are also standing with the resilient, with future agents of change, and there’s much to learn from them. See, youth on the margins are not just the demonized, they are also leaders and visionaries who carry multiple assets, even in their defiance. Sadly, though, we are burying so many kids left and right all over this nation without ever seeing them for what they are; human beings worthy of love and attention. The ever evolving Homeboy Industries model could be a beacon of hope and inspiration. The organization has already shown great success with adults and for those that

complete the 18-month program only “30% return to prison, compared to more than 60% across California, and close to 70% nationwide” (CNN, Nov. 28, 2015). They have a tremendous impact on those “least likely to succeed.” Imagine if we could catch youth earlier before they are incarcerated. Some participant’s insights are worth repeating, “statistics show that these kids [students at Learning Works] will become those men and women [at HBI]. That’s the sad reality, so if we are not supporting the youth now, and helping them get to those goals, then what world are we creating?” (Interview K, personal communication, October 13, 2015)

Schools of Education, Sociology, Criminal Justice, Public Health, and many others stand to learn a lot from Homeboy Industries. Continuing these residencies and partnerships will afford these institutions an opportunity for their students to truly marry theory and practice. That collective partnership may produce ideas that change the world. This has certainly changed mine. The organization is offering a way to scale those ideas and that support, the Global Homeboy Network. Currently there are over 50 organizations in the United States, and over 20 worldwide that have modeled themselves after Homeboy Industries. The manager of the Global Homeboy Network (GHN) Alison Lass-Camacho states that,

“We want to continue this work [of] widening the circle and having more organizations join the GHN to serve those on the outer margins with hope, training, support, compassion, tenderness, kinship, creating community, sanctuary, family, and a place to welcome those on the edges. The ultimate goal of the GHN is to collectively advance the lives of people at the margins through localized direct services, and to create a collaborative platform for advocacy with and on behalf of our clients across the world.” (A. Lass-Camacho, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

Conclusion

I don't want to give the false impression that the onus for change falls on young people or that the major problems in our society are gangs. I do want to give the impression that change can come from the youth and that gangs may also offer some answers to our complex societal challenges. Indeed, our societal problems are deeply complex, and our answers will need to be as well in order for us to truly address them at their root. Dr. Sandra Bloom, coming from the field of mental health, sees our challenges this way, "to take seriously the notion of intervention and prevention, a society must take on issues of systemic violence, abuse, child maltreatment, domestic violence, poverty, racism and gender inequality" (Bloom, 2011, 147). That is our collective responsibility. Homeboy Industries provides a model of hope unlike most others in the world. It is a place worth studying and investing in; however, our role is to address the systemic conditions that impact education, and the ill-equipping of our next generation to even have a fighting chance. Our current solution for rebellious youth, who may make major societal mistakes, is mass incarceration. Author Michelle Alexander calls this phenomenon the New Jim Crow. Dropout youth, those locked up in juvenile hall, those out on the streets, those in gangs, along with those labeled "[sick or bad, or both] all bring up distasteful reminders of what is wrong and socially unjust in our present social, political, and economic system" (Bloom, 2011, p. 351). Where do we stand? Will we stand idly by as more and more kids end up in prison? Can we incarcerate our way out of the challenges that we face? Could we co-create a world that the most sacred in us can be proud of? Father Greg reminds us of our mutuality and our connectedness. At the closing of many of his talks all over the world, including his TED talk, he ends with,

"It shouldn't surprise us that God's own dream comes true for us, that we be one, just happens to be our own deepest longing for ourselves. It turns out, it's mutual, for the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and it will not disappoint, and if it delays, we can wait for it" (Boyle, 2012).

That's how his talk ended there, but he usually adds, "*nadie se quiere quedar con los brazos cruzados*" (no-one wants to wait [for this idyllic world] with their arms crossed) so it is the desire that this may provide a new road map for schools, for centers, for places of engagement to stand with the youth. If we must give youth any type of *clecha*, advice, the expectation is that it will not be directed for them to hear with their ears, but given with our hearts. We know that youth don't care how much we know, so let's attempt to let *clecha* go, and show youth how much we care. Let's hold their *corazones* in a community of kinship such that all that is sacred may recognize it. Let's see not just their circumstances, but their possibilities as change agents, and operate as if we truly believe that youth are indeed our future. That, coupled with our openness to learn from them, will allow us to in unison, like the great peaceful leader Mahatma Gandhi said, "create the change [collectively that] we want to see in this world." Here is one example of that, the Homeboy Industries way. It is not about an organization, or an agency, but a way of living, a type of community that we wish to create where no one exists on the margins. May we honor that work by walking it, and then the elders and young people may say, *en lak eeb* [you are my other me], *mexica tiabui* [onward people of the sun], *asbe* [with power] and *amen* [it is confirmed and the truth].

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Interviews

(In order to respect the privacy of the interviewees, the quotes from the interviews were kept anonymous, never connecting respondents to their statements; however, I am deeply appreciative of the staff and youth who took the time to share their thoughts. It is in that spirit that I wanted to honor them by listing them here.)

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- Avalos, S. (2015). Interview with Navigator from Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 12 15, Lengths: 25:43, 7:55, 1:59, 8:34 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Bedran, F. (2015). Interview with Director of Metal Health for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #61, 70, Lengths: 10:53, 47:15 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Boyle, G. (2015). Interview with Founder of Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 72-74, Lengths: 8:36, 25:24, 4:58 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Brown, C. (2015). Interview with trainee/student at Learning Works Boyle Heights. Audio Tape #38-39, Lengths: 19:02, 16:11 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Chavez, J. (2015). Interview with Chaser for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #68, Length: 35:57 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Contreras, J. (2015). Interview with Navigator for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 24 25, Lengths: 12:12, 10:19 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Correy, D. (2015). Interview with Chaser from Learning Works Charter High School Pasadena. Audio Tape #s 30-34, Lengths: 3:31, 1:10, 15:00, 11:10, 6:14 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Crane, A. (2015) Interview with the Director of Food Services for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 18-19, Lengths: 35:17, 44:24 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Cruz, Ca. (2015). Interview with Chaser for Learning Works Charter High School, Boyle Heights. Audio Tape #s 52-54, Lengths: 11:30, 13:54, 48:08 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Debora, F. (2015). Interview with Director of Substance Abuse Services for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 22-23, Lengths: 5:47, 23:42 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Diaz, R. (2015). Interview with Director of Youth Services for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 41-46, Lengths: 37:33, :48, 2:44, 1:30, 1:10, 3:13 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
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- Gutierrez, E. (2015). Interview with Case Manager for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape # 17, Length: 35:12 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Interiano, E. (2015). Interview with Student at Learning Works Charter High School, Boyle Heights. Audio Tape #48, Length: 19:23 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Johnson, D. (2015) Interview with Navigator for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 62-67, Lengths: 5:34, 8:52, 1:22, 14:22, 5:15, 6:31 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Key, V. (2015). Interview with Navigator for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #71, Length: 30:41 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Morton, B. (2015). Interview with Academic Program Coordinator for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 36-37, Lengths: 24:10, 23:17 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Perez, L. A. (2015). Interview with Director of Personal Development for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #2, Length: 36:45 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Rahn, M. (2015). Interview with Founder of Learning Works Charter School Pasadena and Boyle Heights. Audio Tape #35, Length: 1:40:07 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Richardson, A. (2015). Interview with Site Director of Learning Works Charter High, Boyle Heights. Audio Tape #s 49-51, Lengths: 22:16, 16:51, 29:20 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Torres, S. (2015). Interview with Director of Re-Entry Services for Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #s 80-81, Lengths: 26:50, 12:43 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Valdez, C. (2015). Interview with Mental Health Marriage and Family Therapist of Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #56, Length: 46:59 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Verdugo, H. (2015). Interview with Associate Executive Director of Homeboy Industries. Audio Tapes #s 5-10, Lengths: 9:22, 5:03, 5:17, :57, 14:25 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Vozzo, T. (2015). Interview with CEO of Homeboy Industries. Audio Tape #55, Length: 40:13 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)
- Zaragoza, K. (2015). Interview with Student at Learning Works Charter High School, Boyle Heights. Audio Tape #47, Length: 17:24 (C. Cruz, Interviewer)

Appendices

Appendix A: Informational Visit with Incoming Secretary of Education John King

Los Angeles Times

This is what happened when the incoming Education secretary met former gang members



Incoming acting Secretary of Education John King talked to former gang members, ex-convicts and the people who help them recover at Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles in August. (Homeboy Industries)



By Joy Resmovits • Contact Reporter

OCTOBER 2, 2015, 6:18 PM

On a hot day in August, John King arrived in Los Angeles to better understand gangs.

Then filling the role of deputy Education secretary, King sat down with a group of former gang members and convicts in Chinatown. He met a woman named Mariana Ruiz, whose path to college was far from typical. She was nervous to meet this “wonderful man who looked really clean cut.”

As of Friday, that man is slated to become the nation's acting secretary of Education when Arne Duncan leaves his job in December.

Back in August, King had been dispatched to Los Angeles by the federal government for a number of reasons, including to talk to Homeboy Industries about My Brother's Keeper. The program is a White House initiative designed to help level the playing field for young men of color. At Homeboy, a Los Angeles organization founded to help former and prospective gang members get back on their feet, people went around the room and talked about their experiences with the criminal justice and education systems.

King mostly asked questions and listened. “We have to focus on successful reentry [into society from prisons], like Homeboy, nationwide,” he said.

August, 2015- The article above from the

Los Angeles Times described the visit and learning opportunity from and with incoming

U.S. Secretary of Education John King. The

Director of External Affairs Jose Osuna along

with the Curriculum Coordinator Brittany

Morton helped to coordinate the visit. Multiple



trainees and Homeboy Industries alums spoke about their journeys of transformation.

Appendix B: Audio Files of Interviews conducted at Homeboy Industries and Learning Works

#	Description	Role	Length	Int#
1	Thought of the Day-Miguel Lugo	Trainee	7:34	
2	Interview- Louis Perez*	Dir. Personal Development	36:45	1
3	Interview- Lami Glenn	Trainee, 3 rd month	19:18	2
4	Tape on (can delete)		10:24	
5	Interview- Hector Verdugo**	Assoc. Exec Director	9:21	3
6	Interview- Hector Verdugo, pt. 2		5:02	
7	Interview- Hector Verdugo, pt. 3		5:17	
8	Interview- Hector Verdugo, pt. 4		:57	
9	Interview-Hector Verdugo, pt. 5		14:26	
10	Interview-Hector Verdugo, pt. 6		14:25	
11	Danny, sharing his music	Youth, Trainee	:58	
12	Interview- Steve Avalos	Navigator	25:41	4
13	Interview-Steve Avalos, pt. 2		27:55	
14	Interview-Steve Avalos, pt. 3		1:59	
15	Interview-Steve Avalos, pt. 4		8:34	
16	Interview- Maria Flores*	Dir. Case Management	1:15:23	5
17	Interview- Erin Gutierrez (pt. 2)	Case Manager	20:24	6
18	Interview- Arlin Crane , pt. 1	Dir. Food & Beverage	35:17	7
19	Interview-Arlin Crane, pt. 2		44:24	
20	Interview- Brittany Morton , pt. 1	Pathway to College	9:02	8
21	Interview-Brittany Morton, pt. 2		10:36	
22	Interview- Fabian Debora*	Dir. Substance Abuse	5:47	9
23	Interview-Fabian Debora, pt. 2		23:42	
24	Interview- Janet Contreras , pt. 1	Navigator	12:12	10
25	Interview- Janet Contreras , pt. 2		10:19	
26	Navigators training @Staff Mtg. pt. 1		6:00	
27	Navigators training @Staff Mtg. pt. 2		7:47	
28	Navigators training video		2:07	
29	Navigators training @Staff Mtg. pt. 3		33:22	
30	Interview- Dominick Correy	Chaser, Learning Works	3:30	11

#	Description	Role	Length	Int#
31	Interview-Dominick Correy, pt. 2		1:10	
32	Interview-Dominick Correy, pt. 3		15:00	
33	Interview-Dominick Correy, pt. 4		11:10	
34	Interview-Dominick Correy, pt. 5		6:13	
35	Interview- Mikala Rahn	Founder, Learning Works	1:40:07	12
36	Interview- Brittany Morton , 2 nd Int.		24:10	
37	Interview-Brittany Morton, 2 nd Int. , pt.2		23:17	
38	Interview Carizma Brown	Youth, Trainee	19:02	13
39	Interview Carizma Brown, pt. 2		16:11	
40	Interview Kevin Faist	Case Manager, LW-HBI	36:02	14
41	Interview Raul Diaz*	Site Manager, LW-HBI	37:33	15
42	Interview Raul Diaz, pt. 2		:48	
43	Interview Raul Diaz, pt. 3		2:44	
44	Interview Raul Diaz, pt. 4		1:29	
45	Interview Raul Diaz, pt. 5		1:10	
46	Interview Raul Diaz, pt. 6		3:13	
47	Interview Katia Zaragoza	Student	17:28	16
48	Interview, Eric Interiano	Youth, Student	19:23	17
49	Interview Ashley Richardson , pt.1	Site Mgr./Lead Teacher-LW	22:16	18
50	Interview Ashley Richardson, pt.2		16:51	
51	Interview Ashley Richardson, pt.3		29:20	
52	Interview Carlos Cruz , pt. 1	Chaser, LW-HBI	11:30	19
53	Interview Carlos Cruz, pt. 2			13:54
54	Interview Carlos Cruz, pt. 3			48:08
55	Interview Thomas Vozzo**	CEO	40:13	20
56	Interview Consuelo Valdez	Therapist	46:58	21
57	Interview Marissa Gillette	Dir. Educational Services	55:48	22
58	Shirley Torres' speaking @Board		7:55	
59	Greg Boyle speaking @Board		3:05	
60	Robert Juarez, Thought of Day		2:53	
61	Interview, Fajima Bedran	Dir. Mental Health	10:53	23
62	Interview, Damond Johnson , pt. 1	Navigator	5:34	24
63	Interview, Damond Johnson, pt. 2		8:52	
64	Interview, Damond Johnson, pt. 3		1:22	
65	Interview, Damond Johnson, pt. 4		14:22	

