8-1-2017

Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation: Real Talk Youth Impact Program

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POLICY ANALYSIS AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

REAL TALK
YOUTH IMPACT PROGRAM

Assessment compiled by UNLV PUA 725 Team:

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The capstone project is managed through the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs. The capstone project takes place over two courses. The project starts with PUA 725: Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation, which runs from March through May and finalizes with PUA 729: MPA Capstone Experience which runs from May through August. The first part of the project allowed students to work with their advisor to choose a non-profit or public organization. During the first part of the project, students were introduced to practical aspects of program evaluation, and the methodologies. Students were given the job to apply what they learned to analyze a program of their choice and conduct a program assessment. The final portion of the project has to be presented to the non-profit organization, whose program was assessed, professors in the Public Policy Program and fellow classmates. The final program assessment has been converted into this written report, which contain an analysis of the data collected, and address questions, and issues that were developed during the first portion of the evaluation. Students in the capstone project have used the tools that they acquired thorough their career in the program to develop a program assessment that will help the non-profit organization assess the effectiveness of their program.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our team would like to offer a special thanks to the Real Talk Youth Impact Program Founder, Sheree Corniel for allowing us to evaluate the program. We would also like to extend our thanks to Real Talk’s volunteers and staff for their willingness to collaborate with us in conducting this program evaluation. We are grateful to have had the privilege to work with a program whose dedication can be seen in the constancy of the data collected over an extended period of time. Working with Sheree Corniel and her staff has been a fantastic opportunity and a learning experience that we will treasure for many years.

Dr. Jaewon Lim has been an integral part of this team. Dr. Lim provided us with valuable first-hand experience in the field and was the anchor that guided us through our efforts in providing a program assessment that can be used by Real Talk Founder, Sheree Corniel. We would like to thank Dr. Lim for mentoring us and for never losing patience with our team.
The purpose of this study was to evaluate Real Talk’s effectiveness on having a positive impact with at-risk youth here in Southern Nevada. Using data collected by Real Talk, the goal was to find new strategies for the program to further expand its outreach based on the impact they have made on the students that have successfully completed the program.

Our study employs a mix approach methodology. Specifically, our data was drawn from: (1) 800 initial program surveys and 800 end program surveys, (2) a master list of 800 youth who had participated in the program, (3) participant observation of 5 “change one” meeting, (4) observation of volunteer meeting, (5) interview of two motivational speakers and Real Talk founder, and (6) benchmark study of similar programs in other states. The evaluation questions developed asked: (1) how effective Real Talk was in delivering its services and (2) if youth who completed the program were being deferred from criminal activity. The goals behind the program evaluation questions were to create a system that would allow us to conduct an internal evaluation of the program so that we could create specific recommendations based on the findings. Once Real Talk has an idea of who the program is really helping and how it is affecting its community, it will be able to develop a formal action plan and use the findings to better the program and be able to gain community support and at some point expand its horizons.

The findings reveal that although community participants make up the largest group, only 48.73% graduated from the program while 51.27% of the participants with current or past criminal record graduated. Recidivism in the state of Nevada is hard to pinpoint due to the juvenile justice system ongoing debates on defending and measuring juvenile recidivism. (Juvenile Justice Data Collection in Nevada, 2014, pg.7). Recidivism in the state of Nevada has yet to be determined, but for the purpose of this report, we will be using the juvenile recidivism
rate of 50% within a three-year window for the state of Nevada as determined by the Research Division, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau (Policy and Program Report, 2016, pg.6). In the year 2016, 71 youth participated in the Real Talk Youth Impact Program and out of those 53 had a record; yet 19 of those participants were arrested after graduating the program within the 12-month target window. The recidivism rate was 26.8% that year which percentage cannot be used to measure it against Nevada due to fact that Nevada measures recidivism at 36 months after the juvenile is discharged. The state of Arizona measures recidivism 12 months after the juvenile is released and their recidivism rate is 30%, which prompt us to conclude that the program is effective in keeping youth out of the criminal justice system.

In conclusion, we have developed short, middle and long-term recommendations. We are confident that Real Talk can benefit from our recommendations. The short term recommendations can be applied immediately, the middle term recommendations can be applied within a couple of months and up to a year depending on program constrains and the long-term recommendations can be applied within a year to a year and a half.

In the short term, we recommend that Real Talk’s founder develops a partnership with UNLV so that future capstone students can evaluate different parts of Real Talk’s program using data that we were not able to analyze due to time constrains. A partnership with UNLV or CSN will also allow the founder to acquire interns so that data can be managed. It is important that Real Talk’s founder continue to contact local non-profit organizations as an avenue to future grants and donations. We also recommend that job descriptions are created so that task are delegated to volunteers; this will help the founder avoid founder’s syndrome and burn out.

In the mid-term, we recommend that the program is revamped. The program should increase their children engagement. One of our observations, which was also address by one of
the motivational speakers, was the lack of children engagement. We have concluded that engaging the children can benefit the program. We recommend that current board members are asked to make a donation to the program as a form of buy in. Additional board memberships should require board donations. We also recommend the modification of the survey so that questions gets to the point of what Real Talk aims to accomplish. Questions should be streamline so that there is a clear understanding of how the program is progressing and issues that need to be addressed.

In the long-term, we recommend that the program develops a mentorship structure for the children. Children that need the extra help can benefit from mentorship. The founder would like to see the program cross the state lines so that children all over the states can benefit from this type of program. Keeping the founders wish in mind, we recommend that the founder start building relationships outside of Nevada. In our benchmark study, we looked at different states that offered similar programs and were able to include a spreadsheet with that information so that the founder can start reaching out to those specific programs. In order for the program to continue growing it should continue to hold monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings to gauge the success of the program. The goal of the founder should be to be able to step away and have the program run itself
Real Talk is a non-profit organization established June 2013 by Sheree Corniel. The program targets Southern Nevada youth currently enrolled in school ages 8-18. The Nevada Juvenile Justice Court, diversion courts, and different communities all over Southern Nevada refer youth to the program. The program goal is to “change one” and create productive citizens. During the three mandatory meetings that youth have to be part of in order to graduate, volunteers made up of former and present federal and state prisons speak with the youth about choices and how bad choices can impact their lives forever. Volunteers share their life experience with youth to give them a personal idea of what could happen if they continue on the path of delinquency.

Real Talk’s mission is to assist the next generation with achieving their hopes and dreams, to build character, and to help them reach their full potential as responsible citizens and future leaders. Real Talk fulfills their mission by encouraging youth to participate in an extra-curricular activity of their choice. Real Talk is committed to paying $160 a month in order for the youth to participate in the extra-curricular activity. Once they have graduated from the program they can still participate in the extra circular activities as long as they and their parents continue to volunteer for the Real Talk program and keep their grades and progress reports in a satisfactory manner. Youth are never expected to pay back but they are expected to volunteer in the program and to have the entity offering the extra-curricular activity fill out a progress report for the youth. Parents are also asked to fill out a progress report. Youth are required to submit all documents along with a thank you note to the Real Talk office. Youth who are not responsible do not receive a payment voucher.
**Real Talk’s Focus**

1. **Prevention:** providing behavior changes in youths; give “at risk” children hope for the future, providing them with outlets and activities so they do not turn to crime.

2. **Rehabilitation:** defeat recidivism and refocus youth that have already entered the juvenile criminal system through team member testimony and the introduction of sports and other extra-curricular activities.

**Real Talk’s Program Structure**

![Real Talk's Program Structure Diagram]
Real Talk Youth Impact Program has been audacious in its goal to eradicate the problem that youth phase when they make wrong decisions and get entrapped into the criminal justice system. Keeping youth out of trouble will improve our community in the long-run which is why Real Talk has made it their mission to own the problem and help improve recidivism. Real Talk needs the support from the community to continue to provide youth with new avenues in which they can fulfill their full potential as responsible citizens.

As a team, we have developed specific goals to help Real Talk achieve their mission. The approach that we have chosen has been one that will not allow us to “miss the forest for the trees.” Meaning that we have chosen to look at the larger picture instead of focusing on small details.

