Helping Boys Become Healthy Men
Project Evaluation
Final Report

September 28, 2012

Prepared by:

Jennifer Ellis
Jennifer Ellis Consulting

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The Helping Boys become Healthy Men incorporated two main components: 1) a region-wide approach to coordinate mentor training and ongoing community capacity building to engage at-risk boys and 2) five community projects in the communities of Boundary, Trail, Castlegar, Kaslo and Nelson to demonstrate that mentoring and engaging boys in transformative activities have a positive effect on boys.

Project Rationale

Mentoring has been defined as a "structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement aimed at developing... competence and character" (Bazron et al., nd:6). Youth mentoring is based on the hypothesis that youth with more positive adult relationships in their lives have better social and educational outcomes than youth without positive adult relationships (Sipe and Roder, 1999). Evidence from the literature on mentoring youth supports the notion that interventions with boys that strengthen their protective factors and foster attachment, inclusion and self-worth can alter their futures.

Project Evaluation

A detailed process and summative evaluation of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project was undertaken based on seven project proposal evaluation questions, the project goals and objectives, 21 CAI evaluation questions and emergent data. Data was collected through coordinator case study reports, a survey of 110 participating boys, a survey of 9 mentors, 17 interviews with project coordinators, regional staff and other key informants in each project community, a mentor focus group, a coordinator focus group, three Steering Committee focus groups and a survey of 44 participants at the Mentors Make a Difference Conference.

Review of the Literature

The scientific research on youth mentoring is limited and varied with respect to program conceptualization, project goals, study methodologies and measures evaluated (Nguyen, 2005; Philip and Spratt, 2007). As a result, there is little agreement on what precisely constitute the elements of a successful youth mentoring program (Nguyen, 2005). At best, the literature can offer some early evidence with regard to the program components that appear to be beneficial. Nevertheless a few key elements of best practice in youth mentoring can be identified. These include:

- Clearly specified goals and processes (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009),
- Sufficient program infrastructure (Rhodes, 2001),

- A design that reflects community needs and context (Nguyen, 2005);
- Mechanisms for the support and involvement of parents, youth and community stakeholders (Grossman and Garry, 1997);
- Rigourous mentor screening to find mentors who have sufficient time to devote to mentoring and are willing to commit to mentoring for at least 12 months, demonstrate an understanding of their role and show qualities of attunement (Nguyen, 2005;MENTOR, 2009);
- Training and ongoing support for mentors (Grossman and Garry, 1997; Rhodes, 2001; Nguyen, 2005; Mentor, 2009);
- Long duration (at least 12 months) and high frequency of contact between the mentor and youth (Rhodes 2001; Nguyen, 2005); and
- Positive caring relationships and relationships in which the mentor acts and is defined as a friend and supporter, rather than acting as a teacher or authority figure (Grossman and Garry, 1997; MENTOR, 2009).

Activities Undertaken

Overall, 436 boys were engaged in a wide variety of group activities with male mentors over the course of eight months in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. In total, 60 mentors participated in 1118 hours of mentoring, 43 community organizations were engaged in a variety of roles including referrals, donations, project design and training, and 66 people attended a Mentors Make a Difference Conference. Each of the community projects intentionally took a slightly different approach to mentoring boys:

Nelson: The Nelson project focused on delivering a full-day or two-hour environmental education program to groups of 12 to 17 boys, aged 7 to 12, from a single class, as part of their school day, using six to eight trained volunteer mentors recruited through the project.

Castlegar: The Castlegar project consisted of a two-day camp for 14 at-risk boys entitled Camp Esquire. The camp was intended to showcase activities available in Castlegar, including taekwondo, guitar lessons, cub scouts, cadets, and church-based youth groups. Efforts were then made to assist interested boys in participating in those activities by removing costs or transportation challenges.

Trail: The community of Trail organized a number of community events that were attended by boys and girls of all ages. These included a community Health and Wellness Fair where activity providers, such as the cadets, were showcased, a free movie on a Pro-D day, a Family Fun Day, book readings at the library, pick-up hockey with the Trail Smoke Eaters, and RoadSense training.

Kaslo: Kaslo established a twice weekly ongoing after school activity program with two paid mentors for approximately 15 boys aged 7 to 12. The boys undertook a wide variety of activities including hiking, biking, writing, dancing, art, and community service. The boys also received mentoring with regard to relationship development and conflict resolution.

Boundary: In the Boundary, four ongoing after school activity groups with two paid mentors were established for 56 boys aged 7 to 12 in groups of approximately 12 to 17 in three different communities. Two groups met once a week, and two groups met every second week

for two hours over the course of 16 weeks. Boys participated in a variety of unstructured activities including wide games, pick up sports, board games, gym time and archery.

In addition, regional level project activities were undertaken as part of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project including project coordination, the Mentors Make a Difference Conference, and a project Wiki.

Key Evaluation Results

Support for Project Implementation: The regional coordinator checked in frequently with the coordinators, attempted to support them as much as possible, and provided some training. The coordinators found the supports provided by the regional coordinator and in some cases their agencies to be very useful. However, the regional coordinator and the community coordinators were all less than 15 hour a week positions and therefore all parties engaged in the project faced significant time limitations. The coordinators had limited time to take advantage of training and mutual support opportunities that were offered. The fact that the community projects were all quite different and were not on the same schedule also created challenges in terms of developing a consistent infrastructure.

Key Recommendations: Place more emphasis on the importance of consistency in project timing, coordinator meetings to share ideas, and some common project frameworks.

Community Engagement and Support: Community needs assessments were undertaken for both the overall project region and for one specific community (Trail). Community engagement was sought by all coordinators using a variety of methods, including community meetings, word of mouth and newspaper interviews, and to varying degrees of success. Overall, 43 organizations were involved in the project across five communities. Their roles varied from the provision of referrals and donations to project design advice. Some community organizations in some communities, particularly the School District and other social service agencies were very involved in the implementation of the project. The degree to which the broader community, including local politicians, became aware of the value of mentoring boys is not clear, but was felt to be low. Greater community engagement and knowledge about the project occurred in the communities in which two community meetings were held, the local community service agency and its partners were more heavily involved in project design and delivery, and the boys were engaged on an ongoing basis and would spread the word among parents, friends and teachers.

Key Recommendations: Develop an overall communications plan or strategy, undertake more regional level communication including regular updates from all project communities, develop a formal mechanism for involving parents; and build specific requirements for community engagement into the project contracts including requirements for regular updates to the regional coordinator to feed into the regional communications, and the requirement for at least one community meeting.

Mentoring Capacity: Overall, it appears that mentoring capacity was increased in the project communities as a result of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. In total, 60 mentors were involved in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project and offered 1118 mentoring hours. The degree of focus on mentor recruitment and training clearly varied in each community and each community faced different barriers and advantages in terms of recruiting mentors. In particular, Nelson was very successful in attracting mentors. In Nelson, where mentor recruitment, training and ongoing support was a focus and the mentors and spent a reasonable number of hours on average mentoring, it appears that the greatest degree of mentoring capacity was generated in terms of sheer numbers of men who are prepared and willing to consider mentoring again as a result of this project. The training and ongoing support offered in Nelson emerged as a very key factor in promoting mentor satisfaction with their experience. Mentors in Nelson and Kaslo emphasized the importance of understanding they had something to offer to boys as a key element of their decision to mentor.

Key Recommendations: Focus on helping men understand that they have something to offer and that there is a need for mentorship when recruiting; provide potential mentors with the opportunity for formal training, ensure training addresses how to mentor, why to mentor and what to expect from the boys; and provide appropriate support, supervision and debriefing opportunities for mentors.

Engaging Boys in Transformative Activities: Overall, 436 at-risk and less at-risk boys were engaged in a wide range of group activities on an ongoing or one-time basis with male mentors through the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project and the majority of the boys indicated that they found the activities fun and interesting and liked the male mentors. The ability to assess outcomes and changes in the boys as a result of the project was limited by the lack of baseline data, control populations, long-term data, and objective measures of change in the boys. When asked if they felt better about themselves as a result of the activities, 39% of the boys said yes, and 27% said sort of, which suggests that at least 66% feel at least somewhat better about themselves as a result of the activities, at least in the short-term. However the probability for some degree of positive response bias is high. Overall, the measurable positive outcomes for boys associated with the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project appear small, but more data is required to be certain.

The limited measurable positive outcomes for boys associated with the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is likely in part linked to the fact that in all of the community projects, the duration and frequency of contact was less than a year and/or less than 12 hours a month. However, the boys who experienced the greatest duration and frequency of contact with mentors stated most strongly that the activities were fun and interesting, that they wanted to keep doing the activities, that they liked the male mentors and that they felt better about themselves as a result of the activities. This suggests that duration and frequency of contact are important factors in generating positive outcomes. In addition, it appeared that the boys had a preference for unstructured, fun activities as opposed to primarily learning related activities and the projects in which the boys engaged in the most unstructured activities appeared to have the most positive outcomes for boys in terms of the degree to which the boys felt better about themselves as a result of the activities.

Key Recommendations: Establish programs with opportunities for ongoing mentoring relationships with positive male role models; recognize the importance of mentoring duration and frequency of contact in promoting positive outcomes for boy in mentoring relationships; ensure the boys have opportunities to have fun and contribute to their community; recognize that sometimes boys need more unstructured play opportunities in a safe environment; and establish feedback relationships with teachers and parents to gather observations of change in the boys to help foster further learning with regard to what works and what does not work with regard to mentoring boys.