#	Description	Role	Length	Int#
66	Interview, Damond Johnson, pt. 5		5:15	
67	Interview, Damond Johnson, pt. 6		6:30	
68	Interview, Javier Chavez	Navigator	35:57	25
69	Interview, Mike Araujo	Director, LW-Pasadena	1:12:15	26
70	Interview, Fajima Bedran, pt. 2	Dir. Mental Health	47:16	
71	Interview, Victor Key	Navigator	30:41	27
72	Interview, Greg Boyle** , pt. 1	Founder	8:36	28
73	Interview, Greg Boyle, pt. 2	Founder	25:24	
74	Interview, Greg Boyle, pt. 3	Founder	4:58	29
75	Youth Focus Group, pt. 1	12 youth	41:35	29

Jose Estrada, Oscar Gaveis, Scarleth Pacheco, Johnathan Holguin, Juan Figueroa, Tori Jackson, Eric Interiano, Carizma Brown, Marquis Humphrey, Aaron Moreno, Anthony Ruiz, Brayan

76	Youth Focus Group, pt. 2	12 youth	3:29	30
77	Youth Focus Group, pt. 3	12 youth	19:33	
78	Youth Focus Group, pt. 4	12 youth	4:25	
79	Youth Focus Group, pt. 5	11 youth	15:48	
80	Interview, Shirley Torres**	Director, Re-Entry Serv.	26:50	31
81	Interview, Shirley Torres** , pt. 2		12:43	

* Council Member, **Executive Council Member

Appendix C: Report to Homeboy Industries-Re-Envisioning the 18-Month Program, 1 of 6

During my second week at Homeboy Industries I was asked to help the organization synthesize their notes from their re-visioning meetings as they sought to improve their 18-month training program. The next 6 pages unpack those findings.

Re-Envisioning the 18-Month Program

Homeboy Industries

Senior Staff has identified the “5” areas of focus to help improve the 18-month training program.

July 27, 2015



Identifying the “5”

- I. All-Staff not trained to be trauma/healing informed/focused.
- II. Lack of formal evaluation and assessment after 60-days.
- III. The current process for transitions is not working.
- IV. The balance between business needs and recovery is not there.
- V. There is only one singular 18-month Program for people at various levels of recovery.

I. All-Staff not trained to be trauma/healing informed/focused.

NOTES: Received 9 votes

“trauma” was brought up 10 times, “healing” was brought up 10 times

IDEAS that staff brought up that can help with this challenge:

- A. Define stages of growth
- B. Create a collective balanced approach to meet business and recovery needs.
- C. All-staff training and sharing of best practices.

Re-Envisioning our 18-Month Program

Senior Staff from Homeboy Industries gathered for a 3-hour session on July 27, 2015 to re-envision the 18-month trainee program. The meeting was co-facilitated by Tom Vozzo and Shirley Torres.

Homeboy Industries

II. Lack of formal evaluation and assessment after 60-days.

NOTES: Received 7 votes, "assess" was brought up 11 times

IDEAS that can help with this challenge:

- A. Assess **where we are**/are not in relation to *being trauma-informed*.
- B. **Share current assessments across Homeboy in an organized way.**
(8 formal/informal assessments were identified: Legal, Mental Health, Case Mgmt., Selection Comm., Academic, Violence, Secure Base, On the Job)
- C. **Assessments needed: genuine gang assessment**
- D. **New assessments recommended: stages of growth, Describe graduate at graduation** (possibly have a defined view at what multiple graduates would look like), assess **mindset(s)**, the **18-month assessment** (some may then need more time), **new population shifts**.

Re-Envisioning the 18-Month Program

III. The current process for transitions is not working.

(bringing in trainees to businesses too early, no goals after transition)

NOTES: Received 5 votes, "transition" was brought up 5 times

IDEAS that can help with this challenge:

- A. **Work Readiness Training Program:** Implement a training program for moving into businesses
- B. **Visits to businesses-this is what we do**
- C. **Transition only for a few days then check back w/secure base**

Homeboy Industries

IV. The balance between business needs and recovery is not there.

NOTES: *Received 4 votes, "business" was brought up 12 times
"recovery" was brought up 4 times*

IDEAS that can help with this challenge:

- A. Define what trainees are to develop mastery in.
- B. Create accountability in the back of the house. (x2)
- C. Getting everyone to work together
- D. Have Homeboy be a unified front (x2)

Re-Envisioning the 18-Month Program

V. There is only one singular 18-month Program for people at various levels of recovery.

NOTES: *Received 5 votes*

IDEAS that can help with this challenge:

- A. Create tracks for various level of where people are at. X2
- B. The Final Six Months as a Cycle for continual "work therapy" x2
- C. Re-envision the 4-hour shift with support
- D. Peer mentoring
- E. 9-month program to meet other needs or focus on our population

Below are the meeting notes
that led to prioritizing the “5.”

Challenges/Aspects that need improvement in the 18-month Program

- Lack of formal evaluation after the 60-day eval.
 - Creating tracks for various levels of recovery
 - Need to assess where they are at, where they can go, how they can transition smoothly
 - Collective intention/attention w/which we work w/trainees
 - Communication w/in departments (listed as both a strength and a challenge)
 - Transitions. (“I thought it was going to get better?” Trainee perception) (Janitorial to cubicle to business)
 - Once in a cubicle, are they disconnected to navigators? (diluting recovery, relapse)
 - No guidelines to assess/support after trainee comes back from “recovery”
 - Resources are in the “front.”
 - Business demands –vs- recovery needs
 - Bringing trainees to businesses too early
- Initial summary: A. How do we move “trainees?” B. “How do we assess?” C. “How do we adjust service plan with new markers?”
- How do trainees stay connected through transitions?
 - Many groups need consistency of relationships
 - Are trainees developing mastery? (at what?)
 - No goals after transition
 - M.O.T. = the moves take place very quickly
 - Our HBI focus is on the trainee, what about on the trainer?
 - How do we re-train folks (trainers and senior staff)?
 - How do we get to work together? (1. Case mgr., 2. Managers, 3. Therapist, 4. Teachers/tutors (curriculum), 5. Navigators, 6. M.O.T., 7. Navigator, 8. Secure Base)
 - How do we assess/support healing? Is this our focus or is it watered down?
 - How realistic is a focused program (healing/ trauma informed) w/our business needs?
 - How do we get our staff trauma-informed tools?
 - We are not trauma informed, but there’s a lot we do that is
 - We have good intentions, but we might be hurting people
 - How do we assess trauma, despair, and mental health?
-

Challenges/Aspects that need improvement in the 18-month Program (continued)

- Training program –vs- business –vs- community (balance)**
- How do we **balance** trauma, community, training program and business?

Ideas (that did not fit strengths/challenges buckets)

- A **6-month cycle (at the 12th month)** “**Work Therapy**” with check-in, life skills 102, new classes on the way out, exit interview
 - Last **6 months-hold tighter** (support)
 - Peer mentors** (quarterbacking, support)
 - Opportunity to use the **4-hour shift** for classes, support, therapy, etc.
 - Work Readiness Training Program:** Implement a training program for moving into businesses
 - Add to consulting team** (case mgr., therapy, navigator and substance abuse counselor)
 - Create tracks** for people at different levels
 - Assess people at their stages of rehab** (someone coming after twelve steps –vs- a youngsters –vs- someone older, they all need something different)
 - Navigator** at each business
 - Start them at a business** (Flip the script) during the honeymoon phase (first 60 days).
 - 60 day trial period** to see if it really works.
 - Create a culture of 20 hours work and 20 hours working on self** (case mgr., therapy & classes) during those first 60 days.
 - Individualized service plan** may need **more people involved** than just a case mgr.
 - Team effort disciplinary team**-case consulting.
 - Healing** not jails
 - Let’s describe the graduate at graduation.** Resilience, coming to terms, move beyond mindset, attach(ed), healing
 - Let’s develop everyone to become healers** in their own way so we have a **continuity of care**
 - Share assessments**
-

Assessments that we have:

- Legal**- crime, immigration, debt, traffic
- Mental health**-diagnoses, orient, memory, symptoms, drug, emotional well-being, starting at trauma history
- Case Management**-family, criminal, health, education, but at initial stages
- Selection Committee**-assess if they are ready to change their life
- Academic**-learning assessment, ELA, math, GED-3 levels (pre, 1 and 2)
- Violence**-informal assessment, conversations + affirming + pay attention
- Secure base**
- Job**-on time, breaks, punch, communicate, uniform, rules

Assessments that we need:

- Genuine Gang assessment**: live in hood, assess Bloods/Crips, deeper dive, active/inactive/ "fence," 1-on-1, "beefs," evaluate where trainees are at, check w/ love, assess if trainee is playing games with themselves
- Case management**: (next step for it) **adapt, evolve, and implement** suggestions.
- Define stages of growth**
- Academic**: (next step for it) **capture sooner, formal testing**
- Describe graduate at graduation**
- Assess mindset(s)**
- The 18-month assessment** (some may then need more time)
- Population shifts**, new clientele

Questions (that did not fit strengths/challenges buckets)

- How do we get to **collective trauma-informed decision-making**?
- How do we become a **trauma-informed/led program**? How do we get there?
- How do we assess, **support and measure healing**?
- What if **everyone becomes trauma-informed** focused on healing?
- How we assess where people are at? (Beginning, last two months, 1 person follows in the 18-month program)
- Can we imagine a **middle ground between business and support**?
- Do we create a **9-month program** to meet other needs or focus on our population?
- How do we stand loyal to the **least likely to succeed**?
- How do we stay a **team when we disagree**?
- How do we **trust the expert(s)**?
- What in the 18 month program can **get us to healing**?
- Can we do an **assessment** of where we are/are not in relation to being trauma-informed?
- How do we get to a **unified flourishing culture**?
- What do we do when trainees say, "I don't want to be here?"

Appendix D: Presenting at Global Homeboy Network Conference

During my 3rd week at the residency site, Homeboy Industries hosted the Global Homeboy Network (GHN) gathering. I am extremely thankful that I was given the opportunity to speak about my work with Homies Empowerment. One of our youth leader alums Prisila Pelayo joined us and spoke passionately about the changes she has made in her life. Below you will find the description of the workshop that we presented.



Reaching youth on the margins the Homies Empowerment way

In a 90-minute workshop, co-founder of the *Homies Empowerment* youth development program in Oakland, CA., César A. Cruz presented on incorporating ethnic studies, rites of passage, gender circles and unity dinners in developing a space for youth on the margins to develop and self-actualize.

César A. Cruz was joined by youth leader and alum Prisila Pelayo who spoke about her journey and experiences in the youth leadership component of Homies Empowerment called “*Adelante.*”



Learning Objective

1. Participants learned practical ways to incorporate history, culture, rites of passage and other practices to best reach youth on the margins.



Pictured to the left is Father Greg Boyle addressing the attendees at the Global Homeboy Network at the California Endowment in Los Angeles, CA.

August 2015

Appendix E: Speaker Series to address issues of Domestic Violence

One of the major ways that Homeboy Industries assists the community revolves around providing support groups on issues of domestic violence. In an effort to affirm that work, and also to introduce the organization to a



Homies Empowerment style dinner (in this case lunch), I partnered with librarian Amy Cheney, and she single-handedly helped bring actor/spokesperson Victor Rivas Rivers and author Mim Eichler Rivas to a special in-service for Homeboy trainees and staff.



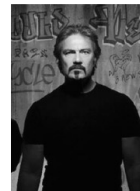
voluntary in-service was the celebrity status of Victor and Mim. Victor Rivas Rivers was very popular with our trainees due in large part to his role in the film *Blood In, Blood Out*. Mim Eichler

Rivas appealed to many folks due her co-authorship of books like *Finding Fish*, and *The Pursuit of Happiness*. Victor and Mim opened up in such a personal way and they captivated our trainees and staff. They even brought their son Eli Rivas to join them. Their partnership with Homeboy would begin there. During the year, Victor Rivas Rivers returned multiple times to volunteer, bring clothing donations and he even spoke to the men's domestic violence group facilitated by Joseph Escamilla. Victor also flew to Harvard University to speak at our return to campus visit at the Graduate School of Education in October, 2015.

The initial draw for folks to attend the

Homeboy Industries presents

Pizza and Conversation with
actor/author **Victor Rivas Rivers** (*Blood In, Blood Out*)
and author **Mim Eichler Rivas** (*Pursuit of Happiness, Finding Fish*)



Monday Aug 24th, 2015
12:30-1:30pm
Classroom A
(For Trainees and Staff only)
LIMITED SEATING



Victor Rivas is an actor that has appeared in many films including *Blood in, Blood Out*, *Mask of Zorro* and *The Distinguished Gentleman*. He is also the author of *A Private Family Matter* a personal story of survival of domestic violence. He is now a spokesperson for the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

and author **Mim Eichler Rivas**
Mim Rivas has authored/co-authored 15 books including *Finding Fish* and *The Pursuit of Happiness*.