We will analyze Real Talk’s raw data so that the data can delineate how the program affects youth. Ultimately, we want to create a report that can summarize whether or not the organization is effective. Favorable results will allow Real Talk to use the findings as a lever that will allow it to request state findings, state grants and gain donors. Un-favorable results will allow Real Talk to use the report in order to grow. The report overall findings coupled with the variety of observations we make, will allow our team to make appropriate recommendations. Real Talk will be able to use the finding and our recommendations to promote the program. The finding will allow Real Talk’s founder to make improvements and continue to develop the program.
Purpose of Evaluation/Evaluation Study

Through observation during the “change one,” and volunteer meetings including interviews of Real Talk founder, the team was able to determine that the program had three main issues. The first issue being that data in the forms of program initial and end surveys were collected but were not analyzed or recorded into any type of system. The second issue that is predominant in most non-profit organizations is that of being understaffed; the program also suffers from a lack of job description for volunteers needed. The third issue that Real Talk faces is the lack of having a formalized “action plan” that would enable it to have a clear idea of the steps and plans for the future which could increase efficiency and success in the future. A good action plan allows members to have a clear idea of who does what, period of when things need to be completed, and an overview of what funds are available for specific activities (resource allocation).

During the initial observations and after interviewing Real Talk founder, it was determined that the program had three major needs. The first and most important need was to conduct an internal evaluation to determine the program’s effectiveness. The second need was to figure out how to gain community support so that the program could continue to provide its services to youth. The third need would address the creation of a formal action plan based on the findings of the evaluation.

1. How effective are real Talk’s effort in delivering its services?
   a. Assess program impact based on staff and participant feedback.

2. Are youth completing the program being deferred from criminal activity?
   a. Court appointed vs. community referred youth


METHODOLOGY

Quantitative Data Analysis Pre- & Post- Survey Data Analysis

- Surveys- Pre & Post (Internal Data)

Throughout the years, Real Talk has consistently collected a variety of raw data that we used to evaluate how the program delivers on its mission statement and whether or not the program’s mission statement matched the goals discussed in meeting with the founder. The program focuses on prevention and rehabilitation; hoping to achieve prevention through changing youth’s future by providing constructive outlets and activities to keep kids from idle time, which can lead to crime. Additionally, the program rehabilitation strategy is to defeat recidivism by helping youth that have already entered the criminal justice system to focus on their choices; the objective is achieved through team member testimony (former or current paroled offenders).

The raw data provided by the program came in the form of initial and end program surveys. Surveys were handed out to youth and their parents (not recorded in this study) during the first and last meetings to gauge participant opinions on many facets of their experience before, during, and after attending three mandatory meetings. Our team used these surveys for data analysis which is defined as the process of transforming raw data (in this case surveys and spreadsheet tracking) into useable information. Real Talk collected three years of surveys, to track the progress of the program which this team processed using pivots tables and pivot charts in Microsoft Excel and Qualtrics through the UNLV Office of Information Technology.

Our sample data originally consisted of surveys for approximately 872 participants and their parents. We did not analyze the parent surveys and removed them from the pool, as the focus of our evaluation is Real Talk’s participating youth. Further screening was conducted for survey entry by eliminating any participants that did not complete the program (these numbers
will still be statistically tracked and reported on but were not part of the in depth results that this evaluation was designed to answer for the program). A sample size of 275 participants who completed the program from October 2014 to June 2017 was our target sample. Qualitative and quantitative surveys that asked the same questions were present in the collected data, however, only the surveys with quantitative data as the main source of sampling were used for the purposes of this analysis, qualitative from the original surveys were struck out. Since qualitative data isn’t easily captured by statistical means, we addressed qualitative methods by way of interviews with participants and Real Talk Team Members and deliver those results later in the evaluation. Quantitative data was the preferred method of data analysis since it is easier to statistically analyze. A master quantitative initial and end survey were then transcribed into Qualtrics and coded by beginning and ending questions that matched; those surveys were then combined into one complete survey to allow for better quality control of the data and to ensure that study group numbers would anonymously be able to mark surveys individually. Surveys were then matched by study number (assigned to each participant by Real Talk) and entered into Qualtrics manually.

550 separate surveys were combined into 275 surveys and individual questions from the surveys were cross-tabbed, statistically broken out, and compared using Qualtrics. Cross-tabbing shows the relationship between two or more survey questions and provides a side-by-side comparison of how different groups of respondents (participants) felt about the questions asked. Pearson Correlation Values (P-Values) are attached to the cross-tabbing charts to show the statistical significance of the side-by-side comparisons and observations made by our team as we attempt to draw answers to most of our evaluation questions from the data collected. For the purposes of this evaluation P< 0.05 is our statistically significant threshold but will also consider
P<0.2 as fairly significant. Please note that while P values are accepted as statistically significant all factors must be considered in evaluation analysis.

We will note that there were several challenges in our data gathering and analysis that we will share here as they affected our methods in this evaluation. The main challenge we encountered was the fact that data was collected for three years but never analyzed. Also of note, the survey forms changed in structure so some data was difficult to compare to other data or incomparable to the excel data. Additionally, while there have been a lot of participants in the program that provided data yet the data is not considered complete by this evaluation team if the participants didn’t complete the program, our sample size of completed surveys represents approximately 30% of Real Talk Participants.

**Court Data on Recidivism (External Data from Real Talk)**

Real Talk created and currently maintains a master list that accounts for youth who participated in the program. The list that we were given accounted for youth enrolled from the year the program was initiated in 2013 to early May 2017 (a total of 872 youth). It must be noted that in order to maintain confidentiality the list that we were handed did not include youth’s name but distinguished youth from one another based on a study number, which corresponded to the youth’s survey number. We modified the master list to represent the 275 youth who completed the program from the beginning to the end. We parsed the raw data collected from surveys and the excel master by graduate year, type of program enrollment, current criminal background, and re-entry (or recidivism) back into the juvenile penal system after the program. During the data analysis phase, we observed that we were working with four types of clients; juveniles refer by the court, their Probation Officer, juveniles referred by the community who show a clean record, refers juvenile and juvenile’s referred by their community who had a past
criminal record. Logically juveniles who were referred to the program by the juvenile justice court and those being supervised by a probation officer would have a criminal record. One variable that has to be considered is that participants with a criminal background may have gone to prison upon entering the program as a result of their criminal activity.

Using Qualtrics we retrieved in conjunction with the excel data we collected we estimated the recidivism rate for the Real Talk Youth impact program. Additionally, we also used pie chart analysis through pivot charting in excel. Pie charting gives a circular statistical representation of a given area divided into sections represented numerically in reference to the size of the “slice” of the circle that data represents. The pie chart focuses on court appointed versus community youth that have entered and graduated the program from our sample group as well as the recidivism rates. The pie chart will allow us to address our main evaluation questions regarding the effectiveness of the program. Real Talk recidivism rate results were compared with Nevada State’s juvenile recidivism rate. We also compared recidivism rate in Oregon, Idaho, California, Utah and Arizona to Real Talk and Nevada.

**Qualitative Analysis**

Concerning our qualitative analysis, we used different approaches that allowed us to capture a strong consensus of the impact Real Talk Youth Impact program had on its participants. We were also able to capture information regarding how its staff members were contributing to the program’s mission. Our three approaches consisted of covert observations, phone interviews with two guess speaker, and volunteer surveys.
Covert Observation

The team was able to complete covert observation by attending several of the “change one” meetings. The meetings take place on the first Tuesday of the month, these meetings are the staple of the Real Talk Program and are ongoing. During the “change one” meetings, several of the volunteers who are present or former state/federal offenders give their personal account on how their bad choices have affected their lives. Parents also receive guidance and counseling during the “Change One” meetings; a separate group of volunteers present to the parents who are separated from their child and taken to a different meeting room. A quick recess is offered to the children once the volunteer speakers address the participants. Parents reunite with their children after the recess to listen to the motivational speaker as well as the presentation offered by Sheree Corniel. The motivational speaker who is usually someone well known in the community that presents their success stories to the children. Stories usually cover subjects such as beating adversity through persistence and hard work. Graduates are honored at the end of the program. During our time at those events, each team member wrote their observations regarding the presentation given to the parents and children.