Project Sustainability and Expansion: All five project communities seem committed to the idea of sharing information and learning from the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. They all have also undertaken steps to promote project sustainability. Castlegar and Trail have secured funding to continue on with some components of the project, and some project elements will be continued in Boundary on a volunteer basis. Kaslo, Nelson and Boundary are working to acquire funding through partnerships or grant applications. The project Steering Committee has committed to continue meeting to promote the regional sustainability of the project potentially through joint funding applications and a learning event focused on mentorship in 2013. However a clear plan with respect to a regional approach to supporting mentoring initiatives had not been established at the conclusion of the evaluation. Although relationships were developed between Steering Committee members and other project participants, and the evaluation results and a summary document of the evaluation will be posted on the Co-op website and project Wiki, a formal learning network or regional framework to support the spread of mentoring were not established and thus it is not clear how widely the learning associated with this project will be shared.

Key Recommendations: Discuss the value of, and the best approach to establishing a formal long-term broad-based learning network; ensure the results of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project evaluation are shared with all of the Co-op partner agencies and all organizations and individuals engaged in mentoring, or involved with boys aged 7 to 12 in the Kootenay Boundary region; explore possibilities for regional cooperation on mentoring initiatives; and identify the components of a regional framework to support the spread of mentoring.

All efforts were made to collect the best data possible for this evaluation. Nevertheless, these results are very preliminary and based on limited qualitative data in some cases. Further research and evaluation of projects, especially research that allows for experimental design, the collection of baseline data on participants, and longitudinal data should be undertaken to confirm best practices in establishing community youth mentoring programs in the Kootenay-Boundary region.

The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project was in many ways a pilot project to consider the value of mentoring and determine what could be learned about mentoring that could be utilized in future projects. It was approached by the participating social service agencies as an opportunity to experiment with five different community youth mentoring projects and determine what could be learned from each. Thus a key outcome of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project should be the learning outcomes and ensuring that those learnings are passed on to other communities and utilized to enhance future mentoring programs. An overview of initial results was provided to the project Steering Committee on Prezi at: http://prezi.com/tm8_f3bxjdaw/july-3-helping-boys-become-healthy-men-evaluation/

Introduction

The Helping Boys become Healthy Men (HBBHM) was a Community Action Initiative (CAI) funded project carried out in the Kootenay Boundary Region by the Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative in 2011 and 2012.

The project incorporated two main components: 1) a region-wide approach to coordinate mentor training and ongoing community capacity building to engage at-risk boys and 2) five community projects in the communities of Boundary, Trail, Castlegar, Kaslo and Nelson to demonstrate that mentoring and engaging boys in transformative activities have a positive effect on boys.

Project Rationale

The project was based on the theory that many men struggling with mental health and substance abuse problems failed, as boys, to receive the mentorship and role models they needed to become healthy adults. The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project attempted to work upstream on this issue by focusing on the healthy development of 7 to 12 year old boys, particularly those at-risk. A key goal of the project was to support these boys by undertaking five community projects that would provide the boys with male mentors and engage them in activities that are inclusive, relational, challenging, skill building, and of interest to boys, evaluate and learn from the projects and build regional capacity for mentoring boys over the long-term.

The original theory of change of the project outlined in the project logic model was: "7 to 12 year old at-risk boys have a reduced likelihood of problems due to mental health or other substance abuse issues later in life – if they are provided with male mentors and engaged in positive activity."

Support in the Literature

Evidence from the literature supports the notion that interventions with boys that strengthen their protective factors and foster attachment, inclusion and self-worth can alter their futures.

Support and guidance from caring adults play a critical role in helping youth grow up into responsible and caring adults (Rhodes, 2001; Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). The research suggests that youth with at least one high-quality supportive relationship with an adult are two times more likely to become self sufficient and productive adults with positive relationships (Bazron et al., nd). Often, for a variety of societal and economic reasons, children and youth lack these caring adult-child relationships and support (Rhodes, 2001; Ichikawa and

Selby, 2009). Changes in society have reduced opportunities for contact with caring adults through extended families, neighbourhoods, schools and two parent households (Rhodes, 2001).

Providing adult relationships and support to children and youth in the form of adult mentors, has emerged as a potential way to address these challenges (Bazron et al., nd) and the number of mentoring programs has grown significantly in recent years (Rhodes, 2001). This is based on the concept of *resilience*, which refers to the factors that enable some youth to overcome adversity, such as poverty, ill health, or limited family support, and make a successful transition to adulthood (Philip and Spratt, 2007). In studies of young people who have overcome adversity, one consistent element that they shared was the presence of an adult or caregiver from the community that supported and encouraged them over the years (Philip and Spratt, 2007). This led researchers to conclude that adult mentors could make a significant difference in the lives of at-risk youth.

Evaluations of programs run by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBS) and other volunteer mentoring programs have strongly suggested that mentoring programs positively affect youth in terms of reducing risk-oriented behaviour and increasing pro-social behaviour and academic achievement (Tierney, Grossman and Resch, 1995; Rhodes, 2001; Rhodes, 2008).

Why Evaluate?

Project evaluations are critical to ensuring that projects meet their goals and objectives, providing information and learning for future project design, showing accountability to funders and building knowledge in the project team and associated community. Despite the encouraging results from some youth mentoring programs, many youth mentoring programs result in at best modest or small positive effects (Rhodes, 2001; Philip and Spratt, 2007; Rhodes, 2008). The degree to which strong positive effects are achieved appears to be linked to the components and quality of the mentoring program (Rhodes, 2001; Rhodes, 2008). Thus it cannot be assumed in the absence of an evaluation that a youth mentoring project or program has achieved its goals. As Brady et al., (2005:29) observed, "Positive outcomes are more likely to accrue when 'best practice' procedures are in place – including screening of volunteers, supervision, training, ongoing support and group activities. Where such practices are neglected, there is potential for programmes to have negative effects on youth."

Research on youth mentoring programs is beginning to identify some of the key elements that contribute to program success and positive outcomes for youth. Evaluations of youth mentoring projects, such as the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project will contribute to the body of knowledge with regard to youth mentoring and the development of best practices in youth mentoring.

Evaluation Research Methods and Populations

The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project was evaluated on: 1) a *process* level – did we do what we said we would and how well did we do it? 2) a *summative or outcome* level – did we achieve what we hoped to and can the work be effectively expanded or spread to other locations?

The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men evaluation incorporated a number of evaluation methods applied to different populations associated with the project. Utilizing several different evaluation methods and collecting data from several different populations allows for triangulation and a reduction of bias in the assessment of results.

Triangulation relates to the concept that we can be more confident in results if more than one method leads to the same conclusion. In general in order to triangulate effectively at least three research methods must be utilized with the hope that they will produce the same conclusions.

The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men evaluation utilized the following research methods:

- Surveys
- Case Studies
- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Spreadsheets to track attendance at events

The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men evaluation collected data from the following populations associated with the project:

- Project Coordinators in the five project communities;
- Community Mentors or key project personnel in each of the five project communities;
- Regional Advisory Committee;
- Boys aged 7 to 12 participating in the program;
- Regional Project Coordinator; and
- Participants in *Mentors Make a Difference* event.

Combining the evaluation methods and the evaluation populations, the main forms of data collection carried out in association with the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project are outlined in the table below:

Table 1: Populations and methods utilized in the evaluation

Population	Survey	Case Study	Focus Group	Interviews	Spreadsheets
Project Coordinators		✔	✔	✔	
Community Mentors	✔		✔	✔	
Regional Advisory Committee	✔		✔		
Boys	✔				✔
Regional Project Coordinator			✔	✔	
Mentors Make a Difference Participants	✔				

Based on the above plan, data was collected from a wide variety of sources. In total,

- 5 case study reports were received from project coordinators;
- 110 boys completed the survey of boys;
- 9 mentors completed the survey of mentors;
- 17 interviews were undertaken with project coordinators, regional staff and other key informants in each project community;
- 5 focus groups were completed with the project Steering Committee, mentors and coordinators;
- 44 surveys were completed at the Mentors Make a Difference Conference;
- Detailed budget summaries were received from 3 coordinators; and
- Attendance tracking spreadsheets were received from 2 coordinators.

All key evaluation instruments including permission forms, focus group guidelines, focus group questions, case study guidelines, and interview guides can be found in the Evaluation Methodology and Instrumentation (see Appendix 1). The surveys can be found in Appendix 2.

More details with regard to who completed surveys by community and who was interviewed are provided in the tables below:

Table 2: Survey participant statistics

Survey Participants		
Community	Number of boys starting the survey	Number of mentors starting the survey
Nelson	60	5
Castlegar	4	0
Trail	0	0
Kaslo	9	4
Boundary	37	0
Totals	**110**	**9**

Table 3: Interview participant statistics

Interview Participants	
Type of Interviewee	Number of Interviewees
Coordinator	5
Mentor	4
Co-op Representatives	2
Agency Executive Directors	1
School Principals/Teachers	3
Community Members	1
Totals	**17**

Table 4: Focus group participant statistics

Focus Group Participants	
Focus Group Participants	Number of Participants
Steering Committee	7
Mentors	9
Coordinators	7
Totals	**17**

Participants in interviews, case reports and focus groups were informed that they would, as much as possible, be kept anonymous, although in many cases their community would be identified for the sake of clarity in terms of understanding which project is being discussed. In order to keep the participants as anonymous as possible, as much of the textual data from interviews, case reports and focus groups provided in the form of quotes is attributed to a 'participant' rather than an interviewee, a coordinator, a mentor or focus group participant. However, in cases where it is felt that clarity is helpful and does not compromise the identity of the participant, particularly when discussing the observations of a mentor or a coordinator, greater specificity is provided. Note that many of the coordinators were also mentors and are sometimes referred as such when they are speaking about their experiences in that role.