Talk/Pizza is FREE but please arrive early. Doors open at 12:15pm
More Information/RSVP: CCruz@HomeboyIndustries.org, 510.776.3740

Appendix F: Backwards Mapping Deadlines

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
October 13 th	Teacher + Navigator int	Transcribe interviews	-	Done, both
October 14 th	CEO + Therapist int.	Transcribe interviews	-	Done, both
October 15 th	Educator + Dir. interview	Transcribe interviews		Done, need Shirley interview
October 19	AVP training	Field notes	2 nd Bldg.	
October 20	AVP training DOL Mtg.	Field notes	2 nd Bldg.	
October 21	Int. Day	transcribe	1 st Street	
October 26 th	Int. Day	transcribe	1 st Street	
October 27 th	Int. Day	transcribe	Bruno	
October 28 th	Int. Day	transcribe	LW- Pasadena	
October 29 th	Int. Day	transcribe	1 st Street	

November

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
Nov. 2-5 th	Transcribe 30+ interviews	Transcribed interviews	Primera Taza Cafe	
Nov. 5 th	Complete all interviews	Notes completed		Deadline- all interviews
Nov. 9-12 th	Conduct focus groups	Focus group		
Nov. 16-19 th	Synthesize all data	Start Report		
Nov. 23-24 th	Synthesize all data	Report		Deadline- syn. data

December

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
December 1 st -	Present findings to Shirley	<u>Report Draft due to Shirley + presentation plan for staff</u>		
December 7-10 th	Off-site completing capstone draft		Library	
December 11th	Capstone draft is due to TFs	1st Draft of Capstone	Library	The 1st Draft of Capstone is due
December 14th		Agenda draft for 1st mtg.		
December 19 th	Receive feedback from TF			
December 21-22	Review feedback and rewrite	Work on 2nd draft of capstone		

December 28-30 th	Review feedback and rewrite	Work on 2nd draft capstone		
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January 2016

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
January 2-3 th	Complete draft to submit by Jan 4 th .		Library	
January 4, 2016	Draft capstone + memo due to committee	<u>2nd Draft of Capstone is due to entire committee</u>	Library	Draft Capstone, incl: Intro, RKA Theory of Action, Description, emerging Results, emerging Analysis (at minimum, analytical framework).
January 11-15, 2016	Return Campus Visit II		Harvard University	
January 19-21, 2016	Work on revision from committee	Work on 3 rd draft		
January 25-28 th	Work on revision from committee	Work on 3 rd draft		
January 26 th	Board Mtg.			
January 29 th	Share Findings w/ leadership	Powerpoint	HBI, break room	Approved to create youth services comm.

February 2016

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
February 5 th	Present proposal to LW leadership	Youth services comm. proposal	1 st Street, CFO's office	Move forward, present to HBI
February 12th	Complete capstone due to TF for notes	3rd Draft of Capstone	library	3rd Draft of Capstone Due!
February 17 th	Present proposal to HBI staff	Youth services comm. proposal	HBI, break room	Move forward, plan the retreat
February 18 th	Receive feedback from TF			
February 22-25	Off-site- finishing capstone		Library	
February 26, 2016	Complete capstone due to committee	4th draft of Capstone		4th draft of Capstone due to committee

March 2016

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
March 4 th	Youth Services Comm. Retreat	Agenda for retreat, plan of	TBD, California Endowment, 2-	Approved, looking for site

		action	5pm	
March 9 th	Youth Serv. Comm. Session 2	Agenda	1 st Street, lunch mtg. 12-1:30pm	
March 11, 2016	Receive feedback			
March 18, 2016	Re-send capstone with corrections	5th draft of Capstone		5th draft of Capstone due to TF
March 23 rd	Youth Serv. Comm. Session 3	Agenda	1 st Street, lunch mtg. 12-1:30pm	
March 25, 2016	Receive feedback			

April 2016

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
April 1 st , 2016	Complete capstone due to entire committee	6th draft of Capstone due		6th draft of Capstone due to entire committee
April 6 th	Youth Serv. Comm. Session4	Agenda	1 st Street, lunch mtg. 12-1:30pm	
April 10 th	My wife's bday			
April 11-15th	Return Visit 3- Capstone Defense Symposium		Harvard University	
April 20 th	Youth Serv. Comm. Session5	Agenda	1 st Street, lunch mtg. 12-1:30pm	
April 22 nd	Post-defense revisions due			
April 29 th	Deadline for committee to approve capstone			
April 30 th	Lo Máximo Awards			

May 2016

Date	Task	Deliverable?	Off-site-location	Notes/ Deadline
May 1 st	My son turns 7- Amaru's B-Day			
May 2 nd , 2016	Deadline to submit all copies of capstone			
May 4 th	Youth Serv. Comm. Session6	Agenda	1 st Street, lunch mtg. 12-1:30pm	
May 25-26	Graduation		Harvard U. Graduation	
May 31st- Tuesday	Final Day @Homeboy -Pres of Strategic Plan by Comm.	Presentation of Strategic Plan by the Comm. to Leadership		Presentation of Strategic Plan by the Comm.

Appendix G: Methodology: Enduring Dilemmas in Residency

I. Negotiating Space

This might appear as if I am beginning with the petty, but space matters. Prior to arriving at Homeboy Industries, I dreamed of having my own space, an office, a desk or at least a cubicle to operate from. I even thought about the feng shui and how I would decorate such a space to create the conditions to provide safety and empowerment to the folks that I would meet, such as by adding inspiring quotes, and putting up revolutionary posters on the wall, but that would never quite materialize. Part of my learning growth was adapting to the lack of space at Homeboy Industries and how that impacts everything. Sometimes private conversations happen in hallways between staff members because space is limited. That adaptation served as a great metaphor for my residency time while at Homeboy. Shirley Torres was very generous with her office space, which she already shared with another staff member. The three of us were to share a small office; however, I quickly learned that I would be bumped out of that space whenever Shirley needed to have private meetings with staff. That happened a lot. I learned not to take it personally as I witnessed the CFO constantly bumped from space to space and if he made it work, why couldn't I? So I became creative: at times working in the constantly busy Homegirl Café, in the hallway, or the hidden stairway upstairs that leads only to an emergency exit. Eventually, I moved into the curriculum department, if only for about a week, as new staff came in to the organization. However, there were small victories like getting the spare key from therapist, Theresa Karanik, to her office so that when she was out at a training I could use her space. In December, I was then asked to move buildings altogether and I went to 1st Street, the Learning Works site where I could observe the school and the youth programming on-site. There, I could use the office of the manager of our Farmer's Markets when he was not there,

but I ended up finding a shared space with the high school aged-youth at their work cubicles. As long as I wore my earplugs, I could get work done there with some hip-hop music playing in the background, and the occasional smell of weed coming from some of their backpacks. Those youths got a kick out of seeing me work next to them, and for me, I was able to build with them in a way that was priceless to get them to open up later. Unintentionally, I received the opportunity to model to many youths the process of writing a 140+ page capstone, as they asked daily, “what page you on?” Then, after I gave the response, they’d quickly respond, “damn, let me get my sh*t together then too if you are that ahead!” We worked together, high-school aged youth, doctoral student, as equals and we motivated each other. Days before I flew to Harvard University to defend my capstone in front of my committee, a Learning Works student Bryan Martinez noticed how stressed I was and he said to me as part of a video interview, “just keep doing what you’re doing, you’ll make it, you’ll be an official doctor.” (B. Martinez, personal communication, April 4, 2016). I had never been called that before, and somehow it took on a special meaning that all this hard work could indeed pay off.

II. Facing a Demon

In January of 2015, six months before residency was to begin, I flew to Los Angeles, CA to spend a week at Homeboy Industries. This was part of the process where all of the doctoral students in the Ed.L.D. Program were trying to find the right match between the residency, mentor, and strategic project. I arrived extremely early that first Monday awaiting to speak to Father Greg Boyle, and my bubble was quickly burst by a shadow that I saw from my past. Walking down the stairs was a “*gentle-*” man whom I knew quite well from the Bay Area, and it triggered painful memories of what he had done. He tried to become a

volunteer with our own organization [Homies Empowerment] four years ago, and he befriended many of us. Quickly, he preyed on the women of the organization, and it hit close to home. It got so bad, when it all came out to the light of the day, that we had to ask him to leave our organization.

I did not expect to see him now, four years later, as a staff photographer and a senior staff member for Homeboy Industries. He had the nerve to write to me in January saying that he was a “vital part” of the organization and that he was “senior staff” in this “movement” for social change. I developed a knot in my stomach as I read those words, seeing him walk around with that smirk, and I felt like vomiting upon seeing him. A lot of my adult development training was quickly being put to the test. I allowed this man to impact me so much that now I was becoming quite angry. I spent the months of March-May of that year, before I even started the residency, unpacking this with my POD¹⁵ mates back at Harvard to figure out the best way to handle this situation. What do I do? My spirit [or 6th sense] told me that this could potentially be harmful and dangerous. I needed to do a lot of soul searching to even come to Homeboy Industries, and I couldn't share that with anyone. My job was not to speak negatively of him or to start off my relationship with Homeboy this way. Needless to say, this was extremely difficult to handle.

On the 6th day of my residency in July of 2015, I approached him and said that we needed to talk. Those were many sleepless nights just preparing for that moment. We met one-on-one outside of Homegirl Café and he seemed somewhat remorseful for his actions and blamed his poor decisions on his addictions. He told me a story about how much he has changed. I wanted to believe him, but too many previous episodes argued otherwise. I knew

¹⁵ POD: In the Ed.L.D. Program we were placed into groups of 4, PODS, so that we could check-in with each other during our residency year. I am very thankful for the support of POD mates Yvonne Delbanco, Tracey Benson and Sean Arthurs. Two of them were able to fly thousands of miles just to visit my residency site at Homeboy Industries during the residency year.

that I needed to take action because I genuinely feared for the safety of the female staff at Homeboy, but I also wanted to be discreet about it. As a co-founder of my own organization, I felt that I had to speak with Father Greg about this. In an effort to be transparent, I told this person that I needed to discuss his actions with Father Greg, but wanted him present while I did so. He reluctantly agreed to this meeting because he said that Father Greg knew of all of this already.

Preparing to meet with a mentor that I respect very much was extremely difficult, to say the least. The meeting did not go quite the way I hoped for. I suppose that I wanted Father Greg to understand why I was so concerned, but instead he said, “my son, we are a place of second chances. If you knew the background of some of these people here, I am not sure if you would give them a second chance.” That was a very powerful lesson for me to learn early on in my residency in October of 2015. I questioned myself for a couple of months after that as I tried to make meaning out of the entire experience. I constantly asked myself if my espoused values of second chances were somehow not connected with my lived values, as I had written this person off because he hurt so many of us? Could I forgive? I turned to some teachings for help with that. Almost every morning, as I took two buses to get to Homeboy, I would open up my tiny pocket *Heart of a Buddha* book and read this brief passage: “focus not on the rudeness of others, not on what they’ve done or left undone, but on what you have and have not done yourself.” I felt a weight being lifted off my shoulders after speaking with Father Greg, but things still felt very unsettled. I then decided to focus on my own shortcomings, and to continue my listening campaign here at Homeboy as I was hearing from many amazing staff about their thoughts on how to best support the youth. After all, that was in fact my strategic project. In many ways, I felt like this person’s energy, or better yet, my own shortcomings of how I choose to see him, were taking away the focus

of my calling. Yet as I tried to focus on the work, his name kept coming up. A close friend of mine wrote to me in December stating the following:

"Cesar, I feel compelled to let you know that another *muxer* [woman] has stepped forward and publicly announced on FB (Facebook) that she was sexually assaulted by [him]. I know that you share space with him @Homeboy. I'm so enraged that he has been able to duck in and out of multiple social justice circles and hurt so many *muxeres* [womyn] including some you know and are close to. I have no idea what you can or should do about it, because I believe that these types of things need to be addressed in a survivor centered way but wanted to let you know as someone who is close to him and because I think it's important that brothers also step-up and hold each other accountable."

I was furious. Not that she wrote to me, but that he in fact had not changed. However, new developments quickly changed things. A few women went public on social media denouncing his actions. One of them wrote a piece on FB called "A Rapist at Homeboy Industries," and the agency quickly took corrective action. The week that I was away on the return to campus visit at Harvard, he was let go.

IV. The way I see, impacts what I see

As a doctoral resident, I have become even clearer that I see the world through a very particular lens. My adult development training has helped me to self-analyze a lot of what I am perceiving. However, my default frame is informed by poverty, deportations, and a lot of macro-aggressions or systemic violence that have me perceiving that folks in positions of power are not to be initially trusted. That is my default lens.

I walked into the very first board meeting of Homeboy Industries, day two of my residency, seeing the people there through my default lens. I began to categorize people into males and females, whites and people of color. I counted 19 men, 17 of them white, and then I placed a value judgment on that. I then began to filter what I was hearing through that

lens. I made meaning out of what I interpreted as a very non-diverse board of directors for Homeboy. I wondered why? During the first board meeting that I attended on July 16th, I heard the board members celebrate an exemption to having to pay [the new \$15] minimum wage for our trainees, and I let that anger me. I judged the board members and wondered how many of them had ever lived off of minimum wage? It was really hard for me to remain quiet for the next two hours. I dwelled on how to raise my voice while also being less judgmental. I scribbled on my notepad and drew blanks for quite a while. What I ended up with was the following question: “How do the trainees feel about Homeboy not paying them minimum wage?” What I wanted to ask instead was, “which of you could live off \$10-11 an hour?” Father Greg thanked me after the meeting for asking that question and I sensed that he was a kindred spirit. I still remain(ed) with the assumption that our board is out of touch with the reality of our trainees. However, countering that view, the board also spoke about the fact that this is not a traditional job, and that Homeboy pays trainees to work on themselves in the form of classes and therapy. That salary may be all that Homeboy can afford to pay the trainees in order to continue to keep its doors open to help other people. I was left wanting and needing to check my assumptions.