Real Talk’s Founder, Sheree Corniel granted us the opportunity be present in their privately held volunteer meetings. The meetings are held quarterly and are headed by Sheree. During the meetings, Sheree addresses concerns, problems, future goals, and current events as well as preparation for upcoming meetings and events. While at those meetings, we were able to meet a variety of Real Talk’s volunteers, which gave us the idea of using another interview-based approach to collect more data on how the Staff contributes to Real Talk’s impact.
Interviews with Various Stakeholders

During one of the “change one” meetings that our team attended we were surprised and delighted to be present as the Wynn Resorts Chief Financial Officer, Matt Maddox awarded Real Talk a substantial amount of money to help the program continue sponsoring youth’s extracurricular activities. Mr. Maddox attended the “change one” meeting and was the motivational speaker who spoke after some of the volunteers gave their speech regarding how their poor life choices had affected them. Being present to view such an event helped us determine that it would be a great idea to interview the motivational speakers so that we could understand why the speakers would go to such lengths and volunteer their time and make donations. After contacting several of Real Talk’s speakers, we were able to conduct phone interviews with two of the Real Talk’s motivational speakers.

Volunteer Surveys

To get a sense of how Real Talk’s staff feels about the program, we designed an 11-question survey tool that was distributed via e-mail to a list of the volunteer staff members we met during the monthly speaker meetings we attended. The survey contained a few demographic background questions as well as a set of questions that asked the volunteers about their feelings towards the program’s impact and improvement.

Participant Midpoint Surveys

Based upon our preliminary observations on Real Talk’s pre- and post- participant surveys, we designed a pilot participant midpoint survey to capture the impact and change in attitude for the students who were coming back for the second meeting. The midpoint survey
consisted of 9 questions that were designed to ask the students a similar set of questions that were captured during the pre- and post- surveys so that way there was a consistent progression on how the participants’ attitudes changed at each of the three months. Although the data was not quantifiable from a statistical standpoint, we decided to simply draw a set of observations of the general responses we were able to receive as well as some background demographics on the students returning for a second time.
**Data Analysis**

Our team was able to piece together a list of findings based on data analysis, observations and interviews, and benchmark studies. The collection and data input of surveys, attending “change one” meetings, interviews with Real Talk founder, parents, participants, Real Talk team members, and community sponsors were detrimental to our analysis of the program. The following portion of our evaluation will list and highlight some of those findings.

Real Talk places a lot of stock in the survey program that gathers the pulse of the participants in the program. Some of the main goals are the prevention of youth entering into the criminal system and the elimination of recidivism of youth in the program that have already been in the Clark County Criminal System.

Below we list some charts and statistical data and provide a breakdown of what each section of data reveal (Figure 1).
Through discussions and interviews with the program founder one of the goals long-term goals of the Real Talk program is to have a greater graduation impact on participants that have not been through the Clark County Criminal system in some shape or form. While individually community participants make up the largest group of graduates from the program (48.73%); collectively participants that have been in the system at some point in their lives before the program are graduating at a slightly higher rate (51.27%). This finding is in contrast to the program founders desired audience target group as a whole but hits the target considerably when broken down by referral type versus community participants.

Figure 2 shows program effectiveness by gender spanning from the first meeting (pre-survey) to the last meeting (post-survey). This crosstab statistic shows the overall impact of program effectiveness from the participant’s perspective. While males outnumbered female
participants by almost 2-to-1 female participants had a stronger positive outlook on the programs perceived (pre-survey) and actual (post-survey) effectiveness. Figure 2 statistical data also shows that there was a larger increase in positive outcomes of the program’s effectiveness for males (9.55%) and no change for females. However, there was a 7.97% increase in the negative outcome effectiveness for female participants and a 1.28% increase for males. Figure 3 shows program effectiveness by AGE spanning from the first to the last “Change One” meeting. This
crosstab examines whether the program was perceived as effective for the participants broken out by age bracket. This is essentially the same data examined in Figure 2 but broken out by age as opposed to gender. This data shows that the program had the least amount of positive effectiveness for participant’s ages 8-12 years of age and had the most positive effectiveness for participants 13-15 (12.79%) years of age. The number of positive responses actually decreased in
this bracket from 90.16% to 77.05% (-13.11%). Furthermore, the negative effectiveness ratings increased for every age bracket except 16-18 years of age.

Figure 4 shows program effectiveness by ethnicity. This crosstab highlights perceived program effectiveness by ethnicity. The Real Talk Youth Impact Program serves the inner city youth and looks to defeat recidivism it doesn’t not place a premium of target on ethnic groups it aims to reach. Statistically speaking, the crosstab chart shows that participants that classified themselves as Other, White, or Native Americans had the biggest positive effectiveness boost from the program (25.12%, 16.13%, and 100% respectively) the Native American sample size is small and not large enough to be statistically significant. Conversely, Blacks and Hispanics experienced negative effectiveness increases of 3.99% and 5.51% respectively while Asians experienced no shift in effectiveness rating.
Figure 5 shows cross-tabbing of participants that have been arrested for a crime and the impact of the Real Talk Team members versus the participants that have not been arrested for a crime and the impact of the Real Talk Team members. Participants that have been arrested for a crime before taking part in the “Change One” meetings showed a greater positive effectiveness level (12.72%) than participants that had not been arrested for a crime before taking part in the “Change One” meetings (1.92%). This cross-tab required a deeper look at the numbers as we wanted to know where the shift in “undecided” for participants that answered “yes” to this question (previous arrest) from the beginning of the program versus the end of the program. The excel master list tallied 126 of 275 participants in the program had been arrested for a crime before starting the program. Out of those 126 participants 3 “disagreed” and 96 “agreed” that they believed they could learn something from Real Talk Team Members; yet 26 were “undecided”. At the end of the program the same question was asked and the breakdown is as follows: 7 participants “disagreed” while 111 participants “agreed that they learned something from the Real Talk Team Members, only 6 participants remained “undecided”. Of those 26 participants that were originally “undecided” 21 (80.7%) participants switched to “agree”, 2 (7.6%) participants switched to “disagree”, 2 (7.6%) participants remained “undecided” and 1 (3.8%) participant failed to answer the question. Below is the breakout of this survey result statistically by Gender, Ethnicity, and Age (Figures 5a, 5b, and 5c respectively):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>UNDECIDED</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4.02%</td>
<td>2.87%</td>
<td>5.17%</td>
<td>44.25%</td>
<td>43.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5.62%</td>
<td>2.25%</td>
<td>1.12%</td>
<td>42.70%</td>
<td>48.31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>119</td>
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</table>

Figure 5a (Real Talk Team Member effectiveness by GENDER)

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<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>UNDECIDED</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>HISPANIC</td>
<td>5.33%</td>
<td>5.33%</td>
<td>9.33%</td>
<td>49.33%</td>
<td>30.67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>45.16%</td>
<td>48.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BLACK</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1.59%</td>
<td>2.36%</td>
<td>39.68%</td>
<td>51.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ASIAN</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>NATIVE AMERICAN</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>3.45%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>51.72%</td>
<td>44.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5b (Real Talk Team Member effectiveness by ETHNICITY)

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<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
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<th>UNDECIDED</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8 - 12 YRS</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.33%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>53.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13 - 15 YRS</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>2.42%</td>
<td>46.77%</td>
<td>44.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16 - 18 YRS</td>
<td>2.38%</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
<td>5.95%</td>
<td>47.62%</td>
<td>40.48%</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>121</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5c (Real Talk Team Member effectiveness by AGE)
Figure 6

Figure 6 gives a profound look at the same cross-tab statistical data but for participants that were arrested AFTER or during the Real Talk Program in relation to learning lessons from the Real Talk Team members before and after the program completion (Change One meetings). The results of this data favor the participants that have not been arrested for committing a crime since starting the program. Participants that answered YES to this question showed no growth statistically from interaction with the Real Talk Team members; there was actually a 75% shift from the “undecided” column to the “disagree column from the pre-survey to post-survey from these participants. Participants that answered NO showed positive effectiveness from the team members with a 7.73% increase in the positive impact that the team members had on those participants.

The next portion of our statistical data comes from the excel tracking document that was supplied to us by the Real Talk Youth Impact Program Founder. This document listed every participant that’s entered the program and whether or not they completed the program. It is
broken out by Age, Gender, and Ethnicity and highlights data such as “Date Entered Program”, “Graduation Date”, and “Last Arrest Date”. Below is the statistical data from that document broken out between community participants and court appointed participants by year cumulative and also by 12 month spread (basing numbers off of what transpired with a graduating participant within that year time span, not recidivating within that time span is a positive result of the program).