Evaluation and Data Limitations

Evaluation Limitations

As with any evaluation, there are many limitations associated with the HBBHM evaluation. Several of these are as a result of the time frame for the evaluation, which started after the commencement of the project and ran until the completion of the project. Some of the key limitations of this evaluation included the following:

- There were no control evaluation populations that did not receive the project intervention against whom the project effects on the target populations could be assessed;
- No questionnaires were undertaken with the boys at which the projects were targeted or with the project coordinators or mentors to determine baselines before the initiation of the project;
- No long-term evaluation was undertaken thereby limiting assessments of change to those that occurred during the project duration. Thus the question of whether early intervention reduces the rate of mental illness and addictions in men was not assessed. However a key assumption outlined in the project proposal is that improving health outcomes for boys through mentors and transformative activity in a sustained manner will affect their health outcomes positively.

These limitations in particular affect the ability to draw conclusions with regard to the *outcomes* associated with the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project i.e. did the project have positive effects for boys. The data available with regard to outcomes is provided, but it is limited in nature.

Data Limitations

Use of Qualitative Data

Although numbers were collected for as many measures as possible in association with the project evaluation, much of the data is qualitative and based on interviews, focus groups and case reports of participants. In addition, the number of participants in the interviews, focus groups and case reports in which qualitative data was collected was necessarily small given the constraints of the evaluation budget and the number of individuals that could contribute valuable insights regarding the projects. Although qualitative data is a generally accepted type of data, it is harder to generalize from qualitative data garnered from a limited number of participants. Nevertheless, the best efforts were made to collect as much data possible and draw reliable conclusions from the data available.

Surveying Children

A key form of data collected for this evaluation was the survey of boys. A survey of the participating boys in each community, aged 7 to 12, was undertaken utilizing survey monkey. There is limited experience globally with using children, particularly younger children as self-respondents in research, particularly survey research as it is a relatively new practice. Much of what is known about undertaking survey research is based on surveys of adults (McGee and d'Ardenne, 2009). In addition, most surveys undertaken with children in the past have been interview-based in which the questions are read out by an interviewer. Self-completion questionnaires with children are relatively uncommon and less is known about their efficacy and administration (Read and Fine, 2005).

Nevertheless, there is a growing agreement that children are independent actors and that information about children given by adults, such as parents or teachers, is often inaccurate (McGee and d'Ardenne, 2009). Given that children, aged 7 to 12, were the critical participants in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project, their opinions, with regard to the nature and outcomes of the activities in which they participated, were central to the evaluation.

The literature suggests that children aged 8 and up, and possibly age 7 and up, are capable of participating in self-completion surveys (Borgers et al., 2000; McGee and d'Ardenne, 2009). However, their responses are influenced by more literal interpretation of language, reading ability, greater inclination to satisfice and provide an answer just to get the survey done, and greater suggestibility and inclination to provide answers that they think adults want. Care must be taken to design the survey with an awareness of how children respond to surveys differently than adults due to their more limited developmental stage.

In accordance with the literature, the survey for boys was developed with extreme care. The survey was pretested with two nine year olds and a seven year old in the presence of the evaluator and changes were made in accordance with their responses. Larger words such as

describe, participate, mentor, and relationship were removed. A few questions were rephrased to remove any confusion or negative wording. The survey was also reviewed by all of the project coordinators for suitability.

Additional details on the survey development and the issues associated with surveying children are available in the Evaluation Methodology (See Appendix 1).

Evaluation Questions

The questions addressed in the evaluation were developed based on three main sources:

- The project goals and objectives and theory of change
- The project proposal evaluation questions
- The Community Action Initiative required measures and questions for provincial level evaluation

Project Goals and Objectives and Theory of Change

An overarching requirement for any evaluation is understanding the project's logic model or theory of change. Theories of change are the hypothesized links between the program's action, participants' response and the desired outcomes (Grossman, 2009). For example, if we provide X in sufficient amount to Y, Z will occur. The project theory of change will be reflected in part in the project purpose, goals and objectives.

The stated purpose of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is "to help prevent the onset of mental Health and addictions in men" by working with boys aged 7 to 12 and building mentoring capacity within the region. The goals and objectives of the project are outlined in the table below. In addition to the explicit objectives of the project, there are implicit objectives or strategies associated with each project goal that are outlined in the project proposal and the project evaluation questions contained in the project proposal. Since the project evaluation questions are a critical component of the evaluation, these implicit objectives or strategies are included in the table below:

Table 5: Helping Boys Become Healthy Men Project Goals and Objectives

Helping Boys Become Healthy Men Project Goals and Objectives
GOAL 1: To improve the capacity of communities to successfully mentor boys:
Objective 1.1: To support communities in the region to implement effective mentoring programs for boys at risk, by providing useful, evidence-based information; relevant learning opportunities; and a region-wide ongoing network for mentoring support.
Objective 1.2: To increase awareness, provide mentor training and improve region-wide capacity for effectively mentoring boys, through hosting a region-wide Mentors Make a Difference event by October 2011 (with local community follow-up workshops or events after 6 to 8 weeks).
Implicit Objective: To attract new and existing mentors to training opportunities through an ad campaign and "talk up" promotion.
Implicit Objective: To train new and existing mentors in the region.
GOAL 2: To increase engagement of boys in transformative activities:
Objective 2.1: To increase the number of 7 to 12 year old at-risk boys participating in supportive, positive activities with male role models - including recreation, outdoor challenges, arts and youth groups.
Objective 2.2: To identify individual boys at risk and remove barriers to them participating in community organizations and activities with mentoring elements.
Implicit Objective: To engage boys in activities that are inclusive, challenging, skill building, perhaps risky and of interest to them.
Implicit Objective: To ensure the mentoring of the boys (both direct and through activities) was effective in terms of providing male role models, increasing protective factors and resilience and fostering attachment, social inclusion, healthy activity and self-worth.
Implicit Objective: To use the wrap-around case management model that involves the whole community.
GOAL 3: To foster ongoing learning and support the spread of successful mentoring initiatives in the Kootenay Boundary Region.
Objective 3.1: To evaluate and learn from five diverse and innovative local mentoring projects, and where they prove successful, to support their spread to other communities.
Objective 3.2: To facilitate peer learning and establish a learning network for all KBCSC member agencies and other interested organizations.
Implicit Objective: To ensure that there is a sustainability plan and regional framework in place to support increasing mentoring for the long term, potentially through the project Advisory Committee.
Implicit Objective: To ensure that the learning network includes an online learning network and a resource bank for mentoring programs
Implicit Objective: To publish and make available broadly, the case studies for the five local initiatives.

The original project logic model is provided in Appendix 3. The project logic model outlines the project theory of change, inputs, outputs and outcomes in the short, medium and long term.

As an exercise for the coordinator focus group, the evaluator developed a new working theory of change for the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. This working theory of change model was reviewed by the project coordinators and the regional coordinator in the coordinator focus group and revised based on their input. It is important to stress that it differs slightly from the project goals and

objectives as outlined in the project proposal and reflects their perspectives with respect to *what the coordinators understood they were trying to achieve.*

Thus this theory of change should be considered to some extent the "working theory of change" that was applied in the project and is important to keep in mind when evaluating the project.

The theory of change of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project developed in the coordinator focus group is in the table below:

Table 6: Helping Boys Become Healthy Men Working Theory of Change

Helping Boys Become Healthy Men Project Working Theory of Change
If we provide: ▪ diverse kinds of group mentoring and some one-on-one mentoring opportunities with positive male role models to boys aged 7 to 12 in five communities; ▪ regional training, in the form of a regional Conference, and networking for mentors; ▪ local information events and celebrations in conjunction with the project and ▪ evaluate the project, we will: ▪ increase protective factors and resilience, foster attachment, social inclusion, healthy activity and self worth among the boys involved; ▪ attract new mentors and increase the capacity of communities to successfully mentor boys in the region; ▪ inspire other groups beyond the region to establish mentoring programs; and ▪ learn about what works and what does not with respect to mentoring boys aged 7 to 12. These outcomes will in turn facilitate the spread of successful mentoring initiatives in the Kootenay Boundary region and help prevent the onset of mental health and addictions in men.