At the second quarterly board meeting, the board of directors discussed the dream of creating affordable housing for folks. When I heard a board member say, “If you advertise it as housing for criminals, then we won’t have that problem [of having too many people apply].” I quickly allowed myself to get angry, again. This time, however, I remained silent. I was still trying to figure when and how to speak up. I am still trying to better evaluate what folks mean by their statements, and not rush to judgment. Dr. Deborah Jewell-Sherman, one of my esteemed professors at Harvard, once told me, “do you want to make a point, or do you want to make a difference?” Those words sat with me, helping me remain silent during

that meeting in order to fully process all that I was hearing. I am choosing to find ways to make a difference, by building a coalition within the agency, and also checking my own assumptions. That is indeed a work in progress, and this time the silence is strategic and golden. Understanding that I will speak again, I hope to lead with open-ended questions seeking to best understand where folks are coming from. That simple lesson for others, may be the hardest one for me to learn, but I am learning.

Appendix H: Interview Coding Notes

-This is a sample of one of the interviews which includes quotes for the different questions that were asked.

I n t Z	#2 What's in place for youth @HBI?	#3 What's working well?	#4 What needs improvement?	#5 How are youth diff.	#6 Strengthen program	#7 Big Dreams	Notes/ Ideas
I n t Z	<p>“our philosophy in regards to a community of kinship, community of compassion and love, where family trumps gangs”</p> <p>“Father Greg visits people while they are in jail, when they are on the streets and have nowhere to go, Father Greg is there, we try to be there as well. (34:42)”</p> <p>Learning Works- “We have a pretty good ratio of graduations that have evolved and gotten bigger numbers as we moved along.” (33:33)</p> <p>employment for kids, youth in general, that is a carrot that draws young kids in where they feel they have an opportunity to make some money to help out their family. So that's in place too that kind of holds people (32:53)</p>	<p>“I think it's Father Greg's philosophy of loving them, being there for them through hard & good times. Always know that this place is here for them when they need something you know, I think has always helped. I think by far that magic that we talk about, is that.” (32:00)</p> <p>Ignatius imagination and prayer. (25:00) It's desolation, consolation, and he regards to allowing to have empathy when you put yourself in the individual's walking the path. -In Jesuit phil. in imagination and prayer they believe in placing themselves in other people's shoes; well that's difficult because of your own way of looking at things, mindset, your perspective plays a big factor.</p>	<p>“Everything. I think that we don't have a lot of things in place outside of the things that I named, and that's not a lot.”</p> <p>2. We do a great job of engaging and initiating relationships, we do a poor job of following up and holding people accountable.</p> <p>3. My approach is very gangster, I still use behavior that I used before and sometimes that's not effective. It's not. I have to improve and evolve a little bit more were I am able to be a little bit kinder or pull more people into the conversation instead of assuming that they understand the philosophy already. 27:00</p> <p>Iceberg Theory- when we struggle about money we pick on those whose behavior stands out, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. 10:10</p>	<p>youth are very good at seeing through B.S., so if you say, do this, do that, and the next thing you know you are not doing that, they are going to call you on your B.S. and then if you get upset at that homie you've lost the individual. That's happened here a lot. St. Ignatius “I always say St. Ignatius was a gangster, busted by the French, captured him, leg hit with cannonball, healed him out of respect, while there he read books, it's about what fulfills you, and what only holds you for a minute.” 11:36 1.desolation- only for a minute 2.consolation- overwhelming fulfillment, wanting to help.</p>	<p>27:50-19:50 1.follow through Father Greg's vision and philosophy. 27:50</p> <p>homeboy boot-camp embed the philosophy of father Greg where people get a clear understanding of his vision, with what he sees, and how he feels, to how he understands, and get to this place, 25:00</p> <p>1. Iceberg- top is behavior, bottom-culture, values & belief systems, 22:10</p> <p>2.Staff do community service outside of HBI 21:05 -staff must b willing to get to know the neighborhoods</p>	<p>19:19-14:30 3 components 1.Housing-big that we lack, 18:54 -home for foster care kids, abandoned</p> <p>2. Classes to Learn to Re-Love Again</p> <p>3. Transition to Adulthood- Rites of Passage, 16:25 -do service for others, they get to see “other people's f-ed up situations.” 15:42</p> <p>3a. Serve Others Program -feed others -build houses then send off into the world, 15:21</p> <p>Fabian, Shirley, Father G can do those teachings. 2:33</p>	<p>“we are here to plant seeds but the kids have to water it themselves”</p> <p>Get outside of your sh*t, unselfish concern for others 22:35</p> <p>Story G tells about a kid that's dying, kid tells G, “how are you doing?” -Kid's love taught G a lot.</p> <p>“We haven't been youth driven, a lot of room for improvement...” :22</p>

Appendix I: Interview Release Form



Harvard
Graduate School
of Education



Harvard Graduate School of Education
Educational Leadership Doctoral Program (Ed.L.D.)
Homeboy Industries
Doctoral Resident: César A. Cruz

Interview Release Form

I (Interviewee) _____ agree to be interviewed for the capstone project of César A. Cruz as part of his deliverable for the doctoral program in educational leadership (Ed.L.D.) at Harvard University. I understand that my interview will be used for the Capstone process, which will include assignments for the L-300 course series at Harvard University; Capstone Defense; Capstone Symposium; and Harvard University libraries/archives. I release any liability from Homeboy Industries and the Harvard Graduate School of Education Ed.L.D. Program. I understand that I will not be compensated for my interview and I agree to be honest with my responses.

Interviewee Signature

Date



Appendix J: Figures 1-30

Figure 1: Roca’s Stage of Change Process

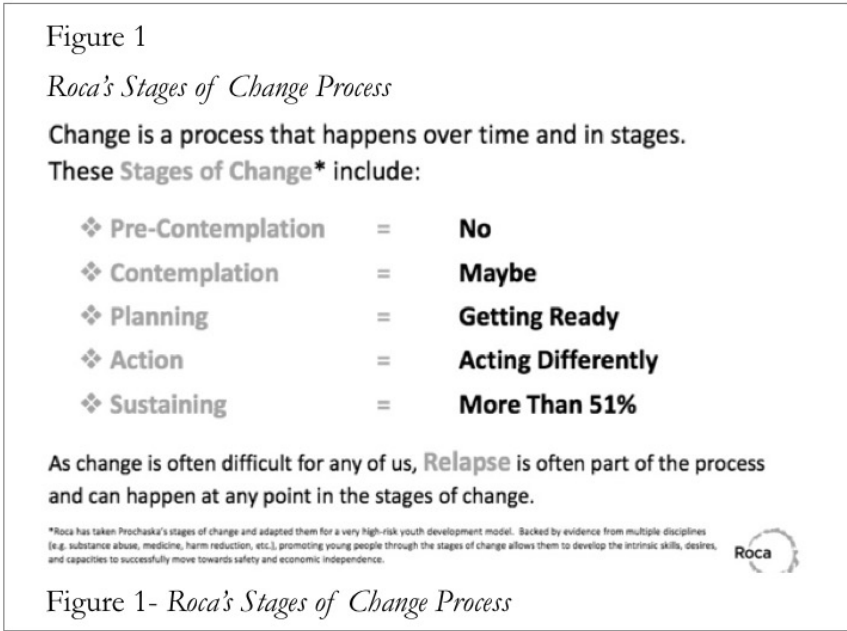


Figure 2: Youth Development Best Strategies

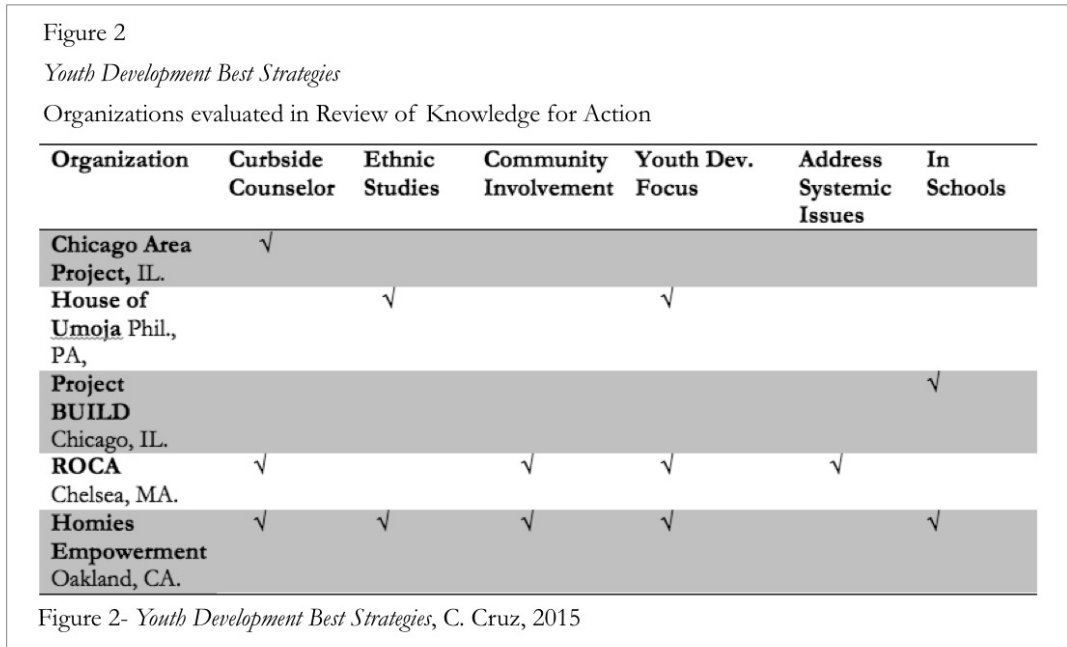


Figure 3: Community Cultural Wealth Model

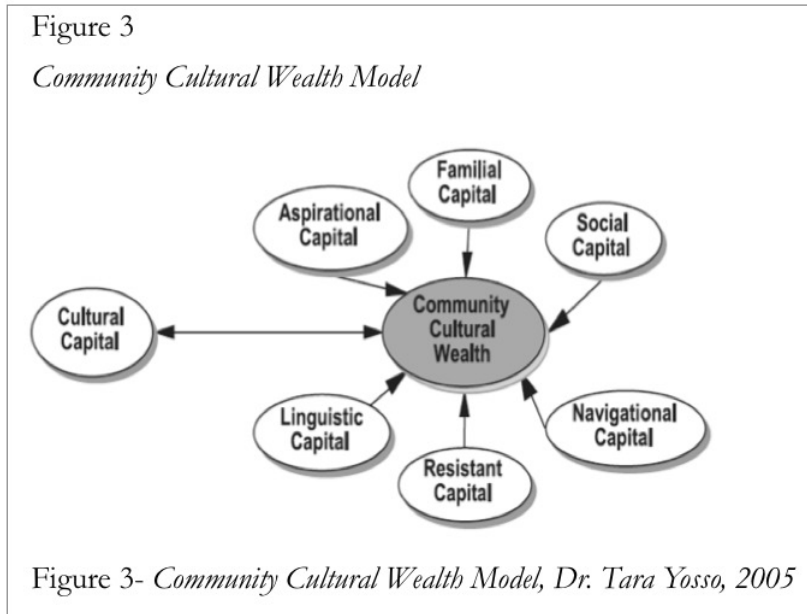


Figure 4: Interview Transcription Process

Figure 4
Interview Transcription Process

I n t e r v i e w	#2 What's in place for youth@HBI?	#3 What's working well?	#4 What needs improvement?	#5 How are youth diff.	#6 Strengthen program	#7 Big Dreams	Notes/Idea
	<p>#1- HBI</p> <p>1. jobs</p> <p>2. navigator-plays a chaser role</p> <p>3. need the right type of people</p> <p>LW</p> <p>1.Rigor</p> <p>2. Relevance</p> <p>3. Relationship-lead with it</p> <p>4. our mission (#1, 42:37)</p> <p>---</p> <p>Stories: Martin, did not like him, did not relate, but he is changing, #1, 3:50, now amazing, does jiu jitsu, is a chaser 2:08</p> <p>Kid, 2023, 16 year</p>	<p>1, being there for the youth as they go to court, navigating the system, #2, 44:45</p> <p>--</p> <p>#2, 38:22</p> <p>1.Give folks a second chance at life.</p> <p><u>"Statistics show that these kids (LW) will become THOSE men and women (HBI). That's the sad reality, so if we are not supporting the youth now, and helping them get to those goals, then what world</u></p>	<p>Support from HBI</p> <p>"The support from the main Homeboy building has been absent, but the 2 people that they have here, Kevin and Raul, that's the support from HBI." #2, 38:01</p> <p>1.Bureaucracy</p> <p>2.Seniority</p> <p>#2, 33:10</p> <p>On HBI side, management needs to stop being micro managers. Why nit pick?</p>	<p>"There is no one-size fits all, youth have diff. learning styles." #1, 11:05</p> <p>"People who come from segregated realities, develop segregated ideas." #2, 28:11</p> <p>1.Youth need to be checked up on, helped with school work, #2, 34:53</p> <p>#2, 30:00</p> <p>Adults forget that they were</p>	<p>#2, 12:50-3:30</p> <p>"I wouldn't change anything, the pieces to the puzzle are here."</p> <p>Only thing we are missing is SPORTS! 12:09</p> <p>1. Listen: sports taught me how to listen to other adults.</p> <p>2. Team: we are all one team.</p> <p>3. LW Soccer, Bball.</p> <p>4. My self-care is sports, watch it or play</p>	<p>3:30-</p> <p>A CAMP</p> <p>Take over one of the camps, implementing a LW model, no need for housing because they are already there, our mission,</p> <p>Problem: Probation officers acting as officers, they are not, and not guiding the youth. (1:47)</p> <p>Use the money to pay for the youth</p>	<p>Great quotes, great ideas:</p> <p>Focus on youth, not adults who end up at HBI</p> <p>Gang Banging Mentality in Non Profits</p> <p>How do you coach folks to be culturally competent?</p> <p>1.Mandate d reporter,</p>