**Court Data on Recidivism**

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS**: These charts will show community participants who have graduated from the program and been arrested since the program. Individuals that were arrested before the program are tallied in this data as the criteria for success of the program is the curtailing of recidivism. It is important to note that a participant that came from the community may have had a criminal past and then joined the program of their own volition. Figure 7 shows 0% recidivism of the participants that graduated from the program in 2014. In 2015 more participants entered the program as it gained notoriety in the community and out of 61 participants in that span 13 were
arrested or entered juvenile care after they graduated the program (21.3% arrest rate).

Out of the 61 participants that completed the program in 2015 13 had an arrest; of those 13 that were arrested 6 were arrested after graduating the program. So actual number of arrests after the Real Talk program was 6 out 61 (9.8% recidivism rate).

The same data was then analyzed using the 12-month recidivism target (6.6% recidivism rate). The low recidivism rate put the overall program effectiveness rate for one of its major mission goals at a 93.4% success rate.

2016 saw a steady number of participants comparable to 2015 (55 community participants in this category versus 61 in 2015) yet the overall arrest rate for the community participants dropped 64.1% over the span of that
same year (Figure 9).

Out of the 55 participants that completed the program in 2016 4 had an arrest; of those 4 that were arrested 2 were arrested after graduating the program. So actual number of arrests after the Real Talk program was 2 out 55 (3.6% recidivism rate).

The same data was then analyzed using the 12-month recidivism target (3.6% recidivism rate). This put the overall program effectiveness rate going as the NPO completed its second full year of its main mission goals at a 96.4% success rate; this was a significant boost from the 2015 program rate (-3.1%).

At the rate of current data that this team was able to analyze the community participant average for effectiveness will likely stay in the 95% mission effectiveness range for keeping the program participants out of the system. Recidivism rates will likely stay in the 6.74% range with a lower rate of 5% for the 12-month span of recidivism effectiveness.
**COURT APPOINTED/PAROLE OFFICER PARTICIPANTS**: These charts will show court appointed participants who have graduated from the program and been arrested since the program. Individuals that were arrested before the program are tallied in this data as the criteria for success of the program is the curtailing of recidivism. It is important to note that a participant that came from the community may have had a criminal past and then joined the program of their own volition.

Figure 11 shows 100% arrest rates of the Court Appointed/PO participants that graduated from the program.

However, out of the 7 participants that completed the program in 2014 3 had an arrest after the program cumulatively; of those 3 that were arrested cumulatively 2 were arrested after graduating the program. So actual number of arrests after the Real Talk program for 2014 was 3 out 7 (42.9% recidivism rate) and 2 out of 7 in the 12-month recidivism target rate (28.6%). What’s important to note here is that the 2104 participants ALL had a criminal record at some point during the program, yet on 28.6% experienced recidivism in the 12-month span (Figure 11b).
In Figure 12 we, again, see the large jump in participation as the program enjoys its first full year in action since its inception in late 2014. Out of 43 court appointed participants 22 have a criminal record (51.2%).

Figure 12a shows a drop of 7 participants that was arrested since the program which means that out of the 22 arrested during the year 2015 only 13 had his/her arrest after graduating the program; this contributed to a recidivism rate of (30.2%) in 2015 which is a 29.4% improvement over the recidivism numbers in 2014.

Figure 12b highlights the total number of participants from the courts or PO in relation to arrests after completing the Real Talk Program within a twelve-month period. Out of the 13 that were arrested after the program, only 6 participants were arrested within 12 months of completing the program. This brought the 12-month recidivism rate to 13.9%. In comparison to the numbers from 2014 in 12-month recidivism, there was a 51.1% improvement in recidivism rate from 2014 to 2015.

The year 2016, (Figure 13) saw an increase in courthouse and PO appointed participants (71)
and also saw an increase in participants joining the program with arrests on record (53), which is a 58.4% increase from 2015 to 2016. The number of participants with an arrest record versus those that entered the program from Court Appointment or PO was significantly higher (74.65% arrest rate).

Figure 13a shows a drop of 33 participants that were arrested since the program, which means that out of the 53 with an arrest record during the year 2016 only 20 had his/her arrest after graduating the program; this contributed to a recidivism rate of (28.2%) in 2016, which is a 6.8% improvement over the recidivism numbers in 2015.

There was nominal difference in the cumulative numbers chart versus the twelve-month chart (Figure 13b) which is a shift in trend from all the other data we have analyzed form this group of participants. However, 71 participants from courthouse and PO were tallied in 2016 and out of those 53 had a record; yet 19 of those participants were arrested after graduating the program within the 12-month target window (26.8% recidivism rate).
The recidivism rates for court appointed and PO participants has increased and decreased over the last three years. Currently 2017 has no recidivism on record in the excel document that this team received (current up until June 2017). So far, the recidivism rate for court appointed participants averages out to 33.8% over 3 years and 25.3% weighted out over 3.5 years to date.
During our research phase on recidivism we were able to determine that the United States of America does not require or mandate that states measure juvenile recidivism or conduct research on juvenile recidivism rates. Each state defines recidivism different and have a different age limitation to define the minimum and maximum age that a child can be define as a juvenile offender. Figure 15 represents a map with five states that surround Nevada. We can see that Nevada recidivism rate is lower than that of California; however, population in California doubles that of Nevada. California population in the year 2016 was 39,250,017 compare to Nevada population of 2,940,058 (United States Census, 2016). The Research Division, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau’s Policy and Program Report conclude that recidivism in Nevada was measured 36 months after the juvenile was released. Based on the information obtained we can conclude that recidivism in Nevada is not encouraging. Most states measured recidivism at different time period, which makes it impossible for us to compare Nevada recidivism rate with those states. We were not able to compare Real Talk’s recidivism rate with Nevada’s recidivism rate because we do not have three years’ worth of data from Real Talk in order to compare it with Nevada’s three-year recidivism rate.

Since its inception in 2014 the Real Talk Youth Impact Program has maintained an overall recidivism rate of 17.53%. This recidivism rate is lower than the state of Arizona and Idaho. Recidivism rates in community participants is 79.3% lower than court appointed/PO participants in the program, this trend follows the same trend as the surveys when asked about the effectiveness of the program between participants that recidivate versus those that do not. The core of our statistical findings show that the Real Talk Youth Impact program is having a greater positive impact on participating youth than youth who do not participate in the program.
Notes: Defining age of delinquency

**Arizona & Nevada**, age of delinquency is considering from 8-17 (older than 17 but younger than 18).

**California, Idaho & Utah**, minimum age of delinquency has not been defined. Maximum age is 17 (older than 17 but younger than 18).

**Oregon**, age of delinquency 12-17 (older than 17 but younger than 18).

*The six states mentioned above allow children can be petitioned to be tried as adults based on the crime.
*Each state defines recidivism differently.
Observations/Interviews

Covert Observations on Real Talk’s Monthly Events:

Presentation for the kids

Upon attending Real Talk’s “change one” meetings, we made observations on the process of how the presentations are run and the layout of how the kids are arranged in the venue as they sit and listen to each speaker go up and give their presentation. The following are some of the key observations we have drawn:

• The meeting was primarily driven by the speaker and their personal life story;
• The speakers typically go up one by one to speak in front of the students;
• The students were seated in randomized sections as they watched the presentations;
• The speakers occasionally engaged the students as they made a point throughout their presentation;
• As the meeting progressed, some of the students became disengaged and were eventually removed from the venue by the Real Talk staff;
• Some of the speakers engaged the students by having them stand up and follow-up with a particular point that was made by the speaker;
• The speakers used their negative circumstances as a means of showing how one wrong decision can ultimately lead someone on a path that will negatively affect them for the rest of their lives;
• The overall message in these presentations is to raise awareness for the kids on what could happen if they continue on a negative path as well as giving them life lessons on how they can achieve anything they set their minds to as long as they preserve and have a positive outlook on life.
Presentation for the Parents

Since the parents play a crucial role in the lives of the children involved with Real Talk, we also attended the speaker presentation that the organization provides for the parents during their monthly gatherings. As the parent presentation unfolded, these some of the major observations we have drawn while watching the presentation unfold:

• The speakers served as the spark for opening a discussion on how to provide an insight for parents to better manage their at-risk youth;
• The style used in these meetings was parent-oriented since parents got a chance to speak up about their personal issues with their children;
• The discussions were more engaged since the speaker has a more supportive role and the primary concerns were brought up by the parents via questions on how to approach certain types of situations they were facing with their children’s behavior;
• If parents wanted to remain confidential, cards were handed over to them to write down a question or concern they wanted to raise and talk about in a more private manner with one of the speakers;
• As the flow of the meeting set its course, the parents provided feedback for the other parents who may be facing similar situations on how to approach their children more effectively;
• At the end of the meeting, surveys were handed to the parents to provide feedback on their children and their experience at the Real Talk event.
Phone Interviews with Real Talk’s Staff:

During our time with Real Talk, we had a chance to meet two of Real Talk’s motivational speakers and set up a series of phone interviews with each one for the purposes of getting feedback on how they currently feel about the organization’s progress as well as providing insight on how they would improve the program in the future. Upon completing the 10 question interviews, here are some of the highlights we gathered from each respective respondent:

Respondent One

Why he joined Real Talk

• Referred to the program by Sheree;

• He decided to join Real Talk because he connected with the program’s mission due to his experience as a Parole Officer;

His perspective on Real Talk’s current strengths:

• Real Talk’s strongest tool lies in its ability to positively influence at risk youth from steering into a negative path via a complete program that offers extracurricular activities;

• The organization’s machine is driven by the heart and soul of the volunteers who are key players in ensuring sustainability for Real Talk;

• Due to Clark County’s need for support in dealing with troubled youth, the program is a great resource for filling the gaps where the public-school system cannot address and therefore reintegrate troubled kids into society.

Respondents Suggestions for Improving Real Talk

• Suggested that the size of the student group attending the monthly meetings may be a bit too large for just one speaker to address and it should be broken down into smaller groups of students
**Respondent Two**

Why he joined Real Talk

- He assists Real Talk with providing a venue for the organization to host its monthly meetings;
- He became involved with Real Talk because he was impressed with Sheree’s consistency in working to push the program’s mission as well as the program’s ability to support with extracurricular activities.

His Perspective on Real Talk’s current strengths

- The program addresses the needs of both the parents and the children involved in the program;
- The meetings have a solid structure and are well organized;

Respondent’s Suggestions for improvement

- There were no suggestions for improvement as the respondent felt like the program was effective and through the passion of their leader, they are capable of sustaining the needs of the community.

**Monthly Staff Meeting**

As far as Real Talk’s monthly staff meeting is concerned, we were able to attend two of these meetings where we had a chance to see how the meeting is run as well as how Real Talk prepares for the next upcoming meeting with the students. As we made our observations during the meeting, we drew the following conclusions:

- There is lack of consistency among volunteers on how to effectively approach students when addressing certain points during a presentation;
• Many staff members were missing from the meeting;
• Agenda was well-organized and staff members were given a chance to speak up on any concerns or if they had feedback for improvement;
• We were not able to obtain any feedback on the financial aspect of Real Talk since that item is typically discussed in a Board meeting that we could not get access to.

Volunteer Survey

After analyzing the volunteer responses using the Qualtrics software program, these were the key findings we discovered:

• Most of the respondents were male and the largest age group was between ages 41-60;
• All the respondents had a positive outlook on the program and were proud to volunteer with the program;
• 100% of the respondents ‘strongly agreed’ that Real Talk’s Supervisor (Sheree) was helpful in describing the program’s mission;
• 100% of the respondents ‘strongly agreed’ that they intend to continue volunteering at Real Talk;
• Some respondents suggested that volunteers get the ability to act as mentors for the children;
• The need for fundraising;
• Allow children to have a more open conversation with the speakers just like in the parents meeting.
Participant Midpoint Surveys

During our time with Real Talk, we managed to distribute two sets of these middle point surveys over the course of two monthly meetings and a grand total of 35 students responded to our survey. After we ran their responses through the Qualtrics statistical program, we found the following distributions:

- Approximately 75% of the respondents were male and 25% were female;
- About 5% of students were not excited about what they learned from the meeting during the first meeting;
- About 68% of the students responded positively to the influence the speakers had on them during the first meeting;
- None of the students responded negatively towards Real Talk’s staff;
- About 22-25% of the students were still undecided if the program inspired them to be a better person or if they would still be willing to participate in the extracurricular activities.
Benchmark study

Over the course of this evaluation, we decided to see if there were any programs such as Real Talk in Nevada or anywhere else for that matter. We found out the program that was in Nevada had shut down last year and Real Talk was the only non-profit program for at-risk youth. Once we found this out we decided to look outside the state and we found several programs that we feel could best lead Real Talk in the direction they would like to go. Some of these programs have been in existence since 1969, some started with a $32,000 budget, and now they exceed $5.6mil.

The programs we identified were:

• Self Enhancement Inc. (SEI)
  o They have been serving the greater Portland, OR area for 36 years. This group was founded by Tony Hopson as a one-week basketball camp and by 1989 grew to a year round program that provides educational support and comprehensive services for students and their families. They have programs that are in-school and out of school from elementary thru post high school.

• Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY)
  o This group was founded in 2000 and is based in the San Jose area of California. Their mission statement is “FLY believes that all our children deserve a chance to become more than their past mistakes.” This is an organization that in 16 years grew from $32,000 to $5.6mil annual budget. The majority of their funding comes from various foundations.

• Angels at Risk
This group was started in the year 2007 and is based in Los Angeles, CA. The deal with drug and alcohol abuse in kids, teens and families. This group did more one-on-one counseling then large group settings.

- The Shatterproof Challenge
  - This a national nonprofit aimed at ending the devastation of addiction on families. They are based in New York and have many different programs to fight addiction from prevention, to treatment, recovery and advocacy. Like Real Talk they have had three full years of operation. In 2016 they had revenues of $7mil.

- BUILD Chicago
  - This program is most similar to what Real Talk would like to get to in their future. Their mission “is to engage at-risk youth in the schools and on the streets, so they can realize their educational and career potential and contribute stability, safety and wellbeing of our communities.” BUILD Chicago has been living their mission since 1969.

Once the programs were identified, we reached out to each program to see if they would participate in filling out a survey. Unfortunately, we were only able to collect just one organizations input on our survey, which was Fresh Lifelines for Youth or FLY. The answers provided to this survey have valuable advice for the Real Talk program.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Short Term Recommendations:

• Continue to build partnership with UNLV and its students; through the CAPSTONE program or by other internship volunteer programs, continue to leverage volunteer support from UNLV students to help lessen the work load of current Real Talk staff so they can focus on the participants. UNLV volunteers can come in as intern short term volunteers and handle easily transferable administrative tasks for the Non Profit.

• Contact local foundations; Real Talk is a 1 of 1 organization, however there are other foundations in the area that target the same audience the Real Talk targets for different services, attempt to collaborate with these foundations, to leverage each other for what each organization do well. This may increase the quality and range of services provided to the area of need and increase the success and notoriety of the program.

• Data Management; consider UNLV, CSN, and NSC students to help continue to load and track the data collected by the program.

• Avoid Founder’s Syndrome; develop formal volunteer positions, job descriptions, and post-able job announcements. Develop an Executive Director (ED) position so some of the workload can be delegated to the ED, which will create a more efficient of flexible program. Consider developing and volunteer manager position.

Mid-term Recommendations:

• Engage Youth Participants more frequently; observations at Change One meetings revealed that some children become mildly disruptive or “check out” of the meetings and are not fully engaged in what’s going on. This may be due to the fact the the meeting is currently “one-way” traffic and the kids are not asked to speak or talk
about their daily problems. Children face enough time where they are talked to and don’t get to respond, Real Talk has the opportunity to have these kids for an extended period of time in a safe setting. This time should be used to allow these children an outlet similar to what the parents get in their meeting. Real talk is not large enough at this time to allow that but staffing to enable that in the future should be considered.

• Board Membership; consider making the Board Membership a donor position (meaning that board members pay an annual stipend to sit on the board and govern the nonprofit). Also, consider making board members focus on networking outreach opportunities if they haven’t already.

• Broad Stroke Survey versus data collection; develop a survey that gets to the point of what Real Talk aims to accomplish, streamline the questions asked of the participants and parents so there is a clear understanding of how the program is doing and from what direction issues need to be addressed.