Project Proposal Evaluation Questions

In addition to project goals and objectives, the project proposal contained a set of questions to be addressed in the evaluation. These questions are outlined in the table below:

Table 7: Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project proposal evaluation questions

Process Evaluation
QUESTION 1: How will we know we succeeded with the regional event, Mentors Make a Difference?
▪ Track and count the number of attendees, their geographic diversity and the range of organizations involved. (Quantitative) ▪ A post-event survey to judge success against the event's objectives. (Qualitative) ▪ Ask for feedback in the community follow-up sessions. (Qualitative)
QUESTION 2: Did we train mentors in the region - and how well?
▪ At 12 months - # new mentors trained, # existing mentors (coaches etc.) trained. (Quantitative) ▪ Measure depth and extent of learning via survey of trainees. (Qualitative) ▪ Interview number of mentors at 12 months for what is working and what needs improvement.
QUESTION 3: Are we reaching boys directly with mentors and interesting activities?
▪ Track # boys engaged in activities with mentors, by location, frequency and type of activity ▪ Track # boys receiving individual 'case management' support by location and frequency.
QUESTION 4: How will we know that a regional framework and support for increasing mentoring is in place for the long-term?
▪ 6 months, 12 months and 18 months - review the effectiveness and composition of the Advisory Committee through internal review. (Qualitative and quantitative) ▪ Is there an online network in place (6 months) and what are its user stats? (Quantitative)
Summative Evaluation
QUESTION 1: How successful are each of the 5 community initiatives at providing mentorship to at-risk boys? Are we influencing boys positively through effective mentoring?
▪ Each project will be evaluated externally through a case study provided by the local proponents, by external evaluator interviews with project partners, and through analyzing the data on mentors and boys noted above.
QUESTION 2: Which elements of the project should be expanded or spread – and how?
▪ The Regional Advisory Committee will host two learning sessions (near 6 months and 12 months) to review progress and explore the feasibility of spreading projects that appear successful. ▪ The external evaluator will assess local projects and data on regional infrastructure (Q4 under Process Evaluation, above), interview selected partners, and hold mentor focus groups to provide an early summative evaluation (recommendations for next phase of project).
QUESTION 3: How can the work be sustained to meet the mid and long-term outcomes?
▪ Learning sessions at 6 and 12 months will include sustainability review and planning. ▪ External evaluator will look for best practice/success in projects and make recommendations.

Community Action Initiative Evaluation Questions

The Community Action Initiative (CAI) Toolkit for Creating a Project Evaluation Plan outlines six performance measures and 21 related questions that are required to enable provincial level evaluations. (These performance measures and questions are outlined in Appendix 4). These questions also had to be addressed to some degree in the evaluation, while recognizing that some of them were more or less relevant to the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men Project.

Emergent Data

Projects evolve as they are implemented and different components of projects are implemented more fully than others. Thus the evaluation questions and focus should also evolve somewhat to capture emerging ideas and knowledge and theories of change, and place less emphasis on project elements that were less fully implemented and for which there is less data. In addition, there are some components of the evaluation for which the project participants were unable to provide data, due to time restrictions or changes in the manner in which the projects were implemented. Efforts were made to identify and track important emerging data, ideas and themes and highlight these where relevant in the evaluation.

Organization of the Evaluation Results

The requirement to address 28 questions in the evaluation as well as provide some assessment of the degree to which the project met its project goals and adhered to the working theory of change was not a small task. The degree of overlap among the evaluation questions and the data required to answer them made simply answering the questions in a linear fashion challenging without being repetitive. As a result, the data is presented thematically in six main sections that reflect the melding of the seven project proposal evaluation questions, the 21 CAI evaluation questions and emergent data. These sections include:

- Project Activities
- Support for Project Implementation
- Community Engagement and Support
- Mentoring Capacity
- Engagement of Boys in Transformative Activities
- Project Sustainability and Expansion

Each section contains a sub-section entitled "relevance to the evaluation" that identifies which project goals or objectives, project proposal evaluation questions, CAI performance measures or evaluation questions, and/or emergent data are addressed in that section.

Overall, the project evaluation endeavored, as much as possible, to address both the project proposal evaluation questions outlined above and the CAI evaluation questions, while recognizing the reality of project implementation and the working theory of change, and capturing other emergent data, ideas and results of value. All efforts were made to capture as much data as possible. However, in some cases requested data was not provided by communities, due to lack of time or limited record keeping. There were also areas of the evaluation where, due to the nature of the questions being addressed and the age of some of the participants, the quality of the data is less than optimal. These shortcomings in the evaluation are highlighted where they occur. For more details on the development of the specific evaluation questions and performance measures based on the project goals and objectives, proposal evaluation questions and CAI Performance Measures, consult the Evaluation Methodology and Instrumentation (see Appendix 1).

An overview of initial results was provided to the project Steering Committee in visual form on Prezi at http://prezi.com/tm8_f3bxjdaw/july-3-helping-boys-become-healthy-men-evaluation/

Elements of Successful Youth Mentoring Programs

Since youth mentoring appears to be only successful and result in positive outcomes if it adheres to best practices, this section will explore the elements of successful mentoring programs for youth identified in the literature and develop a list of best practices for consideration in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project.

What is Youth Mentoring?

Mentoring has been defined as a "structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement aimed at developing… competence and character (Bazron et al., nd:6). Youth mentoring is to be differentiated from career and other forms of mentoring for adults in both its goals and methods. In most cases, youth mentoring is intended to promote social development and/or academic achievement and career development in youth, generally with an emphasis on one or the other (Nguyen, 2005). Youth mentoring is based on the hypothesis that youth with more positive adult relationships in their lives have better social and educational outcomes than youth without positive adult relationships (Sipe and Roder, 1999).

Traditionally, mentoring of youth was confined to one-to-one relationships between adults and youth (Nguyen, 2005). In recent years, however, the concept of mentoring has expanded to include *group mentoring* where by one adult mentors a group of youth or a group of adults mentors a group of youth (Sipe and Roder, 1999; Nguyen, 2005; Karcher, 2006). Inter-generational mentoring, where the mentor is over 55, peer mentoring, and e-mentoring for youth have also become increasingly practiced (Karcher, 2006). The target of youth mentoring has generally been at-risk youth (Nguyen, 2005).

Group mentoring, the primary form of mentoring practiced in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project, is thought to potentially have some advantages over one-to-one mentoring because it not only includes the development of adult-youth relationships, but also the development of peer relationships (Rhodes, 2002; Karcher, 2006). In addition, youth have the opportunity to observe caring and competent adults interact with other youth (Karcher, 2006). At this point in time, the research suggests that group mentoring most commonly consists of a group of 6 to 10 youth who meet together over time with one mentor or a team of mentors (Karcher, 2006). Group mentoring is also more cost effective and helps to address the challenge of finding sufficient mentors to meet the demand for mentoring (Sipe and Roder, 1999).

Research on Youth Mentoring

The scientific research on youth mentoring is limited and varied with respect to program conceptualization, project goals, study methodologies and measures evaluated (Nguyen, 2005; Philip and Spratt, 2007; Rhodes, 2008). Much of the research is confounded by the lack of control or comparison groups, which makes it challenging to link outcomes definitively to the mentoring intervention (Karcher, 2006). Even using the same evidence, different researchers draw different conclusions regarding the effectiveness of mentoring depending on the weight they give to different data (Rhodes, 2008). These research challenges are particularly true for group mentoring, the focus of this project, for which very little evaluative research exists (Karcher, 2006). The study of group mentoring is further complicated by the fact that there is a wide variation in the types of group mentoring programs in terms of size of the group, the ratio of adults to youth, the frequency with which the group meets and the activities in which they engage (Rhodes, 2002).

As a result, there is little agreement on what precisely constitute the elements of a successful mentoring program (Nguyen, 2005). Significant gaps in knowledge remain particularly with regard to long-term effects, negative impact and processes, the degree to which mentoring changes behaviour, and which youth benefit most from mentoring (Philip and Spratt, 2007). At best, the literature can offer some early evidence with regard to the program components that appear to be beneficial. At the same time, the literature strongly suggests that programs that are not run well or do not adhere to best practices have more limited positive outcomes for youth and in fact can result in negative outcomes (Brady et al., 2005; Rhodes, 2008).

What Appears to be Beneficial in Youth Mentoring Programs

The following is a summary of what the literature tells us about what appears to be beneficial in youth mentoring programs that is relevant to the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. Please note that this section was compiled based only on resources that were evidence-based studies or cited evidence-based information. Guidebooks without citations, while often very informative and helpful, were not utilized. It is important to note that much of the research derives from studies of one-to-one mentoring programs. While some of the

principles likely transfer to group mentoring programs, this may not always be the case. Because the Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) program has been so thoroughly evaluated and shows some of the strongest positive results associated with youth mentoring programs, it will be referred to in some instances as a potential example of best practices.

Overall

The research suggests that positive effects from mentoring for youth are found only within programs that have clearly specified goals and processes (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). At the same time, program design and implementation should be flexible (Nguyen, 2005). Monitoring of overall program implementation is associated with greater positive outcomes for youth (Rhodes, 2001; Nguyen, 2005).

Youth mentoring programs can be differentiated based on two main theories of change that underpin program goals. The two main types of youth mentoring approaches are called *developmental* mentoring, whereby the mentor focuses on building a relationship with the youth and *instrumental* mentoring, whereby the mentor focuses on specific skill building with the youth (Karcher, 2006). The theory of change associated with developmental monitoring is that the youth will experience increased social support, which will lead to increased self-esteem and connectedness and then gains in academic achievement (Karcher, 2006). In contrast, in instrumental mentoring, it is believed that the youth will experience an increase in academic achievement, which will in turn foster increased social support and then increases in self-esteem and connectedness (Karcher, 2006). The literature is currently unclear as to which approach to mentoring is more effective in the long-term, although instrumental mentoring that is perceived as too adult-driven has been negatively perceived by youth (Karcher, 2006). Whichever type of mentoring is selected, Karcher (2006) believes that it is critical for programs to clearly state which approach they are taking in order to facilitate better evaluation by enabling comparison of outcomes with project goals.