Figure 4- *Interview Transcription Process C. Cruz, 2016*

Figure 5: Interview Labeling Process

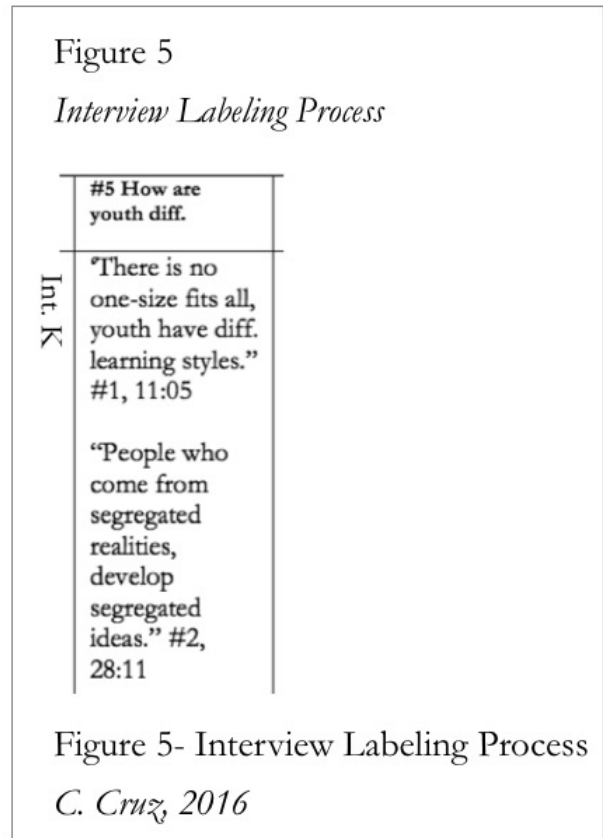


Figure 6: Top Responses- Systems to Support Teens

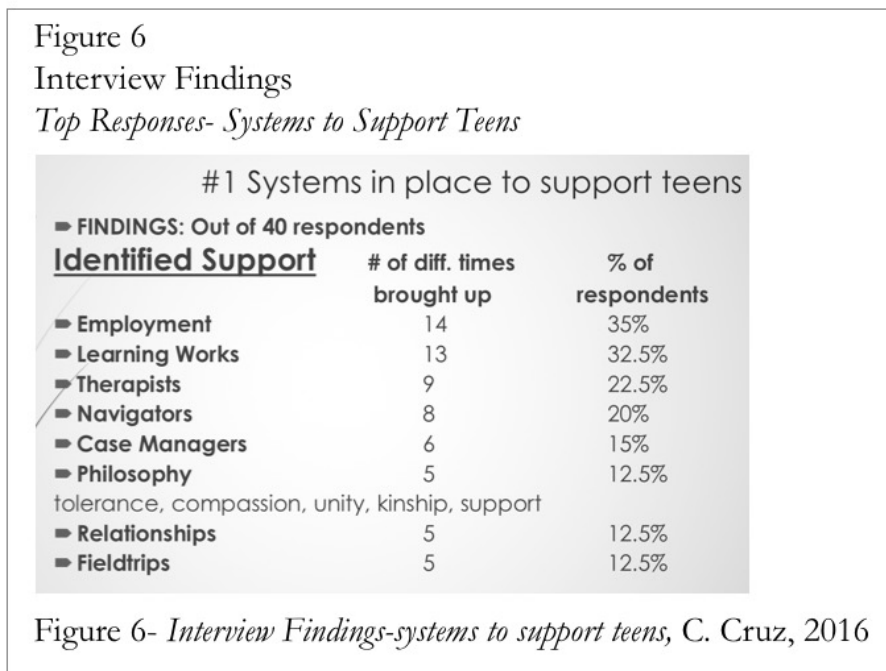


Figure 7: Top Responses- What is working well to support teens

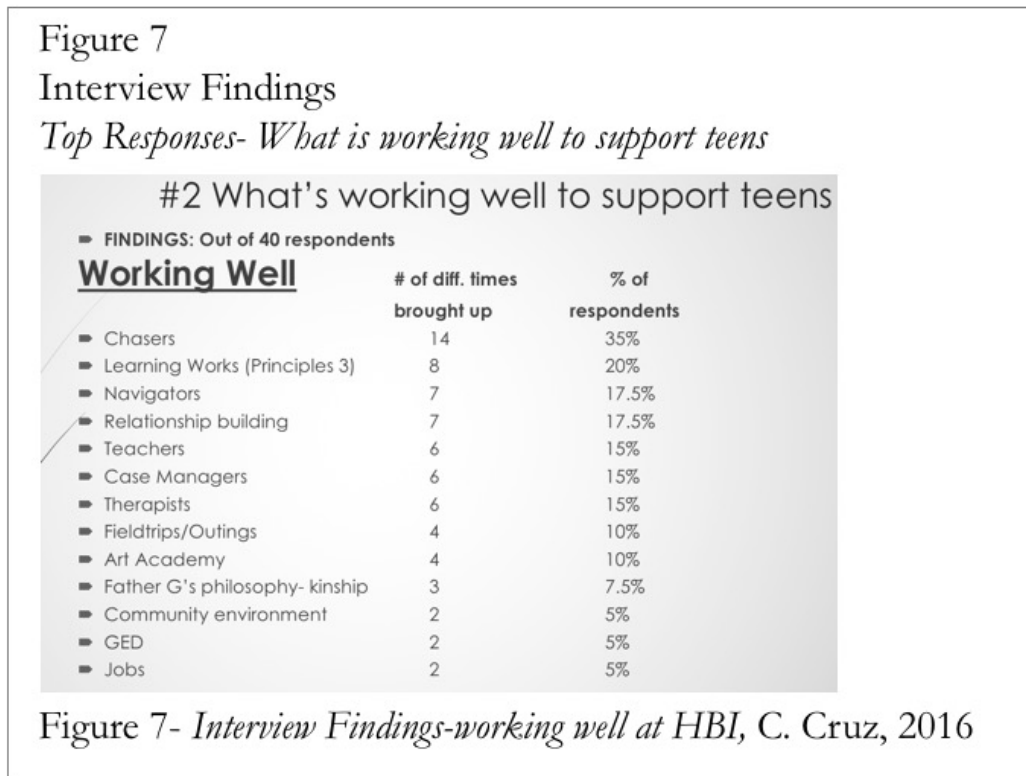


Figure 8: School Principles

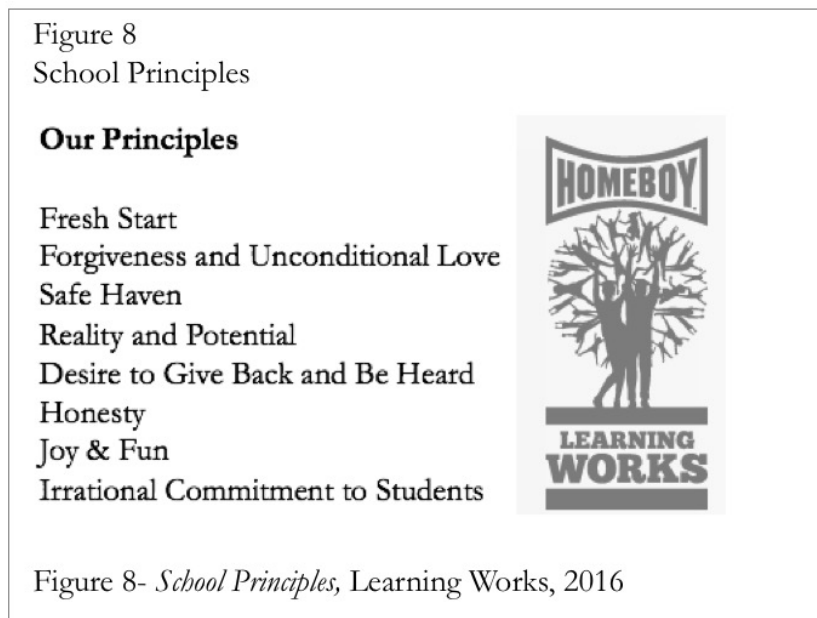


Figure 9: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens

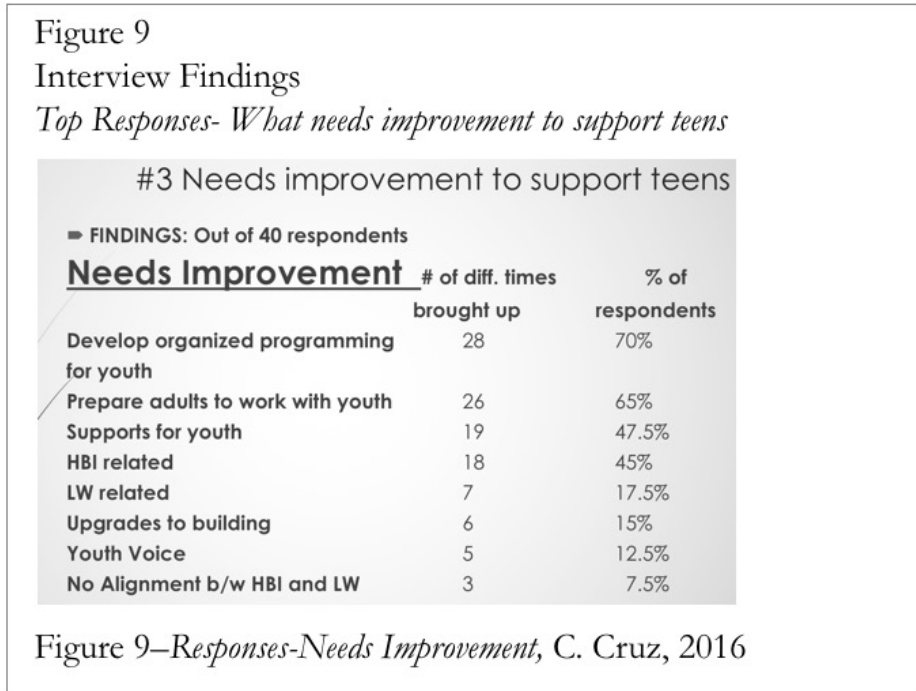


Figure 10: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens
Category: Develop Organized Programming for Youth

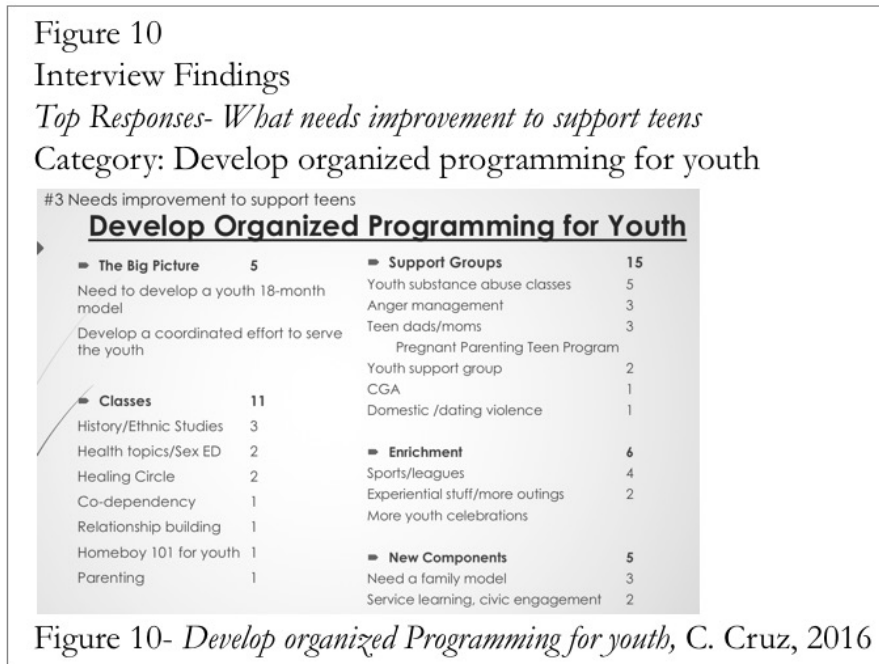


Figure 11: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens
Category: Prepare adults to work with youth

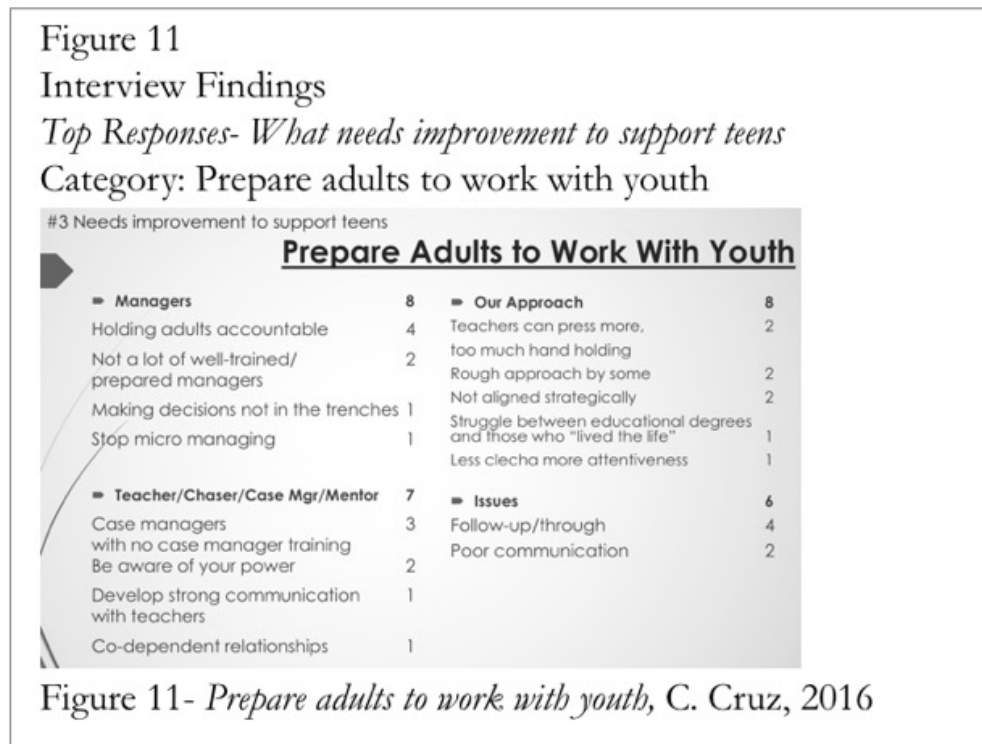


Figure 12: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens
Category: Professional development