Long Term Recommendations:

• Mentorship Structure for Youth Participants; develop a program that allows children to match up with a professional of their choice to see the ins and outs of a career of a given type. This will give participants hope for the future and also help them choose (or not choose) a path for professional growth best suited for them.

• Build Relationships Outside of Nevada; similar to the organization collaboration but on a Regional and National scale.

• Continue to Grow the Program; hold monthly, quarterly, annual meetings to gauge the success of the program and to constantly evolve the program. The goal of the founder should be to be able to step away and have the program run itself.
Board Member Meetings

**RECOMMENDATION:** Over the course of our evaluation, we were not able to get access to those meetings and therefore could not make any further observations on how the financial aspect of Real Talk is run. For a future study, we recommend that the next evaluation team get a chance to observe how these meetings are run so that way they can bring forth a set of suggestions on how Real Talk can improve its ability to fund raise in order to ensure sustainability for the program.

Parent Surveys

**RECOMMENDATION:** Due to time constraints, we did not get a chance to review the parent surveys that were collected by Real Talk since it was first founded. Therefore, we suggest that a future study incorporates a data analysis for the feedback that was given by the parents from both the initial surveys and post surveys.

Middle Surveys

**RECOMMENDATION:** As with any research, one of the main challenges we faced throughout the course of this evaluation was a limited time frame to further expand our own survey that we developed for the students coming to the second meeting. When we designed and distributed our middle surveys, the pre- and the post- data was already analyzed and we did not have enough time to link the data we collected during our last month with the program. Therefore, we recommend that the next study continue to collect the midpoint surveys and then link them to the pre- and the post- surveys as they correspond to the participant numbers. This will help further develop Real Talk’s understanding of how to approach the students who may still be undecided in order to do a better job of reaching out to those students before they drop out of the program.

Data Analysis (Survey Design and Tracking)
RECOMMENDATION: The Real Talk Youth Impact Program has the advantage of a copious amount of data. Through surveys of parents and participants at the beginning and ending stages of the program there is a great opportunity to help shape the direction of the program to fit the needs of the target audience. However, this evaluation team was the first to actually attempt to analyze the data that was collected (3 years of data). The surveys had an abundance of data points asking questions that could help shape the program but limitations came from questions that were similar and not uniform from the initial survey to the end survey. Furthermore, the surveys changed format in the middle of the data collection cycle which made a significant amount of the old surveys difficult or impossible to collect meaningful or statistically significant data from. The UNLV Evaluation Team re-aligned some of the questions from the initial and end surveys so that the Qualtrics Survey system could correlate the data and make statistically significant connections from the attitudes of the participants on the initial survey to the end survey. Real Talk should consider adopting the survey templates created by this team, trimming existing similar questions from other surveys while ensuring that each survey have a matching number of quantitative Likert-scale type questions for quick crosstab/data analysis. Furthermore, develop unpaid staff positions with job descriptions that focus on data (survey) entry would help ensure that the NPO attracts short term (unpaid staff) volunteers’ specific to the given task so that surveys get loaded into whatever system the NPO chooses to track and store this data. Finally, have annual reviews of existing surveys to ensure that the questions asked accurately reflect what the program mission entails.

Data Analysis (Target Audience: AGE)

RECOMMENDATION: Real Talk Youth Impact Program seeks to target youth ages 8 to 18 whether they are Court Appointed or Community Participants. This leads to a broad stroke
approach to capture and influence participants and parents across a wide demographic group; each with different needs. While the program is achieving success in the form of overall recidivism rates the 8 to 12-year-old category accounts for 22% of program participants while only accounting for 2.4% of the arrest rate before the program (Figure 15 and 15a).

Due to the disparity in amount of youth in the juvenile system at the age category of 8-12 versus the other two age brackets we recommend more research into the ages of the participants that were involved in the juvenile system. Furthermore, we recommend a shift in resource allocation from the age bracket of 8-18 to an age bracket of 13-18 years of age. A re-alignment of the target age groups will free up resources from an age group that has yet to show significant risk of criminal activity to be refocused on the core group of participants in the 13 to 18 years of age range (in our study those participants account for 97.6% of at risk recidivism youth). Our belief
is that this will make the unpaid staff (Real Talk Team Members may then be able to focus on a smaller group of participants and be more effective in positive contact and results). Annual review of the program and recidivism rates will help determine if the 8 to 12 years of age target group needs to be re-introduced to the program. This will also help the NPO stretch resources and provide more opportunities to the at risk participant target groups.

Data Analysis (Target Audience: Court Appointed versus Community Participants)

**RECOMMENDATION:** The target population that the Real Talk Youth Impact Program most wants to impact is the community participants, staving off recidivism before these children enter the system. The success rate for community participant recidivism is 93.8% (cumulative 6.2% recidivism rate for community participants for the life of the program). However, the recidivism

<p>| Since the program I have been arrested for a crime (criminal | STRONGLY DISAGREE | DISAGREE | UNDECIDED | AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | Total |</p>
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<td>44.44%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>55.56%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>96.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.46%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.46%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.77%</td>
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**Figure 16** (Effectiveness of program for those arrested during the program)

success rate for court appointed participants is 71.9% (cumulative 28.1% recidivism rate for court appointed participants over the life of the program). This could be the result of a number of factors (limited unpaid staff, lack of financial resources, etc.). While the overall program (court
appointed and community participants combined recidivism success rate is 16.7%) is effective in general and when compared to state level recidivism rates and cumulative Clark County recidivism rates (17% for 2015 and 2016); the overall purpose of an evaluation is to highlight items and suggest more efficient ways to achieve greater results. Therefore, our short term recommendation is the elimination of the court appointed participant portion of the Real Talk Youth Impact Program or the development of a separate division of the program that counsels and works with the court appointed youth in an isolated section (two concurrent “Change One” meetings or two smaller “Change One” meetings on different day within the same month). In figure 16 participants that had an arrest after or during the program reported less satisfaction with the effectiveness of the program. Reasoning behind this could be that the message was not what these participants needed to achieve positive impact from the program. It is possible a more effective and catered message may have turned the tide for those participants. The intended effect is a more focused message tailored to the unique positions the participants may find themselves in during their time in the program.

**RECOMMENDATION:** During data collection and analysis we used surveys and collected excel data from the real talk program and there was some surprising disparity between how surveys were answered by respondents when matched with study numbers of actual participant information for the excel documents. From the data we collected through surveys and the Real Talk tracking document 126 participants answered YES to being arrested for a crime before entering the program, of those participants 9 answered that they went back to jail or juvenile detention (7.1% recidivism rate overall with 88% representing court appointed participants and 11% representing community participants). This is a 9.6% difference in overall recidivism from the data collected by the NPO when participants enroll in the program.
Therefore, our recommendation is the elimination of the survey question concerning arrests after the program. A possible solution to this gap in reporting is to take the list of graduates and have it run by local law enforcement on a quarterly basis. This could be another duty listed in an unpaid staff job description.

**RECOMMENDATION:** NPO is at the 3-year mark and still in the early GROW phase of the program. The Founder still carries a large amount of the load and has one dedicated unpaid staff member and one paid (part time) staff member, difficulty raising funds, and lacks specific job descriptions for positions of need. Our recommendation is to develop job descriptions for positions of need, develop job description for Executive Director position, establish “Give-Get” policy for all sitting board members (the Give-Get concept expects every sitting board member to donate monetarily to the program annually, the thought process is if members are willing to sit on the board then they show the community their commitment to the cause they expect those they go to for funds to get behind by donating to the cause itself), and establish a strategic plan for short, mid, and long term goals and objectives of the non-profit. When it’s perceived that the board isn’t paying into its own cause it makes donors, foundations, and other institutional givers, weary and hesitant to give as well. If the “Give-Get” approach is too aggressive an alternative is to institute and implement Fundraising Ambassador into the list of Board Member responsibilities and functions; this will limit the amount of Board Members who choose to vacate the Board while giving all Board Member’s a stake in expanding the donor network and alleviating some of the load off of the Founder to prevent burnout. With an expanded fundraising team through the board networking increases and the Founder can transition from energy spent looking for the money to cultivating relationships, drawing related donors to the cause, increasing notoriety, and increasing funds
CONCLUSION

During our time with the Real Talk Youth Impact Program, we were able to draw several conclusions on the overall effectiveness the organization has managed to have in its ability to have an impact on its targeted populations. With respect to the data analysis that was conducted, Real Talk had an abundance of data to work with to help understand what is going on within the program while helping to identify trends in the product delivered to the community. This data also would be essential in board meetings, action planning, and quick reach-back to key statistics when fundraising or networking with possible donors. However, the three years of data has not been utilized or analyzed until this evaluation was conducted. This means that the growth of the Real Talk program has not had any statistical backing to help shape it into a more efficient service to the community it serves.