Program Infrastructure

To be successful, mentoring programs must have sufficient program infrastructure to undertake the many activities associated with making a mentoring program result in positive outcomes for youth including the screening, training, supervision and support of mentors, community engagement and overall program monitoring (Rhodes, 2001). Without this required infrastructure, most mentoring programs struggle (Rhodes, 2001).

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The literature highlights that mentoring projects should be designed within the social and cultural context of the community (Nguyen, 2005) and an understanding of the specific needs of the community and the services already provided in the community (National Mentoring Centre, 2007). The project goals should be clearly stated and developed collaboratively by individuals and groups implementing and participating in the project and the local community (Nguyen, 2005). There should be mechanisms for the support and

involvement of parents, youth and community stakeholders (Grossman and Garry, 1997; Nguyen, 2005). Parental involvement has been identified in the literature as one of the key elements influencing positive project outcomes (Rhodes, 2001; Karcher, 2006).

Mentor Qualities and Eligibility Requirements

Mentors are required to make mentoring projects successful and there is increasing evidence that the attitudes and actions of the mentors themselves play a critical role in the outcomes for youth (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). Poor mentoring can actually be worse than no mentoring as the youth feel the effects of another failed adult relationship (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009).

Having set eligibility requirements and evaluating mentor suitability rigorously contributes to program success (Grossman and Garry; 1997; Nguyen, 2005; MENTOR, 2009). It is recommended that this go beyond just criminal record checks and include face-to-face interviews with the program manager. BBBS utilize written applications, personal interviews, reference checks and criminal records checks to screen mentors (Sipe and Roder, 1999). Finding mentors who already understand the mentoring role, have prior experience in mentoring or helping roles and/or are receptive to training contributes to effective mentoring (Grossman and Garry, 1997; Nguyen, 2005). Mentors who are more attuned, or able to identify and solve relationship issues, have higher success rates in forming positive mentoring relationships (MENTOR, 2009). Higher income volunteers appear to last longer than lower income volunteers (Nguyen, 2005). Unmarried mentors aged 26 to 30 appear to be the most stable in terms of longevity of mentoring (Nguyen, 2005). Mentors who view their role as providing opportunities and support for the goals of the youth, rather than guiding youth to positive behaviours and trying to achieve their own goals have greater success (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009).

The research suggests that mentoring relationships that last longer than 12 months have more benefits to youth than those that last fewer than 12 months, and that mentoring relationships that are terminated early may result in negative child outcomes (MENTOR, 2009). As a result, mentor eligibility requirements should include some pre-set commitments and/or screening with regard to the length of time the mentor is willing to be involved in the program and the number of hours per week that the mentor is willing to have contact with the youth that they are mentoring (Grossman and Garry, 1997; MENTOR, 2009; Bazron et al., nd). A minimum of a year commitment with at least one hour a week of mentoring contact is suggested for most one-on-one mentoring programs (MENTOR, 2009). Shorter mentoring commitments may be acceptable as long as both the mentor and mentee have a clear understanding of the expected length of the relationship. The number of hours that the mentor is able to have contact with the youth each week is also important with frequent contact being associated with more positive youth outcomes due to the greater opportunities to establish a supportive relationship (MENTOR, 2009).

If matching is to be undertaken, matching mentors with youth based on skills and common interests appears to be the most effective, rather than matching based on age, gender, race or ethnic background, which do not appear to have any bearing on the success of the

relationship (Grossman and Garry, 1997; MENTOR, 2009). Nevertheless, there is some evidence that boys matched with male mentors experience greater benefits in terms of avoiding certain criminal activities (Bazron et al., nd).

Mentor Training, Support and Recognition

The needs of mentors matter. The research shows that when mentors are not given a clear outline of what to expect in terms of the rewards and challenges of mentoring and what they can hope to achieve by mentoring, they are more likely to quit (MENTOR, 2009). Training for mentors is strongly associated with larger positive program outcomes (Grossman and Garry, 1997; Rhodes, 2001; Nguyen, 2005; Mentor, 2009). Training affects how the mentors perceive their relationship with the youth including feelings of closeness, support, satisfaction and effectiveness, which in turn is believed to increase positive outcomes for youth (MENTOR, 2009). The research suggests that mentors who do not receive training express more dissatisfaction with the mentoring experience, feel they needed more support and were unclear how to approach mentoring (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). Having at least two hours of training is associated with more positive feelings about mentoring, more time spent with the mentee and longer mentor-mentee relationships (MENTOR, 2009). Rhodes (2001) observes that mentors in the BBBS programs which have demonstrated strong positive outcomes for youth, receive at least six hours of training.

Training should focus on ensuring that the mentors have an understanding of their role, appropriate expectations of the mentoring relationship and what it can accomplish, an understanding of any special needs or challenges faced by their mentees, how to develop and sustain positive relationships, and the importance of not terminating the mentoring relationship before the set date (Grossman and Garry, 1997; MENTOR, 2009).

In addition, mentors need ongoing training and support. Mentors that are monitored and supported have a better experience and establish better relationships with the youth and this results in more positive youth outcomes (Grossman and Garry, 1997; Ichikawa and Selby, 2009; MENTOR, 2009). The BBBS standard is that mentors should be contacted at least once a month (Sipe and Roder, 1999). Contact with other mentors also appears to be a valuable component of this ongoing support (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). Ongoing training for mentors is highlighted in the literature as a key element contributing to better outcomes for youth (Karcher, 2006; MENTOR, 2009). Checking in with the mentor on how things are going can result in valuable information to help support the mentor and the mentor-mentee relationship (MENTOR, 2009).

Recognition of the specific contributions of the mentor at the ending of the program is also considered beneficial, as well as some special event to bring closure to the mentor-mentee relationship (MENTOR, 2009).

Youth Recruitment

The literature suggests that at-risk youth show the most benefit from mentoring (Nguyen, 2005; Brady et al., 2005). However one-on-one matches involving youth with serious psychological problems resulting from emotional, sexual or physical abuse are more likely to break up (Nguyen, 2005). There is no evidence that not at-risk or less at-risk youth cannot be included in mentoring programs, particularly in group settings. However they are not likely to experience the same degree of positive outcome as at-risk youth (Brady et al., 2005). That said, if one of the benefits of group mentoring is the development of peer relationships (as discussed below) having a mix of at-risk and not at-risk youth may be beneficial. One-on-one mentoring matches involving youth aged 10 to 12 appear more successful than those involving 13 to 16-year-olds (Nguyen, 2005).

Youth Preparation and Monitoring

It is important that youth entering into mentoring relationships have some understanding of what mentoring is, what to expect and how it can be helpful to them (Grossman and Garry; 1997; MENTOR, 2009). Youth should also be monitored with regard to the quality of the mentoring relationship as the program proceeds (MENTOR, 2009). This can be done using surveys or informal interviews.

Duration, Frequency and Intensity of Mentoring

In order to develop a meaningful relationship, intensity, continuity of contact, frequency of contact and duration are very important (Nguyen, 2005). As outlined previously, the length of time of the mentoring relationship, referred to as *duration* in the literature, is very important (Nguyen, 2005). Youth who have been disappointed or had difficulty in relationships with adults in the past require time to develop trust. The literature suggests that relationships that terminate within the first three months result in negative effects for the youth, while those that last 12 months are longer have positive effects (Rhodes 2001; Nguyen, 2005). The literature strongly suggests that the most successful mentoring relationships are at least a year in duration (Bazron et al., nd).

In addition, as outlined above, the frequency of contact between the mentor and the youth is a critical element of youth mentoring with more positive outcomes for youth being associated with more frequent contact (also referred to in the literature as dosage) (Grossman and Garry, 1997; Rhodes, 2001; Nguyen, 2005; Karcher, 2006). The effective 'frequency of contact' was approximated at about 12 hours of contact per month in one mentoring evaluation (Grossman and Garry, 1997) and five hours a week of contact in another evaluation (Rhodes, 2008).

The intensity of the mentoring refers to the psychological and emotional strength or dept of the mentoring (Karcher, 2006). This is harder to measure, but the literature suggests that intensity matters in terms of achieving positive outcomes (Nguyen, 2005). The intensity of the relationships between mentors and the youth have been found to be lower in group settings than in one-on-one settings (Rhodes, 2002). This is potentially related to the amount of one-on-one time spent with the mentor in a group setting, but also the types of mentors

potentially attracted to group mentoring, who may prefer greater structure and less intimate relationships (Rhodes, 2001). However in a group mentoring setting, youth have more than one individual with whom to form a relationship and initial research on group mentoring suggests that group mentoring does provide some form of peer mentoring and positive outcomes with respect to peer relationships (Rhodes, 2002). Research has suggested that youth actually prefer group mentoring situations over one-on-one mentoring situations (Rhodes, 2002). Nevertheless, in a cautionary note, Rhodes (2002) observed that while it may produce some positive effects, if group mentoring does not result in a sufficiently strong relationship with an adult, it may not truly be mentoring as it was originally conceived, and may not result in the positive effects that have traditionally been found associated with youth mentoring.

Philip and Spratt (2007:41) observe that "Questions of dosage, duration and intensity demand more intensive scrutiny." But at the very least, the evidence strongly suggests that program practices must ensure that mentors and youth meet long enough and frequently enough to form meaningful relationships, particularly in group settings where the intensity of the relationships is lower.

Programming and Nature of Relationships

The nature of the relationship developed between the mentor and the youth has important implications for the outcomes of the project. The literature stresses the importance of positive caring relationships and relationships in which the mentor acts and is defined as a friend and supporter, rather than acting as a teacher or authority figure (Grossman and Garry, 1997; MENTOR, 2009).