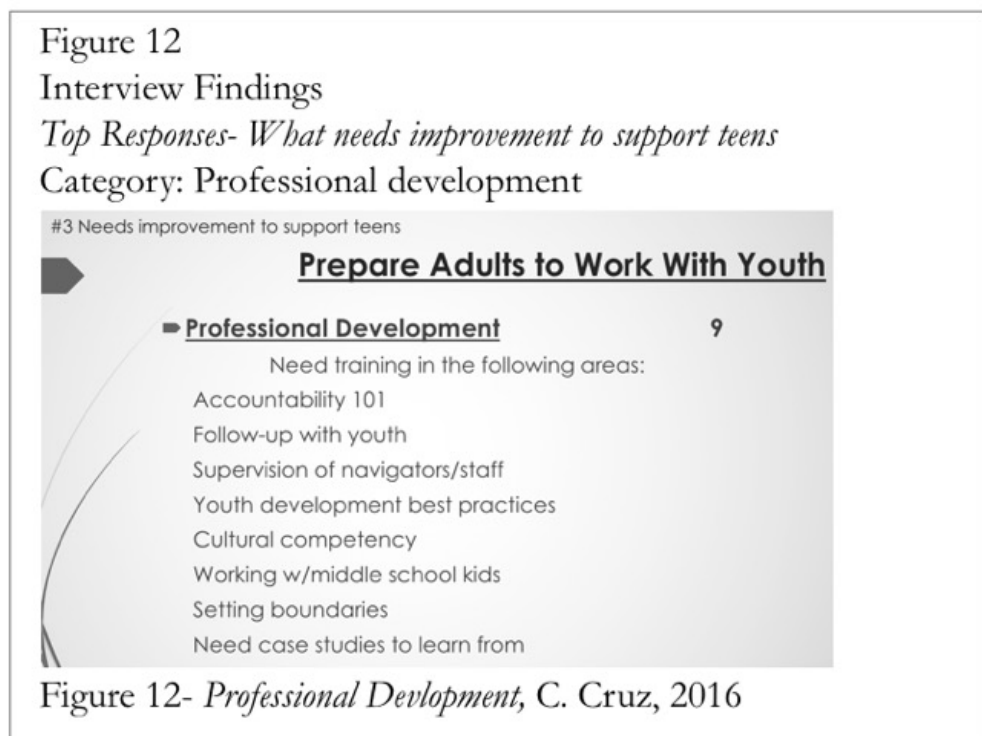


Figure 13: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens
Category: Supports for youth

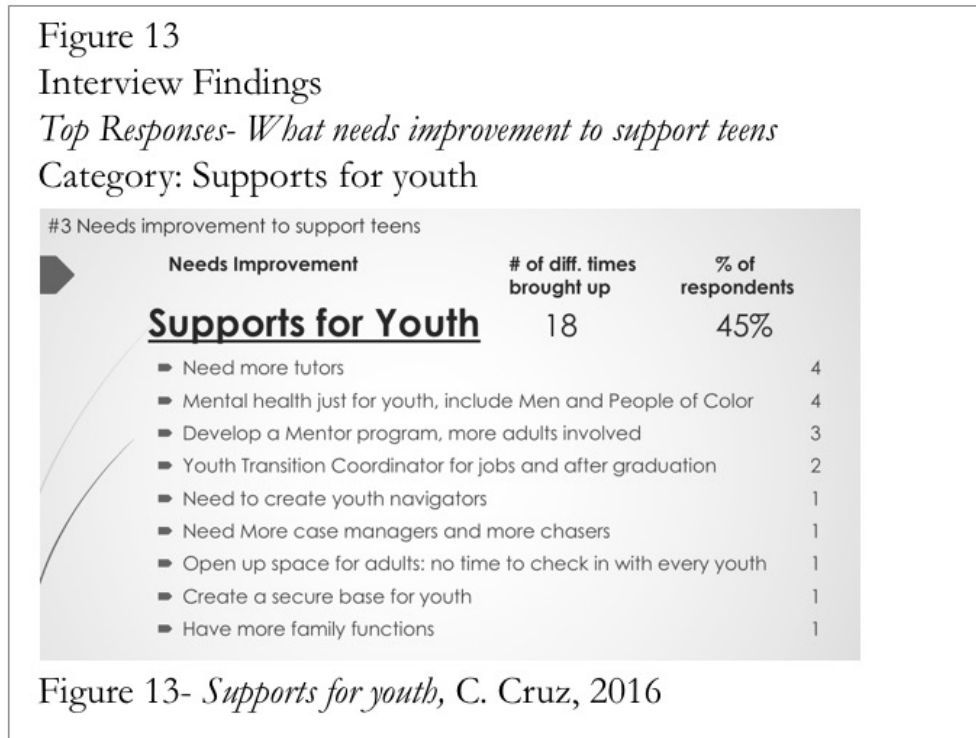


Figure 14: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens
Category: Issues related to Homeboy Industries

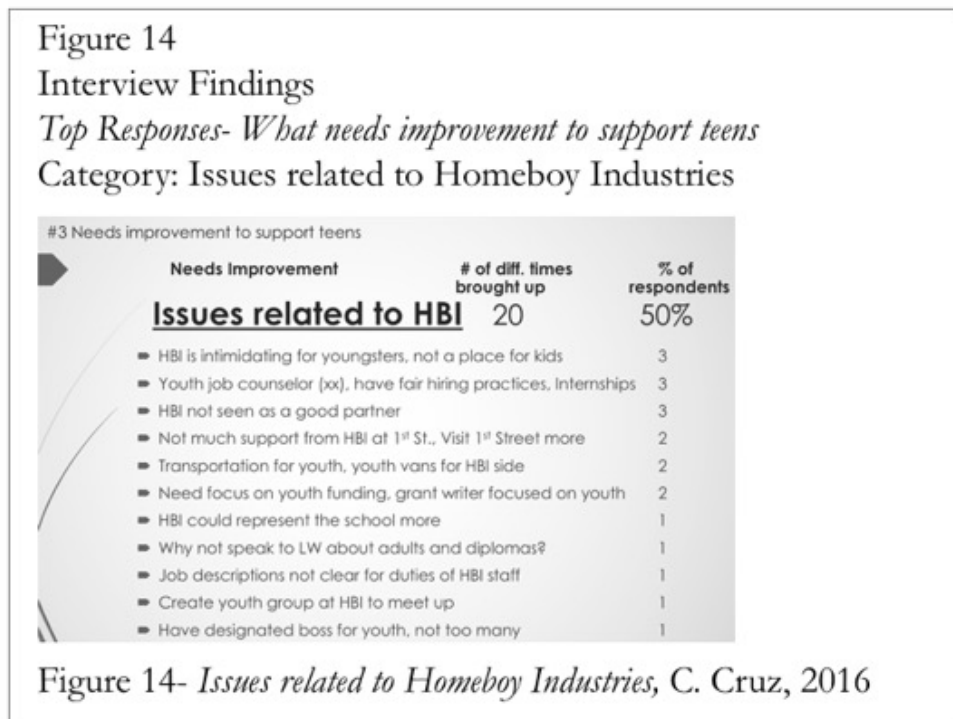


Figure 15: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens
Category: Issues related to Learning Works

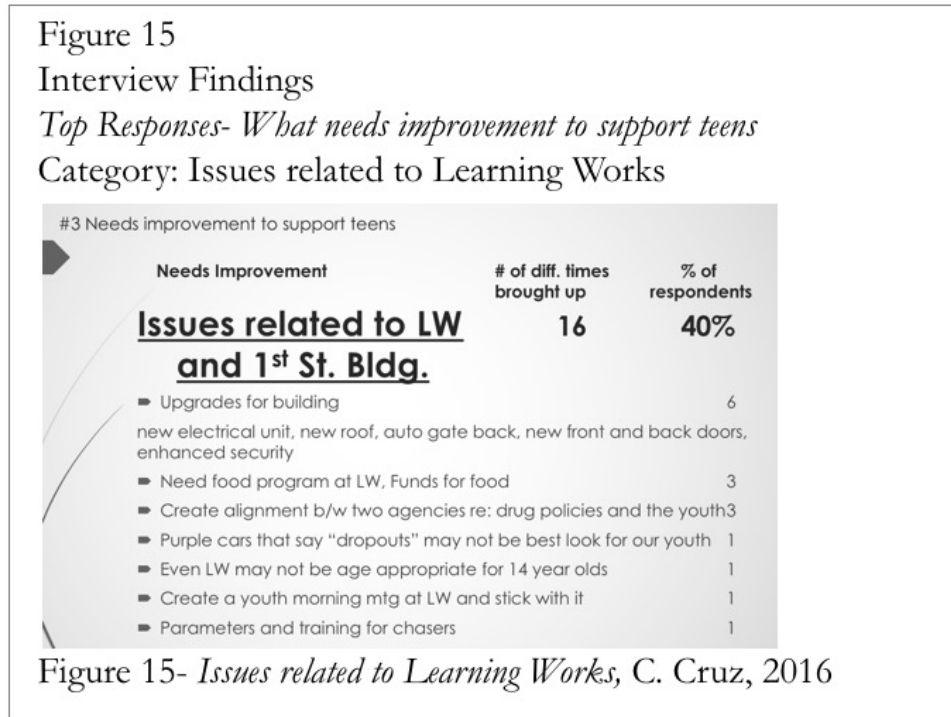


Figure 16: Top Responses- What needs improvement to support teens
Category: Youth voice

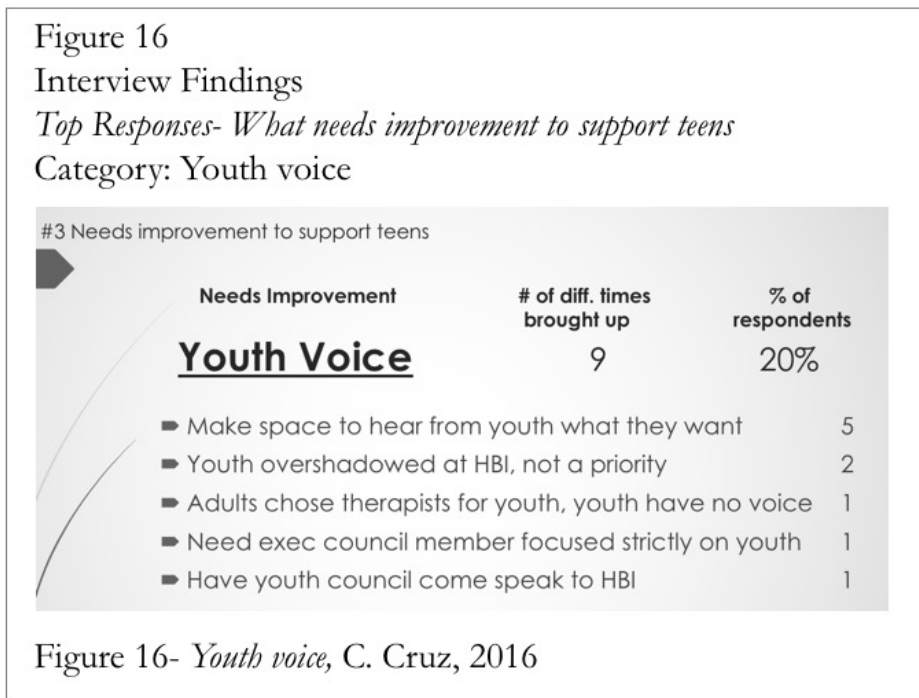


Figure 17: Top Responses- How are youth different from adults?