This, in part, is due to the founder being all things the NPO needs and being spread dangerously thin in the process; no amount of drive can make up for lack of personnel. Additionally, the niche that this program serves provides no donations of funds or resources other than the children they hope the Real Talk Program can help. It is somewhat disturbing that one of the major stakeholders in what Real Talk does has not introduced or considered any monetary aid to ensure the program remains afloat. Furthermore, as with many NPOs, the board may want to consider donating to the cause that they choose to lend guidance too. It sends a strong message to the community if they are giving annual donations to the program and it also sends an equally powerful message that does not benefit the program if they do not donate to a cause they want others to donate to.

Moreover, the Founder of this program has a huge heart. The message she wants to bring is pure and its purpose is poignant yet it is equally important that the participants voices are heard at some point as well, as the program grows so must the opportunities for the
participants to have their own real talk. In light of these limitations from months of observation, the Real Talk program finds its niche for success. Recidivism rates are equal to or largely better than the Regional, State, and County average; considerations on consolidating resources to areas of need and suspending resources in areas that are not statistically in need could increase that level of success even more. Through inaugural planning and vision, Sheree has carried this program to successes that many others could not have achieved. So many good pieces are in place that just need attention and dedicated unpaid staffing positions to focus and improve them and with it the program’s effectiveness.

Real Talk Youth Impact Program has maintained an overall recidivism rate of 17.53%. The juvenile recidivism rate in Nevada is 50%, which allows us to conclude that this program is having a positive effect in the juvenile population that it is serving. Recidivism rates in community participants is 79.3% lower than court appointed/PO participants in the program, this trend follows the same trend as the surveys when asked about the effectiveness of the program between participants that recidivate versus those that do not. The core of our statistical findings show that the Real Talk Youth Impact program is having a greater positive impact on participating youth than youth who do not participate in the program. From our covert observations, phone interviews, and volunteer surveys, we were able to see that the program has a solid foundation in terms of the staff’s commitment to the program’s mission and through a more efficient use of monthly speeches, they will be able to enhance the ability to impact at-risk youth and steer them away from making poor decisions. With the aid of this program evaluation, the Real Talk Youth Impact Program may utilize our findings and recommendations to streamline their process and therefore improve their effectiveness in making an impact on at-
risk youth in Southern Nevada. We look forward to seeing this program grow and have a lasting impact on the youth of Nevada.

The Real Talk program is an invaluable part of the community it serves; in doing this evaluation, many great things about this program were highlighted; the Real Talk program is in desperate need of grants and donations to take it to the next step of growth, efficiency, and success in the heart of the Vegas Valley. In comparison, with the other similar organizations, Real Talk may be able to reach out to the executive directors of these other programs to see what works as far as funding and education are concerned. Real Talk has a great staff and director who lead with their head and their heart but sometimes-outside perspective is a valuable resource.

One of the most important limitations we faced was sorting data that had been collecting dust for three years. This was an important limitation because after sorting out 872 pieces of surveys we realized that only 275 were usable. We wasted valuable time figuring out what we had in the forms of data. Due to time, limitations and time wasted sorting out data we were also not able to look at the parent’s surveys that were attached to the children surveys. We were not granted permission to join any of the board meeting and that was also a limitation that could have given us a better insight of how donations were collected. We recommend that student who wish to continue evaluating Real Talk look at the parent’s surveys and are allowed to attend one of the board meetings.

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**APPENDIX TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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This map was created using the master excel file showing where all the participants of the Real Talk program from its start have come from. You can see the bulk of its population comes from North Las Vegas and from the northwest area as circled on the map.
This matrix shows the organizations we reached out to regarding our benchmark study.
Alex Bernal- Phone conference 7/5/2017- 1:20pm
Coordinator for Clark County-oversee prevention and intervention programs for Clark County

1. What is your current affiliation with Real Talk?
   I work at the Pearson Center and I help Sheree with attaining permission to use auditorium space for her “Change One Meetings”. Some of our kids also attend the Real Talk program. I am also a key note speaker.

2. How long have you been working with Real Talk?
   2yrs

3. How did you hear about Real Talk?
   I took a special interest in the program once I was able to see the consistency of the CEO to host the meetings at the Pearson Center. Over the years I have previewed other programs that have not been as consistent as Real Talk.

4. What made you decide to be a part of Real Talk’s movement in helping at risk youth?
   I have worked with at risk youth for more than 20 years. I believe in the program because Real Talk helps kids and their parents in ways that the county cannot. For example, Real Talk can pay for extracurricular activities while the county cannot. Real Talk helps families with no income get their kids evolve.

5. What do you feel is currently the most effective tool Real Talk has in addressing its mission?
   Bringing parents and kids together. Addressing both children and parent’s needs. Also providing speakers who can provide children with real life experience. The consistency of the program is also beneficial.

6. Which area of Real Talk do you believe needs immediate improvement?
   Nothing currently. Real talk is an effective program.

7. Do you believe Real Talk’s meetings are well organized?
   Yes. They are very structure always on time.

8. Do you see Real Talk as a sustainable program in the long term?
   Yes. It fulfills the needs of the community and provides services that other agencies cannot.

9. What makes you want to continue supporting Real Talk’s mission?
   Sheree. Her passion is contagious.

10. If you were the program’s coordinator, what would you change in the first 30 days?
I think that it is an effective program and why fix something that is not broken. From an outsider perspective I do not know what needs changing but as of right now I would not change anything.

“Real Talk is like no other program, the fact that the program is willing to help families is amazing. Real Talk is full of real stories and it is a genuine program.”

Felipe Ortiz- Phone conference 6/29/2017- 4:17pm
Retired Federal Probation and Parole Officer- Currently a special assistant to the Major and City Council.

“You can lie to your friends; I will lie to my friends but let’s not lie to each other. When someone is trying to help, you do not lie to them. There is always a solution-you don’t know what you don’t know especially when you are young, which is why we are here to help you find a solution.”

1. What is your current affiliation with Real Talk?
   Sheree used to be a co-worker in US Federal Courts. Asked him to speak to her kids

2. How long have you been working with Real Talk?
   First time speaker- first year

3. How did you hear about Real Talk?
   From Sheree

4. What made you decide to be a part of Real Talk’s movement in helping at risk youth?
   The experience and luxury to know that many individuals that break the law can and will succeed especially when they are young. People need someone to connect with them that will help them see the light and help them see their bad behavior and need someone to point them out to what is the correct behavior.

5. What do you feel is currently the most effective tool Real Talk has in addressing its mission?
   The biggest tool they have is getting all the kids together and offering them a start and a finish program. We have many young children that do not have a clue of their bad behavior while on the other hand, we have 17-18 year olds who have committed serious offenses and the program offers them real talk from individuals that have walked that path. The speakers give these kids hope that they can pull them self out and reach kids by making them aware of their bad behavior. They bring resources and their team to help the children
   Scare straight does not work. Real talk makes the parents an active part of the program and they can see criminal who share their experience and makes them realize that they
need to set their perimeters so that their kid does not become one more criminal. Real Talk is a successful model especially since it includes the parents.

6. Which area of Real Talk do you believe needs immediate improvement? 
Size might be too big. Maybe brake down the kids into group- speak to half of the kids at either time.

7. Do you believe Real Talk’s meetings are well organized? 
Yes. Hey started on time and late comers where not allowed to join the program or interrupt.

8. Do you see Real Talk as a sustainable program in the long term? 
Sustainable- continue on- successful  
It is a no- nonsense program and will continue to be sustainable because the volunteers have the passion to continue showing up. When support is hire as soon as the money runs out so does the support most of the time but Real Talk has volunteers that are happy to help.

9. What makes you want to continue supporting Real Talk’s mission? 
There is a big need in Clark County who has a great volume of students and programs like Real Talk offer the support that the Schools need. Real Talk meets the needs of the kids in being re integrated to society if they become a problem for the schools and the criminal justice field.