Evidence from research with youth involved in mentoring programs suggests that youth prefer mentors who ask about their lives, listen, consider the youth's ideas and preferences and do activities, such as going to movies, coffee shops or sporting events, with them, rather than trying to explicitly achieve specific behavioural or learning outcomes (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). Non-judgmental and non-directed connections appear to be preferred by youth (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). Attempts to address problems by mentors can have negative results, unless a trusting relationship has been established (Rhodes, 2001).

Mentors in mentoring programs have also expressed a preference for unstructured activities that allow them to form more natural relationships with the youth that reflect the needs of the particular youth (Ichikawa and Selby, 2009). However, the literature is not definitive on this front, with some evidence that structured activities result in more positive outcomes for youth (Rhodes, 2001; Karcher, 2006). It may be that a mix of both structured and unstructured activities is best. Rhodes (2002) observed that youth who characterized the level of activity and structure with their mentor as moderate (as opposed to high) had more positive outcomes. Programs that provide information on low cost events, provide tickets to events or access to other structured activities are associated with positive outcomes (MENTOR, 2009). Research also suggests that activities that create the opportunity for youth to try on different pro-social identities have positive effects (Nguyen, 2005).

A special event at the end of the project to reflect on fun times and bring closure to the relationship is recommended (MENTOR, 2009).

Outcomes of Youth Mentoring

Done well in accordance with at least some of the best practices outlined above, research suggests that youth mentoring promotes some better social, academic and behavioural outcomes for *some* youth (Rhodes, 2008). At the same time, there are also many studies that also suggest limited positive effect, no positive effect or negative effect for youth as a result of youth mentoring (Rhodes, 2008). We also remain uncertain regarding the extent and depth of these outcomes. There have also been studies that suggest that positive effects erode to non-significance within a few months of the end of the program (Rhodes, 2008).

All of this strongly suggests the need to be cautious when interpreting outcomes and avoid being unrealistic when setting expectations for the outcomes associated with youth mentoring. As Roberts et al., (2004:513) observed, "Our current state of knowledge on the effectiveness of mentoring is similar to that of a new drug that shows promise but remains in need of further research."

At the same time, the research does suggest some potential for optimism. Programs that adhere to known best practices generally produce better outcomes for youth than programs that do not (Hansen, 2007). There is strong evidence that youth involved in long-term, high quality relationships do experience positive outcomes (Rhodes, 2008). Moreover, new research is suggesting that in large data sets, the large number of neutral or perhaps even negative outcomes can mask the strongly positive outcomes (Rhodes, 2008). In addition, the potentially moderate effect of mentoring must be considered in comparison to the effectiveness of other interventions in promoting pro-social behaviour and academic achievement in youth. It is quite possible that when compared to other interventions, mentoring remains an effective and cost-effective approach despite producing only moderate results.

Overview of Project Activities

This section reviews broadly what happened on a regional level and in each of the five project communities including the actions that that were undertaken, the services that were delivered and the resources and materials that were developed. Data for this section was gathered primarily through the coordinators case study reports, and interviews with coordinators and regional staff.

Relevance to the Evaluation

Project Proposal Evaluation Questions

This section does not specifically address one of the project proposal evaluation questions. However it provides an important overview or context for the subsequent sections of the evaluation report, and helps to address the broad process component of the evaluation: did we do what we said we would?

This section to some extent addresses CAI Performance Measure 4: Numbers and types of project related activities and outputs that address mental health/illness and problematic substance abuse. Specifically, the questions related to CAI Performance Measure 4 are as follows:

- What types of activities and outputs have been delivered through the project?
- What are the major highlights of each activity to report?
- What has been the level of participation or distribution with these same activities and outputs?
- Has the project met all of its funded deliverables and the timelines that were expected?

These questions are not completely addressed in this section. In particular, there is an entire section devoted to community engagement that provides additional information regarding the level of participation in the activities and outputs. A section on key learnings near the end of the document covers what may be considered 'highlights' of each activity when it reviews the coordinators' thoughts with respect to the key things they learned or accomplished as a result of the projects.

Overview of the Community Projects

The five community projects undertaken in Nelson, Castlegar, Trail, Kaslo and Boundary were intentionally diverse in their approaches to improving mentoring capacity and engaging boys in transformative activities.

Engaging Boys in Transformative Activities

A total of almost 400 boys were engaged through the community projects. All of the communities undertook group mentoring with some minor elements of one-on-one mentoring. A major difference among the communities was whether they engaged a large number of boys in one-time events or whether they engaged a smaller number of boys in ongoing activities. The communities can be further differentiated based on whether the ongoing activities were through an existing ongoing group, or a group created as a result of the project, whether they focused on at-risk boys and the types of activities the boys were engaged in.

The table below provides a snapshot of the community projects with respect to the numbers of boys engaged, the model of engagement, the level of contact with the boys and the types of activities undertaken.

Table 8: Overview of the community projects

Community	Number of Boys	Model	Level of Contact with the Boys	Focus on At Risk Boys	Mentor Ratio Ranges	Types of Activity
Nelson	139	One-time events	▪ Eight 5 hour events for 57 boys with 14 to 17 boys at each event ▪ Six 2 hour events for 82 boys with 9 to 13 boys at each event	No (but at-risk boys were identified & cared for)	1 to 2 1 to 3	Art, Nature exploration, Wide games*, Story telling, Food, Environmental education, Opening and closing rituals
Castlegar	26	One-time event Existing ongoing group	▪ One 36 hour event with 14 boys ▪ 2.5 hours/week in existing group for 26 boys and continuing ▪ 12 hours/month in existing group for 26 boys ▪ One on one mentorship for some boys ▪ 1 hour lessons for 5 boys (3 ongoing; 2 for 2 months)	Yes	1 to 1 1 to 7	Camp, Wide games, Food, Music, Taekwondo, Hanging out, Skits, Life lessons, Pick up sports, Board games, Basic construction skills, Biking, Swimming, Snowboarding, Skiing
Trail	200 est. No records	One-time events One ongoing activity	▪ Nine 2 hour events for 10 to 200 (?) boys ▪ Weekly art classes for 12 (?) boys	Yes (at some events)	? 1 to 12	Movie, Book readings, Health and Wellness Fair, Road Sense events, Hockey, Art
Kaslo	15	New ongoing group	▪ 2 hour/twice a week activities for 15 boys for 8 months	Yes	1 to 7 1 to 15	Hiking, Art, Dance, Writing, Helping in Community, Conflict Resolution, Wide games, Hanging out, Bike Maintenance, Biking, Swimming, Igloo Building, Celebrating Birthdays, Sharing Circles, Dance Parties, Pool, Ping Pong, Gym Time
Boundary	56	New ongoing group	▪ 2 hour/once a week activities for 29 boys in groups of 12 to 15 for 7 months ▪ 2 hour/every second week activities for 27 boys in groups to 12 to 17 for 7 months ▪ One 5 hour event for 36 boys	Yes	1 to 6 1 to 8	Football, Archery, Trip to Pines, Hanging out, Food, Wide games, Board games, Pick up sports

*Wide games are games such as Capture the Flag, British Bulldog, or Kick the Can that are played outdoors over a large area.

Improving Mentoring Capacity

The communities also varied with respect to their approaches to improving mentoring capacity. A total of 60 mentors were involved in the projects. One community focused on recruiting and training a large number of ongoing volunteer mentors, while another community utilized mostly existing mentors. Three communities were able to only recruit one to three time mentors (mentors who only mentored on one to three occasions), while mentors paid through the project undertook the bulk of the ongoing mentoring. The table below offers a snapshot of the number of mentors recruited and trained through each community project:

Table 9: Number of mentors recruited and trained

| Community | Frequency of Mentorship | | Recruited through project | | Remuneration | | Training | | | |
	Ongoing Mentors	One to Three Time Mentors	New	Existing	Paid	Volunteer	Through Project	Before Project	TOTAL	Total Mentoring Hours by Mentors
Nelson	8	3	9	2	3	8	9	2	11	258
Castlegar*	12	1	0	12	2	11	0	12	13	416
Trail*	0	22	22	0	0	22	0	0	22	60
Kaslo*	2	5	6	1	4	3	0	1	7	148
Boundary	2	5	6	1	2	5	0	1	7	236

* Numbers for Castlegar, Trail and Kaslo are estimated due to lack of tracking data.

Focus of Efforts

Each project community was given the latitude to apportion their project time and funds as they saw fit, and thus each community had slightly different focuses in terms of the types of outputs they were aiming to generate. The overall goals and objectives of the project are broad and it is unlikely that any one community project could have achieved them all to an equal degree. Choices had to be made with regard to the allocation of limited funds and time. The projects should be evaluated, at least in part, based on how the different communities elected to focus their efforts.

In the coordinator focus group, coordinators were asked to indicate the proportion of their time they spent on six main project tasks including: engaging boys, recruiting and training mentors, engaging the community, personal learning and training, administration and evaluation and sustainability planning. The table below outlines the responses provided:

Table 10: Coordinator percentage focus of effort

Community	Engaging Boys	Recruiting and Training Mentors	Engaging Community	Personal Learning and Training	Administration and Evaluation	Sustainability Planning
Nelson	30%	30%	10%	5%	20%	5%
Castlegar	25%	15%	30%	5%	20%	5%
Trail	10%	0%	70%	0%	10%	10%
Kaslo	70%	10%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Boundary	65%	10%	10%	0%	5%	10%

A few key observations from this exercise are that Kaslo and Boundary spent the bulk of their time engaging boys directly, whereas Nelson and Castlegar split their time more evenly between engaging boys, recruiting and training mentors and engaging the community. Trail, in contrast, spent the majority of its project working with existing community organizations and helping them to engage boys.