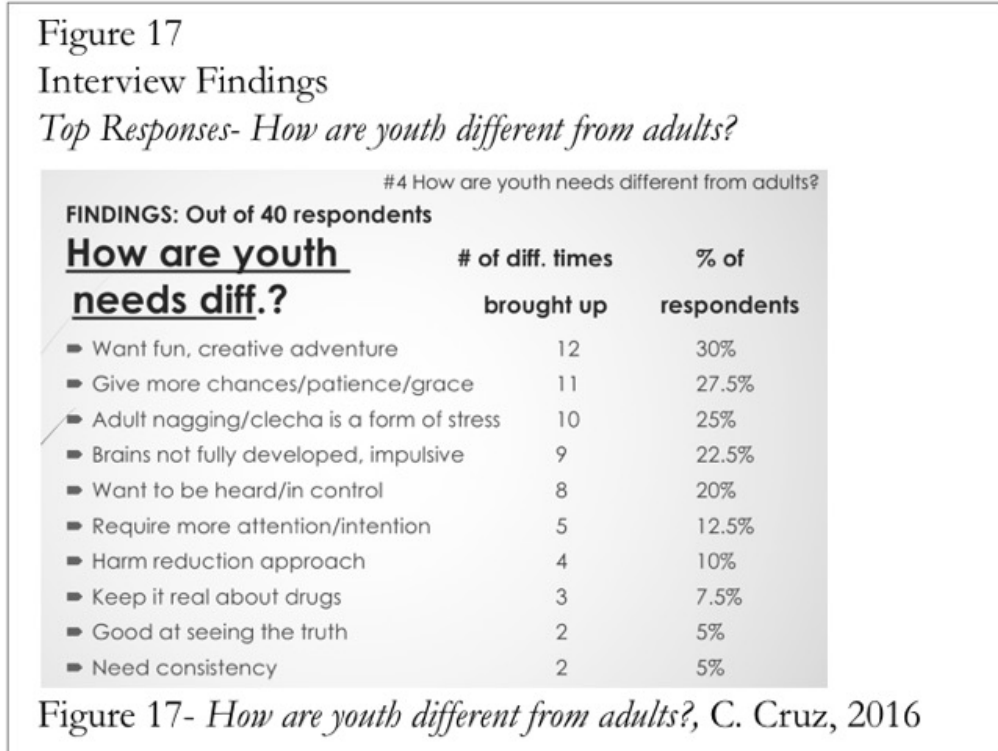


Figure 18: Top Responses- Building on the strengths of HBI to grow the program
Category: Expand the following programs

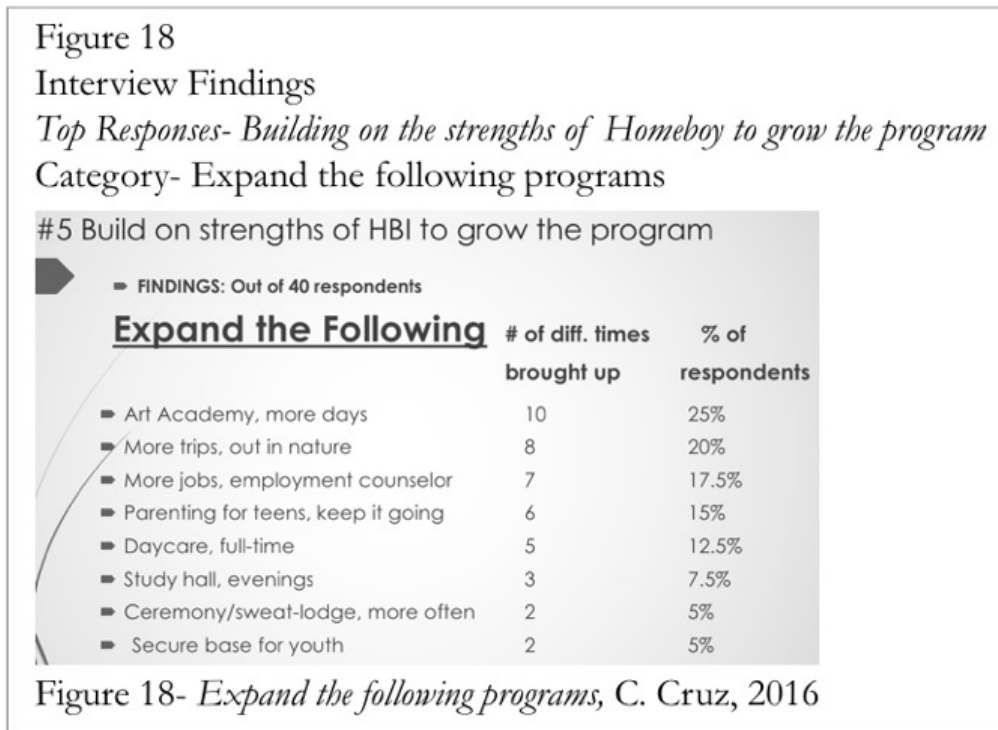


Figure 19: Top Responses- Building on the strengths of HBI to grow the program
Category: Dreaming, short term goals

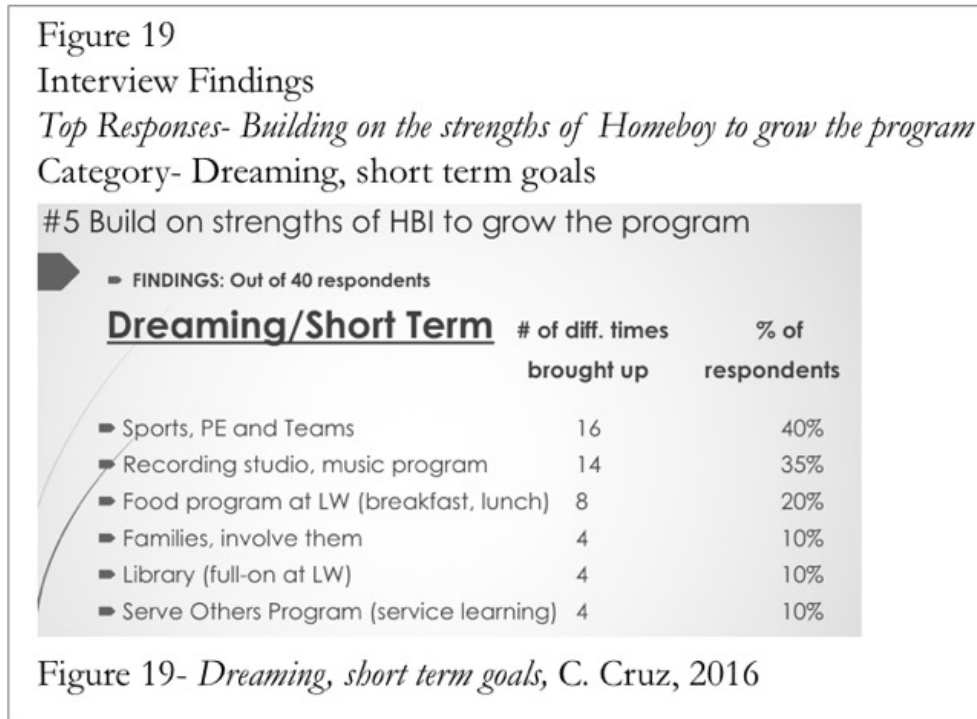


Figure 20: Top Responses- Building on the strengths of HBI to grow the program
Category: Classes/groups

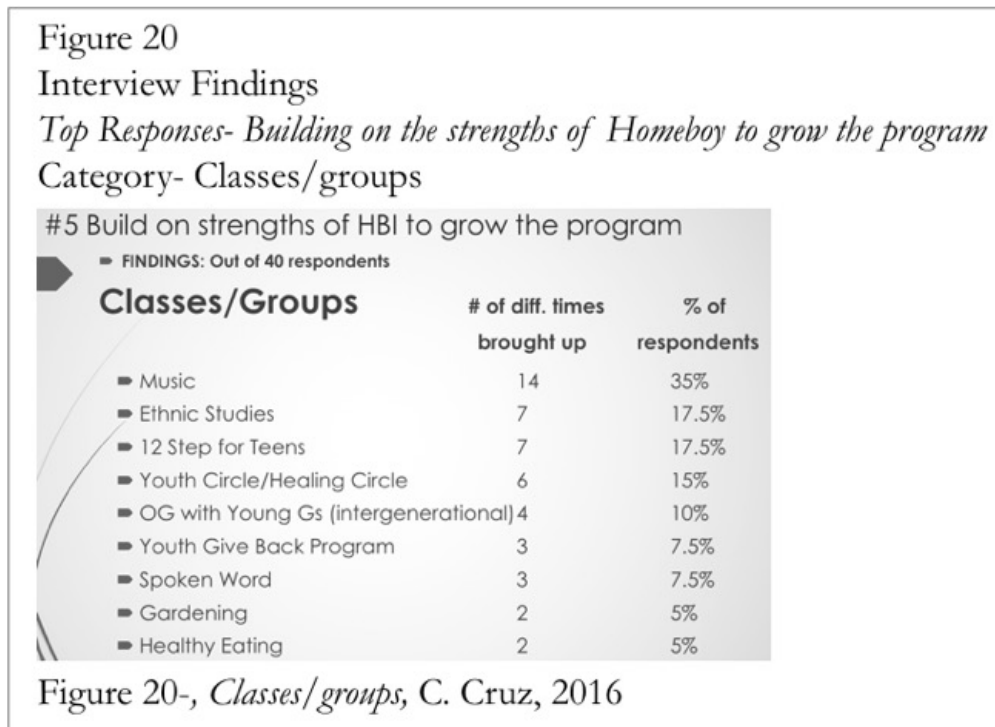


Figure 21: Top Responses- Building on the strengths of HBI to grow the program
Category: Dreaming, long term goals