10. If you were the program’s coordinator, what would you change in the first 30 days? 
I don’t know enough to answer.

Parting words
“Every person is redeemable, no matter what they have done they will go back home (our society and communities) we need to prepare them to come back home. What kind of people do we want coming back? We need to be prepare for those coming back. People will change.”

People are hard to believe that this is a good program?  
“I was prejudice against everyone myself, I did not trust anyone, I spent 30 years as an officer, and some people do not see when it is time for them to retire. Everyone needs to be trained, when you see comments like that it is because of the lack of training, people are not trained properly and don’t see the good side of programs. Training and sometimes people see the world differently they do not see the reality of the world- they need to let it go- you cannot save everyone. People become suspicious it is not the program it is the people and their mistrust.” “I have been part of this community 35 years and I have seen a lot and know a thing or two- you have to know your audience in order to be good at what you do.”

“What is you plan to make a difference?”
Philosophy- “You were given two ears and one mouth. So that you can do twice the listening and half the talking.”
UNLV Survey  
August 2, 2017

Name: Claire Wagner, Director of Communications  
Program: Fresh Lifelines for Youth  
Location: HQ in Milpitas, Santa Clara County, CA

1. What issues did you have when creating your program?

Our founder had volunteered to teach the law to incarcerated kids in another state, and when she transferred to Stanford Law School she discovered there were no programs like this in Santa Clara County, so she eventually started one. As far as I know, there were no huge issues or barriers to success because the idea received support initially from the Public Defender’s Office and grew steadily from there. I could answer more specific questions by phone. Below is a brief history of FLY that talks a bit more about how the program came about.

In 1996, FLY’s founder and CEO, Christa Gannon, was a law student volunteering to teach the law to youth spending most of their teenage years, or their entire lives, behind bars. As she got to know the youth, they opened up to her about their experiences. Their statements often began with “If only…”

- If only I had known how much trouble I could get into.
- If only I had been given a chance to change.
- If only someone had really cared about me, I wouldn’t be here.

The youth were adamant that it didn’t have to be this way for other kids. They told Christa what she could do to make a difference:

- Teach kids about the law and consequences of crime so they can learn to make better choices
- Give them access to positive adult role models who will be there for them and can help them change their lives
- Give them a chance to do something good for their communities so they aren’t just seen as juvenile delinquents

In 1998, Christa received the prestigious George Soros Foundation award, a two-year fellowship, to take those ideas, bolster them with best practices research, and start a pilot program. The pilot was so successful that when the fellowship ended in 2000, Christa incorporated the project into a
The suggestion of the youth Christa originally worked with remain the foundation of FLY to this day—legal education, leadership training, and one-on-one mentoring.

FLY began with one staff member and a handful of volunteers serving youth in a few neighborhoods in San Jose on a budget of $32,500. Today, FLY serves more 2,000 youth annually in 23 cities throughout the Bay Area. Christa Gannon serves as Chief Executive Officer, and for FY17-18, FLY will have more than 60 staff and 200 volunteers. The agency and Christa have received numerous local, state, and national awards.

2. How many kids have participated in your program and how long is your program (duration from start to finish)?

FLY has several programs with different lengths operating in three counties. I do not have cumulative participation data for our 16+ years of operation but I put the approximate number of kids each year for each program.

FLY Law Program – 12 weeks, approximately 1000 kids last year
FLY partners with schools and probation officers, lawyers, and judges in the juvenile justice system. They refer youth to the FLY Law Program, where our staff and highly trained volunteers teach a fun, interactive course on the law and consequences of crime. They use role plays, mock trials, and group work to help youth develop skills like anger management, problem solving, and conflict resolution so they can learn to make healthier choices. The classes are taught in schools, community centers, juvenile halls, and juvenile camps and ranches.

FLY Leadership Training Program – 10 months, approximately 100 last years (should increase this year)
When the Law Program ends, youth needing additional support join the FLY Leadership Training Program, where they work with a FLY case manager. Each youth completes a comprehensive assessment to identify their greatest barriers to living a healthy, productive life. Together the case manager and youth create a plan to address these barriers. The program kicks off with a wilderness retreat where they begin building trust and the confidence to change. Then the youth, who are now identified as Peer Leaders, meet bi-monthly for social activities and to plan service learning projects where together they learn how to identify, build on, and redirect their strengths.

Court Appointed Friend and Advocate Mentor Program – One year, increasing to about 100 this year
For more than 15 years in Santa Clara County, FLY has trained and matched adult volunteer mentors with youth on probation. The mentors meet weekly with the youth to support them in developing new attitudes, behaviors, and ambitions. Each mentor/mentee match has a FLY case manager for support and also attends monthly group activities organized by FLY. After the local juvenile justice system saw an alarming failure rate for youth of color on a type of probation for serious crimes, they asked FLY to help. FLY added a court advocacy component to our mentor program and achieved a dramatic turn-around in the probation failure rates for those youth. As a result, FLY’s program is now called the CAFA (Court-Appointed Friend and Advocate) Mentor Program and all mentors are granted legal standing to act as advocates for their youth in the courtroom and at schools.
FLY Middle School Program – depends on the kid and school, the program has changed and I’m not sure of the # served for this year
The FLY Middle School Program helps interrupt the “school-to-prison pipeline” in which kids with issues at school are disciplined and pushed into the juvenile justice system instead of being offered the additional services they need. Our program helps seventh and eighth graders in high-crime, high-poverty areas of Santa Clara County stay engaged in school and out of the system. The program offers age-appropriate classes from FLY’s Law Program along with one-on-one support from a FLY case manager for youth referred by school officials.

FLY Reentry Program – new program, depends on the kid’s location (12 weeks for SCC, 12 weeks + about six months’ case management in SMC), new to SMC and I’m not sure how many will be served (last year in SCC it was about 50 in law class and 30 in case management)
The FLY Reentry Program serves youth in longer term incarceration at camps in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. In both counties, the program provides a 12-week legal education course taught by FLY staff while the youth are in custody. In San Mateo County, after youth are released, they also receive intensive one-on-one support from a FLY case manager to help with their transition back into the community.

Youth Advisory Council – About a dozen youth so far, not sure there is any special term or length of service
FLY’s latest collaboration with the Santa Clara County Probation Department is the Youth Advisory Council (YAC). The young adults in YAC were all formerly impacted by the juvenile justice system. Now as Justice Consultants sworn by the court, they guide the department on policy initiatives that will improve the success of youth in completing probation.

3. Where do you get your main source of funding?
For FY17-18, we will have a budget of $5.96 million. Approximately 31% of our revenue is projected to come from government, 44% from foundations, and 25% from individuals and corporations.

4. What is the most beneficial program you provide?
The combination of programs is most powerful so we don’t usually call them out as more valuable. The Law Program is the foundation and entry point to everything else. Probably the most transformative is the most intensive, which is Leadership Training, because it is one year and combines so many activities along with intensive case management.

5. How many volunteers or staff do you have?
More than 60 staff and 200 volunteers

6. Have you noticed a decrease in your kid’s recidivism rates after completing the program?
Year after year in our Leadership Training Program, more than 80% of FLY youth do not sustain a new charge during the program year and 80% of eligible seniors receive their high school diplomas or GEDs. (For comparison: Without effective intervention, 50% - 80% of youth released from detention will reoffend, and juvenile incarceration can decrease the chances of high school graduation by up to 39%.)
FLY is proud to be part of a collaborative effort that has seen a 77% reduction in juvenile incarceration in Santa Clara County and a 65% reduction in San Mateo County since 2000.

7. Where do the majority of your kids come from? (Type of referral)
Juvenile courts, Probation, and school officials. The kids are either incarcerated, on probation living in the community, or live in high-risk areas and are referred through their schools.

8. How long has your program been in existence?
Incorporated as a nonprofit in 2000

9. If someone were to start a program such as this what would be the one thing to focus on to ensure success?
Doing this work with both the head and the heart. We love our clients fiercely but in a way that holds them accountable, is smart and sustainable, and drives to results cost-effectively.

10. Do you have a population/demographic breakdown of your participants and do you use a database to store all this data to evaluate at a given time?
Approximately 95% of FLY youth are from low-income families and more than 90% are youth of color. Most live in areas with high rates of crime and poverty. Our program staff uses the ETO system but it is not optimal. We have an Evaluation and Learning Department that is constantly analyzing program data.