Snapshot of the Community Projects

The following provides an overview of each of the community projects:

Nelson

The Nelson project focused on delivering a full-day or two-hour environmental education program to groups of 12 to 17 boys, aged 7 to 12, from a single class, as part of their school day, using six to eight trained volunteer mentors recruited through the project. The mentors provided the program in eleven classes at five different schools, including one private school. Four classes received the full-day session and seven classes received the two-hour session. In total, 139 boys were engaged through the project for either five hours or two hours each. The environmental education program included storytelling about experiences in nature, time outside, experiential games to learn about nature and the environment, hot chocolate, art-making using items collected outside and opening and closing rituals.

In addition to receiving formal training, the mentors participating in the project had a day of reflection and discussion regarding their experiences. Two community meetings were held to inform the larger community about the project, share success stories and undertake sustainability planning.

Castlegar

The Castlegar project consisted of a two-day camp for at-risk boys entitled Camp Esquire. The camp was intended to showcase some of the activities available in the community of Castlegar, including taekwondo, guitar lessons, cub scouts, cadets, and church-based youth groups. Efforts would then be made to assist interested boys in participating in those activities by removing costs or transportation challenges. Fourteen at-risk boys aged 7 to 12 recruited through referrals from community agencies attended the camp with two to three pre-existing mentors. Some of these boys received one-on-one mentoring in the weeks prior to the camp to prepare them for the camp. In addition to the presentations by the community activity providers, the boys played games and hung out at the camp.

Subsequent to the camp, three boys joined taekwondo, two boys elected to take guitar lessons and 14 boys joined an ongoing church-based junior youth group. Barriers were removed to participating in taekwondo by eliminating the cost for the long term. The guitar lessons were made available free of charge and the boys received free guitars and transportation to the lessons. The boys only remained interested in the guitar lessons for a few months and then ceased to participate. The 14 boys remain in the church-based junior youth group, which is free of charge.

An additional 12 boys joined the youth group subsequent to the Camp due to word-of-mouth promotion of the youth group by youth, parents and agencies. The youth group meets once a week for two and a half hours and undertakes a wide array of activities including wide games, hanging out, life lessons and board games. Six youth mentors facilitate the youth group and had received informal mentor training prior to the project, but received ongoing debriefing from a more experienced mentor throughout the project. Participating youth can form one-on-one mentoring relationships with the mentors if they choose to. It is believed that several youth have done so, but no numbers are available.

Trail

Trail focused much of its efforts on working with community partners that it hoped would carry on the activities subsequent to the project to ensure project sustainability. As part of its project, Trail organized a number of one-time community events that were attended by boys and girls of all ages. These included a community Health and Wellness Fair where a few activity providers, such as the cadets, were showcased, a free movie on a Pro-D day, a Family Fun Day with free bouncy castles, face panting and a Bike Safety clinic, and RoadSense training for elementary students of all ages.

In addition, two author book readings were held at the library and at-risk boys aged 7 to 12 from three schools (10 to 15 per school) were invited to attend. Each boy received a free book. The Trail Smoke Eaters hockey team also played hockey three times with 10 to 12 boys at Sanctuary (a pre-teen centre). One of the hockey games included a trip to Glenmerry School where a free pizza dinner was served. The Smoke Eaters donated used hockey sticks to Sanctuary. Two high school students also provided free weekly art classes at Sanctuary but

no numbers are available with regard to the number of participants. Two hundred free swim and skate passes were also given to the local schools to be given to at-risk youth with a focus on boys.

It was hoped in particular that the relationships established with the Library and the Trail Smoke Eaters would result in sustainable mentoring programs that would continue subsequent to the project.

Kaslo

Kaslo established a twice-weekly ongoing after school activity program for approximately 15 boys aged 7 to 12. Boys were recruited with the assistance of the School District and approximately 33% were considered at-risk. The boys undertook a wide variety of activities including hiking, biking, writing, dancing, art, and community service. The boys also received mentoring with regard to relationship development and conflict resolution. Two paid mentors worked with the boys, although one was hired late in the project. Five mentors also worked with the boys on a one- or two-time basis to provide instruction with regard to a specific topic such as bike maintenance, marimba, portrait making, writing and soapstone carving. Two of these mentors were paid and three of them were volunteers.

Boundary

In the Boundary, four ongoing after school activity groups were established for 56 boys aged 7 to 12 in groups of approximately 12 to 17 in three different communities. Two groups met once a week, and two groups met every second week for two hours over the course of 16 weeks. Boys were recruited with the assistance of the School District who identified at-risk boys they felt would benefit from the program. Additional boys joined due to word-of-mouth promotion of the program by the participating boys. Boys participated in a variety of unstructured activities including wide games, pick up sports, board games, gym time and archery. Two paid mentors participated in the project in an ongoing manner. Up to five volunteer mentors participated on a one- to two-time basis to facilitate certain activities, such as archery. The project concluded with a full-day event at a local adventure camp, Pines, which was attended by boys from all four activity groups.

Regional Level Project Activities

The primary regional level project activities undertaken as part of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project include project coordination, the Mentors Make a Difference Conference, and a project Wiki. The majority of regional level project activities were undertaken by a regional coordinator under contract with the Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative (the Co-op), the Executive Coordinator of the Co-op, and a Steering Committee consisting of the Executive Directors of the five participating community service agencies in the project communities. Collectively, for the purposes of this document, the regional coordinator and Executive Coordinator of the Co-op are sometimes referred to as the regional staff, recognizing their regional level oversight role in the project.

Project Coordination

Project coordination, provided by the regional coordinator and regional staff, included ongoing support for community project coordinators, organization of community project coordinator meetings and conference calls, organization of project Steering Committee meetings, preparation of the five community project contracts, contract management, reporting in to the funding agency and overall budget management.

Mentors Make a Difference Conference

A major role of the regional staff was to organize a full-day Mentors Make a Difference Conference. The purpose of the conference was to provide training for mentors participating in the community projects, provide networking opportunities for the individuals engaged in the community projects and mentoring of boys in the region, and to get the communities excited about the prospects of mentoring boys, aged 7 to 12, in the Kootenay Boundary region. The conference took place on April 12, 2012 in Nelson BC and was attended by 66 people from all over the region. The conference provided networking opportunities, overviews of the community projects, a keynote address from Jim Conway of the Search Institute regarding the 40 Developmental Assets for adolescents, and sustainability planning for each project community.

Project Wiki

The project Wiki was intended to provide an overview of the project, updates on the community projects and resources and information regarding mentoring boys, professional development opportunities and youth development opportunities. The project Wiki was set up by the regional coordinator with information in each section. All project coordinators and the evaluator were given administrative ability to update the Wiki as their components of the overall project progressed. Based on the update history of the Wiki, it does not appear that any of the coordinators took advantage of this opportunity. The Wiki user stats will be reviewed in the community engagement section.

Timelines and Budgets

The overall project and community projects all generally met their project deliverables within the timelines and budget expected. All of the projects were completed as planned by September 2012 and the overall project also drew to a close at that time. Only one of the project communities exceeded their original budget of $16,000 by $700 and this was accommodated in the overall project budget. When asked in interviews if they met all of their planned deliverables, all five of the coordinators indicated that they had.

The project contracts for each of the five community projects were generally fairly open-ended with respect to project deliverables. Each contract provided a broad overview of the type of project the community was expected to implement based on the descriptions provided in the project proposal. Examining these descriptions in conjunction with what the communities ended up implementing, four out of the

five communities adhered closely to the project descriptions and deliverables outlined in their contracts. The one exception was a community that was intended to remove barriers to boys participating in activities for boys already taking place in their community. Although this community did have a fair in which some activities for boys were showcased to boys, the community project ended up focusing more on organizing larger community events for boys and girls and some small events with mentoring elements for at-risk boys, rather than working with boys to remove barriers to participation in existing activities.

Support for Project Implementation

This section addresses support received by the project coordinators from those individuals and agencies directly involved in the delivery of the project, including support received from within their own community services agency, from the regional project coordinator, and from other coordinators. Support received from individuals, agencies, organizations and businesses external to the project are reviewed in the next section on community support and engagement.

Data for this section was primarily gathered through coordinators' case study reports, interviews with coordinators and regional staff and the coordinator focus group.

Relevance to the Evaluation

Project Goals and Objectives

Support for project implementation ties in with Project Objective 1.1, which is "To support communities in the region to implement effective mentoring programs for boys at risk, by providing useful, evidence-based information; relevant learning opportunities; and a region-wide ongoing network for mentoring support."

Project Proposal Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Summative Question 2 in the project proposal focuses on assessing which elements of the project should be expanded or spread and requires the evaluator to assess regional infrastructure to support the spread of mentoring.