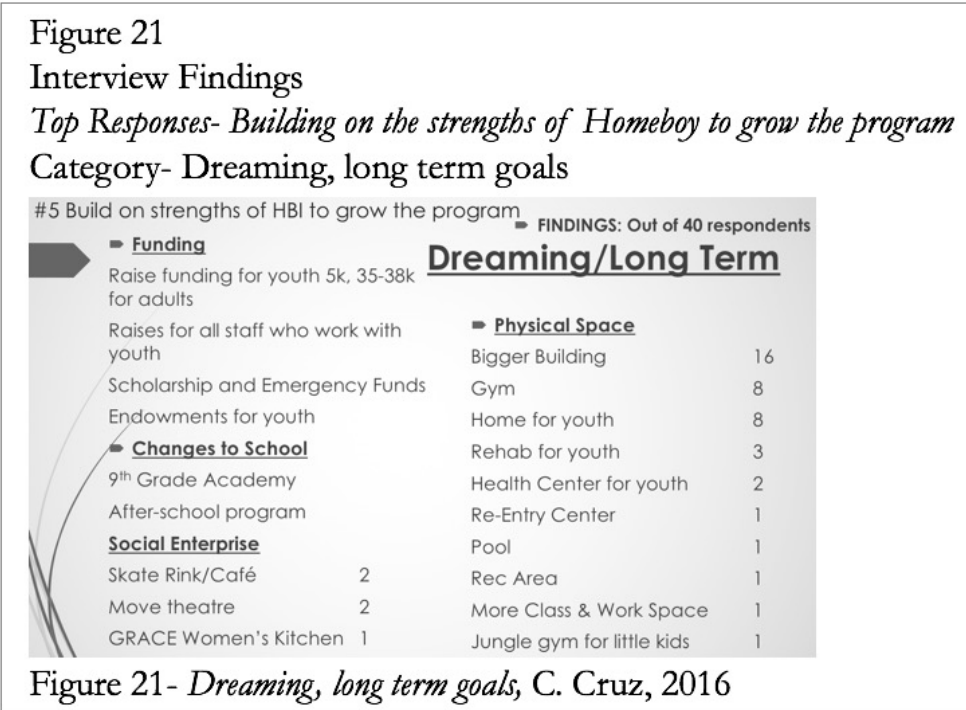


Figure 22: Top Responses- Model youth empowerment program ideas

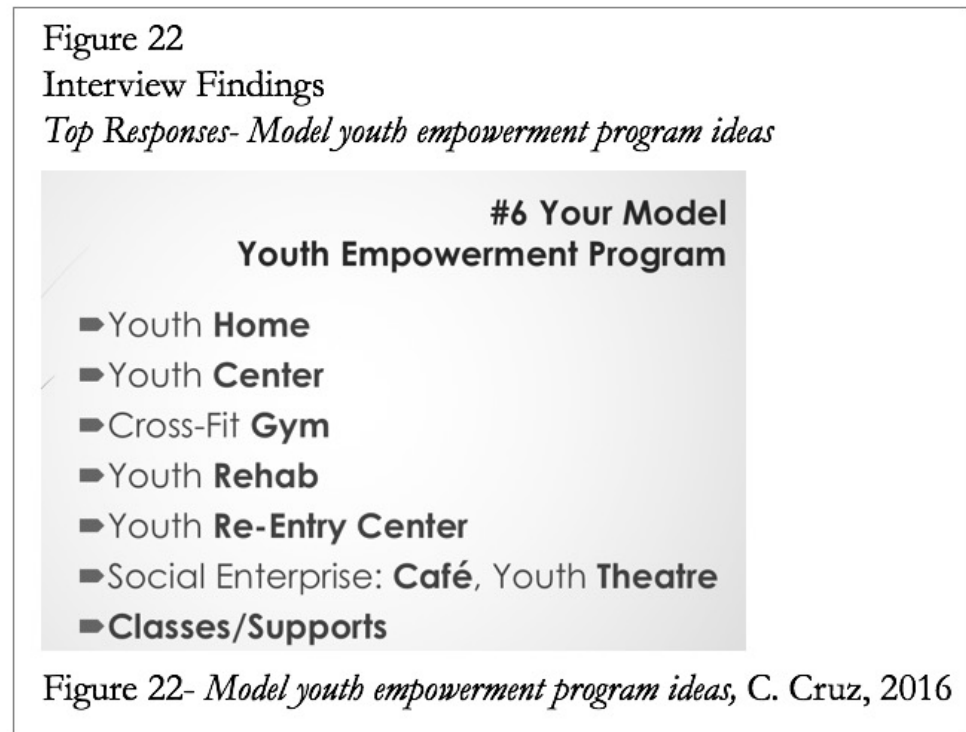


Figure 23: Top Responses- Youth Home idea

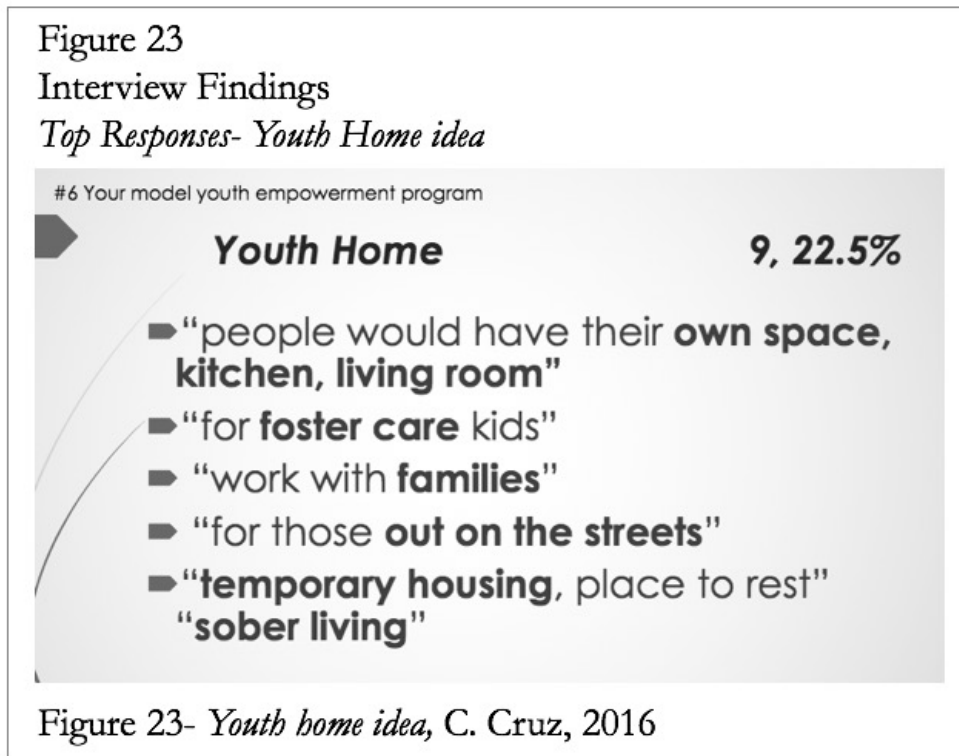


Figure 24: Top Responses- Youth Center idea

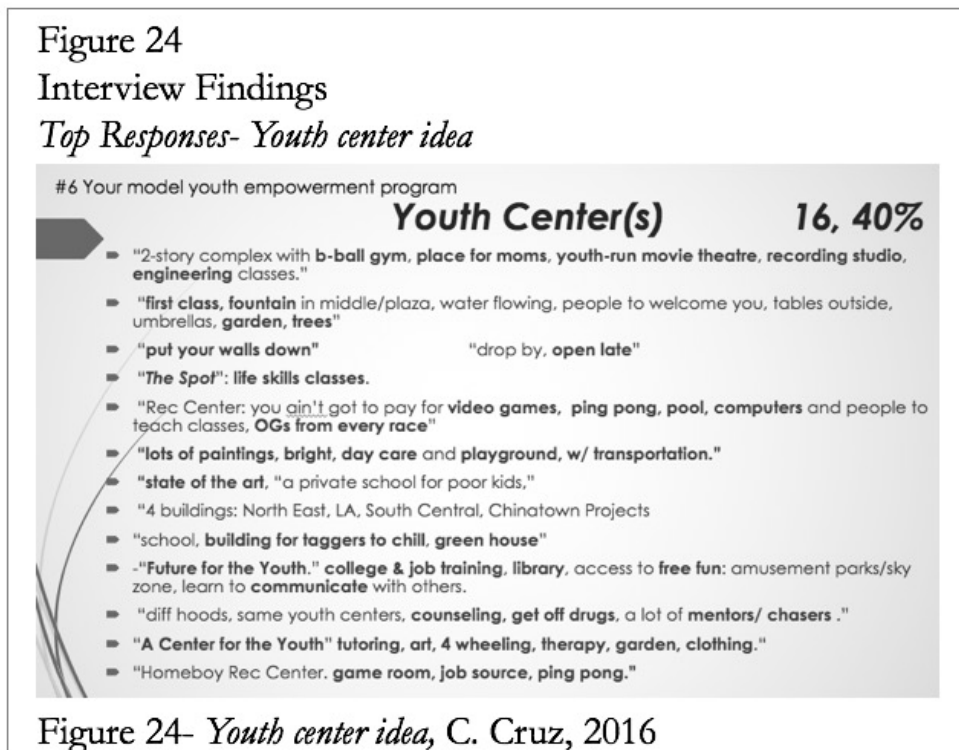


Figure 25: Top Responses- Youth Re-Entry Center

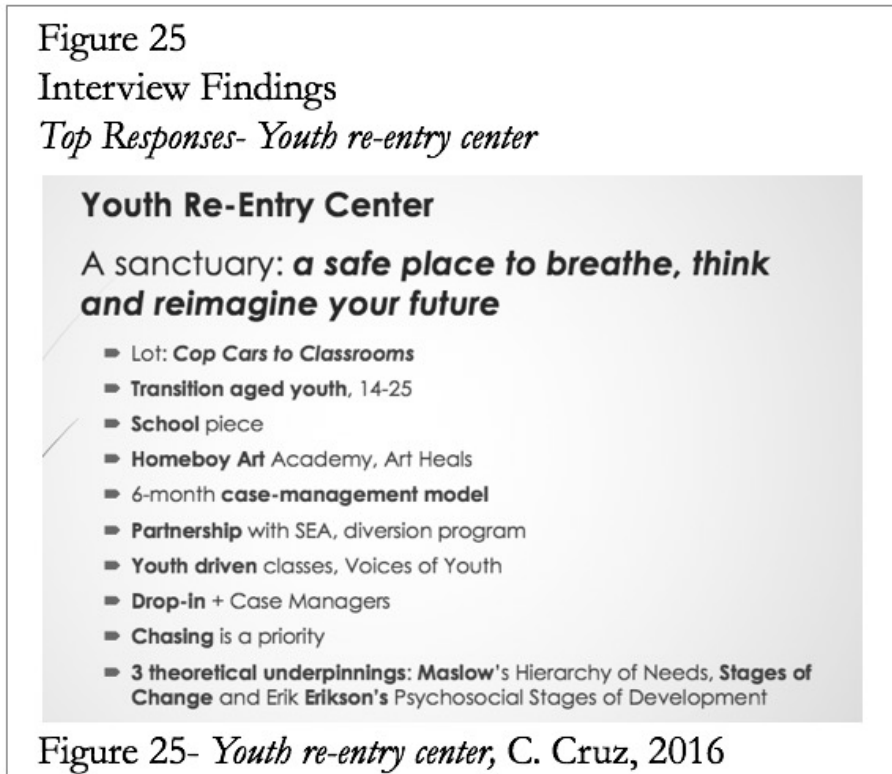


Figure 26: Timeline, Phase 2: Plan of Action

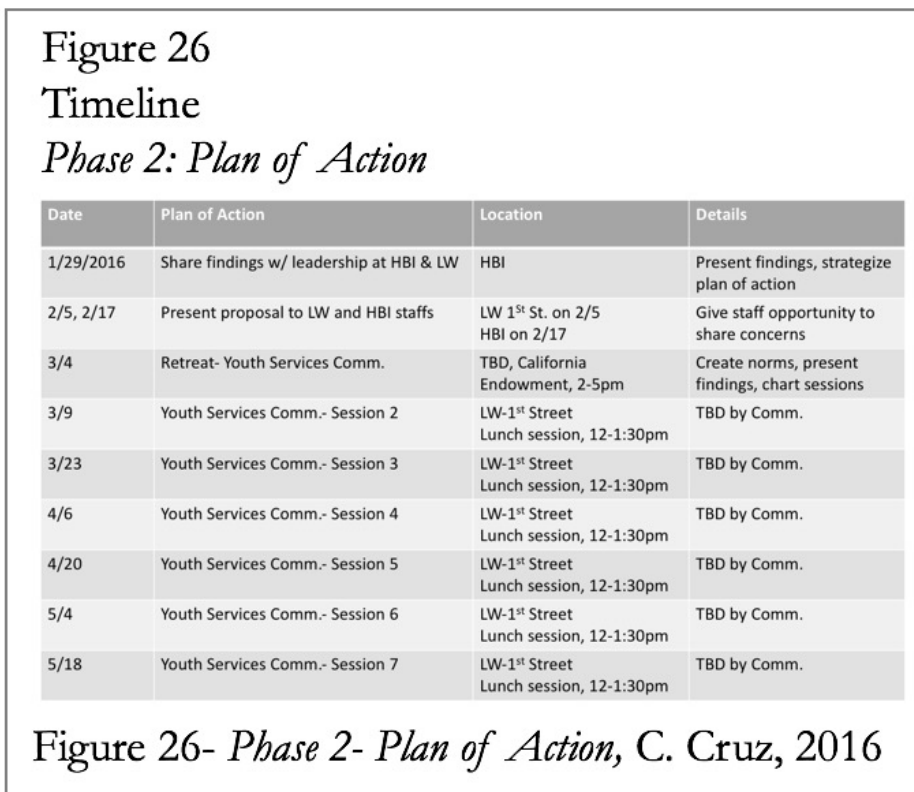


Figure 27: 4I Framework

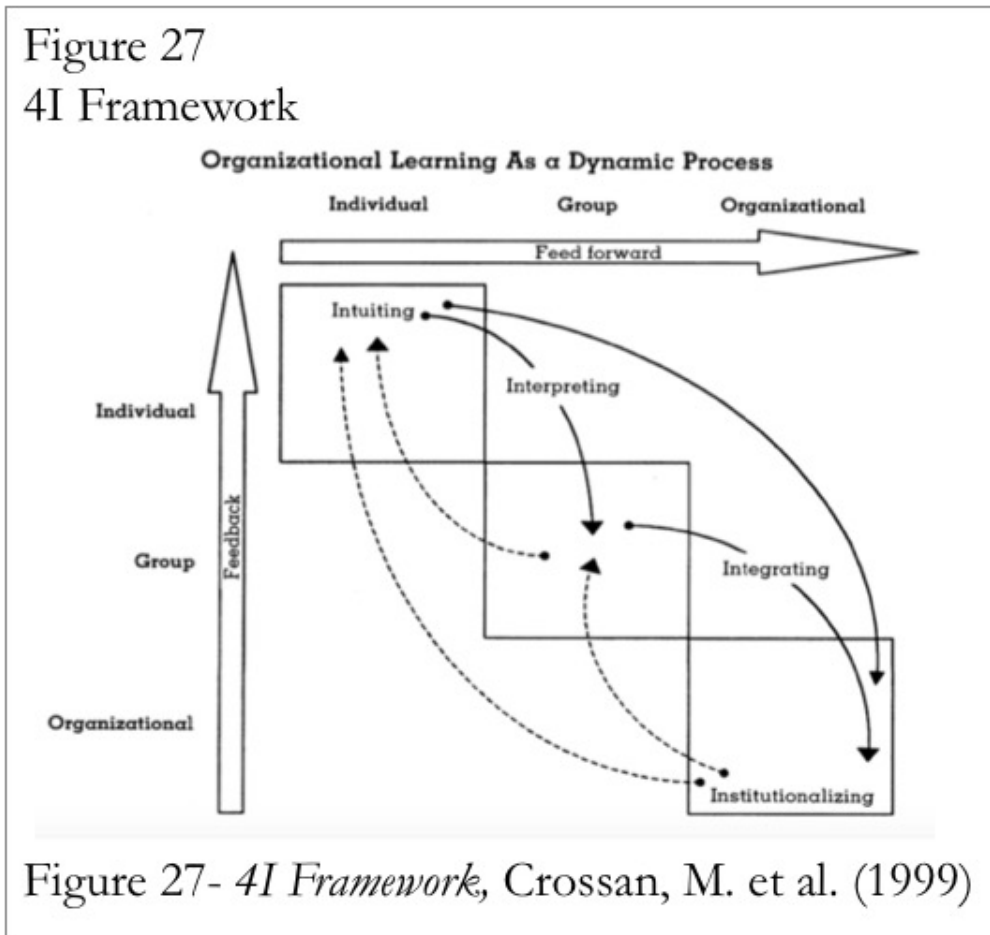


Figure 27- 4I Framework, Crossan, M. et al. (1999)

Figure 28: Assessing the Action Steps 4I Framework

Figure 28
Assessing the Action Steps with 4I Framework

Action Steps, Phase 2	Intuiting: recognition of a pattern or possibility comes from within an individual	Interpreting: explaining, through words/ actions, of an insight/idea to one's self and others.	Integrating: When actions take place in concert with other members of a workgroup	Institutionalizing: the workgroup may establish formal rules and procedures, and routines become embedded
Present findings to leadership of Homeboy and Learning Works	Synthesized findings into a report.	Shared report with Founder of LW, CEO and Director of Re-Entry Services 1/29/2016	Received approval to create youth services group 2/2/2016	
Nominate a Youth Services Committee	Created a proposal (see Appendix G) for a youth services committee 2/1/2016	Explained proposal to Founder LW and Dir. Re-Entry	Met w/ Founder LW and Dir. Re-Entry to get it approved	There will no be an official youth services comm. approved by Founder of LW/ Dir. Re-Entry 2/5/2016
Convince Dir. of Mental Health to allow therapist to participate		Mtg. set for 2/9/16 1:30pm	Dir. approved participation of therapist conditionally upon my speaking with her. 2/9/16	
Convince Dir. of Education to allow educator to participate		Mtg. set for 2/9/16 3pm	Dir. approved participation of educator as long as the meetings are productive. 2/9/16	
Convince Dir. of Case Mgmt. to allow case manager to participate		Mtg. set for 2/10/16 3pm	Dir. approved participation of 1 case mgr. to participate. 2/10/16	
Have forum with LW staff to address concerns		Mtg. set for 2/5/16	Teacher and chaser shared concerns, but decided to join.	
Have forum with HBI staff to address concerns	Send invitations 2/11/16	Mtg. set for 2/17/16 11am	3 of 5 HBI staff were there, in favor, will speak to others 1-on-1.	
Organize retreat with entire youth services comm.		Retreat set for March 4 th , 1-4pm		

Figure 28- Assessing Action Steps, Cruz (2016)

Appendix K: How others see our barrio, how we see our barrio

These two murals were created by youth from the Ramona Gardens neighborhood housing project in East Los Angeles, CA. in the youth development organization Legacy LA.



In the first mural, graffiti, alcoholism, smoking, and hyper policing are prominent.

On the other hand, the second mural shows an empowered child harvesting food, someone



with tattoos making a peace treaty with the police, and kids playing basketball.

In the same housing projects both realities depicted may be true, it just depends what we choose to see. With the second mural, the youth opted for authoring their own story.