Types and Level of Support for Project Implementation

Overall most coordinators seemed to feel sufficiently supported as part of their projects. When asked in the coordinator focus group to indicate how well supported they were during their projects, one coordinator indicated that he was adequately supported, one indicated he was well supported and three indicated that they were very well supported. One coordinator observed in his case report:

> *"Honestly, I felt very supported during this entire project, from start to finish. I felt, in fact that the level of support was above and beyond what I would normally expect."*

Regional Coordinator

Coordinators varied in terms of the level of support they accessed from the regional coordinator. Two coordinators did not seek much support from the regional coordinator, while two sought significant support, and one sought occasional targeted support. The regional coordinator provided a number of supports to project coordinators including encouragement, links to other coordinators, links to the evaluator, updates, templates for advertising and information on mentoring educational opportunities. The regional coordinator organized the Mentors Make a Difference Conference and set up the project Wiki. The regional coordinator also provided programming and mentoring advice, where requested.

Coordinators and regional staff indicated in interviews and in the coordinator focus group that the regional coordinator was highly supportive and very accessible. Two coordinators listed the regional coordinator as the most important form of support that they received and the coordinators identified the regional coordinator as one of the most important forms of support in the coordinator focus group. One coordinator felt that the regional coordinator could have checked in more and attended the events in that coordinators community. Another coordinator indicated that the regional coordinator was hired too late in his community project to provided significant support as that project was almost completed.

Other Coordinators

Coordinators met face to face twice during the project and once by teleconference. All coordinators indicated that this was a useful but underutilized support. They noted that it was helpful in sharing ideas, designing their projects, and reducing the feeling of isolation. One coordinator noted that other coordinators had useful information to offer such as links to valuable mentorship training courses on-line. Another coordinator stressed that it was encouraging to know that other coordinators faced similar obstacles in terms of attracting mentors. Even though they met in a limited fashion, coordinators listed other coordinators as one of the most important supports that they received.

Many of the participants (coordinators, regional staff) stressed that more face-to-face meetings or conference calls (monthly, quarterly or at critical project points) to share ideas would have been helpful. Coordinators also listed more meetings of the coordinators as one of the most important supports missing in the project. One coordinator observed:

> *"I think we could have learned from each other as we went along on how to improve each project and not just as a retrospective review at project closure time."*

Another participant noted:

> *"In retrospect, we should have been more insistent on a process of connection and meeting as a group. We wanted to allow a level of autonomy, but ensuring that the coordinators had opportunities to connect and learn from each other would have been helpful."*

Facilitating these meetings was a challenge. As one participant pointed out:

> *"It was very difficult to get six people together that were all part time and all worked different days of the week. Time was a major issue for all of them. It took weeks to find a time that everyone was available."*

Requiring the coordinators to set aside time for these meetings either formally in the contracts or just as a project expectation was suggested by three participants.

Local Community Service Agency

Each of the five community projects was delivered through a local community service agency that is a member of the Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative. Support for project coordinators was provided both by the Executive Directors of the community service agencies and by other staff and members of the board of the agencies.

The Executive Directors of the local community service agencies engaged in the five community projects varied in terms of their level of involvement and the support they provided to their coordinators. Three were relatively hands off, while two met with their coordinators more frequently and were very actively involved in promoting the project and assisting with the administrative aspects of the project such as liability and insurance. One coordinator in particular indicated that he received outstanding support from his Executive Director and community services agency team, and that the Executive Director was one of the most important supports he had during the project. One coordinator indicated that due to staffing changes in the Executive Director during his time as coordinator, he was less well supported.

The community service agency staff and board also varied in terms of their involvement in the community projects. In two communities, they were more actively involved in project design and promotion, participating in a local steering committee or pre-established committee to help get the projects organized. In the coordinator focus group, coordinators listed their agency staff and their agency connections and networks as one of the most important supports that they utilized in their projects.

Training and Information

Training and information was provided to local coordinators primarily through the Mentors Make a Difference Conference and a project Wiki, which contained information on each of the projects, information on the overall project and some links to mentoring resources.

All of the coordinators that attended the Mentors Make a Difference Conference stressed in both interviews and the coordinator focus group that it was a valuable event both in terms of the information provided and the opportunity to meet the other coordinators and learn about their projects. One coordinator observed that it would have been helpful to have the conference earlier, as the information received on the 40 developmental assets from the Search Institute would have been a helpful tool around which to frame one's project.

Aside from the Mentors Make a Difference Conference, most coordinators did not feel they had received much in the way of training and information with regard to mentoring. None of the coordinators utilized the project Wiki with any frequency. However most stressed that they were already knowledgeable and/or trained with regard to mentoring and therefore more information was not necessary and they had not sought it at the outset of the projects. The coordinators listed their pre-existing community knowledge, on-line information on mentoring that they accessed themselves and regional workshops on mentoring not connected to the project, as key supports they utilized during their projects.

In retrospect, two coordinators acknowledged that some information or training in some format (emailed links on new research or practices, flip book or data base on mentoring) would have been helpful. Advance information regarding liability, insurance and release forms was also identified as a key support that was missing for coordinators. Coordinators listed training as one of the key supports missing from the project in the coordinator focus group. Three participants (coordinators, regional staff) stressed that more consistent information or training in advance with regard to what mentoring looks like and group mentoring in particular would have been helpful to ensure that all of the project coordinators had a shared understanding of mentoring. One participant noted that having a framework such as the 40 developmental assets for adolescents age 12 to 18 that was provided in the Mentors Make a Difference Conference as a overarching framework for the project would have been helpful at the outset to ensure all the coordinators and communities were approaching mentoring in the same way. One participant observed:

> *"It would have been helpful if there was more discussion about what mentoring is about and what resources are available. The projects could have been richer with that kind of information."*

Funding

Two coordinators identified the project funding as a key support that they received and coordinators listed funding as a key support in the coordinator focus group. As one coordinator observed,

> *"Without the funding, we could not have worked with boys and contributed nearly as much."*

Overall, however, it was felt that the funding was too limited and too short-term. One Steering Committee member observed:

> *"The limited amount of resources allotted limited program success."*

One coordinator observed however that a small amount of extra funding to support a few extra hours per week would have made a significant difference in terms of the quality of programming and degree of community outreach that he would have been able to provide. In the coordinator focus group, the coordinators indicated that additional funding would have made a large difference in terms of their ability to engage the community and connect as a group and share ideas. In the coordinator focus group, coordinators indicated that ongoing funding to allow for continued engagement of boys is a key support missing from the project.

Project Structure

Coordinators and regional staff differed with respect to the extent to which greater project structure would have served as a support for coordinators. One coordinator indicated that the freedom to deliver the project in the manner in which his community wanted was a key support that he received in the project. However, in the coordinator focus group, coordinators suggested that hours dedicated in the contract for meeting with other coordinators, consistent templates for advertising and other project activities, and a consistent project logo and name might have been helpful supports.

Co-Facilitators

Three project coordinators had the support of paid co-facilitators or assistant mentors in their projects. Two coordinators indicated that these co-facilitators or assistants were very important elements of their support structure.

Regional Advisory Committee/Steering Committee

One coordinator indicated that the Regional Advisory Committee was useful in assisting in project design and implementation.

Regional Network for Mentoring Support

As outlined above, one of the components of Project Objective 1.1 was to establish a regional network for mentoring support. This seems to have also been referred to as a learning network in other project documents. Coordinators were asked in interviews and case studies regarding their participation in and the utility of the regional network for mentoring support. None of the coordinators were able to answer this question with any degree of certainty, with most of them being unclear whether a network had been established and what it consisted of. They were unable to state definitively whether they thought a regional network would be useful without having more information with regard to what it would look like.

Discussion and Conclusions

The literature highlights the importance of program infrastructure in the success of mentoring programs, particularly with respect to the screening, training and support of mentors. Some best practices guides for mentoring programs suggest that the support role must be a full-time position. The infrastructure for the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project was complicated by the fact that it consisted of five individual community projects linked by an overall Steering Committee and Regional Coordinator. Thus the regional coordinator and steering committee provided some of the project infrastructure, while the individual project coordinators and their agencies provided the rest.

The regional coordinator checked in frequently with the coordinators, attempted to support them as much as possible, and provided some training. The coordinators did find the supports provided by the regional coordinator and in some cases their agencies to be very useful. However, the regional coordinator and the community coordinators were all less than 15 hour a week positions and therefore all parties engaged in developing and accessing the project infrastructure faced significant time limitations. The coordinators had limited time to take advantage of training and mutual support opportunities that were offered. The fact that the community projects were all quite different and were not on the same schedule also created challenges in terms of developing a consistent infrastructure. More emphasis on consistency in project timing, the importance of coordinator meetings to share ideas, and the need for some common project frameworks were identified as desirable.

Recommendations

Based on the data collected with regard to coordinator support, the following are recommended for consideration in future projects:

1. Hire and train coordinators at same time;
2. Develop a common data base of information on group mentoring, liability and insurance and programming ideas;
3. Start projects on a similar schedule;

---

4. Build requirements for coordinator meetings and participation in the evaluation into the project contracts;
5. Schedule regular conference calls (monthly/critical points/quarterly) or face to face meetings among coordinators to share ideas;
6. Develop templates for advertising materials and other elements of project promotion; and
7. Consider having an overall project mentoring framework such as the 40 developmental assets for adolescents age 12 to 18 to help guide the community projects and ensure some consistency among projects.

Community Engagement and Support

This section reviews the degree of community engagement and support in the community projects. Data from this section was primarily gathered through coordinators case study reports, interviews with coordinators, regional staff and key informants, the coordinator focus group and attendance records for the Mentors Make a Difference conference and local community meetings.

Project communities engaged and received support from a wide variety of community organizations including their local School Districts, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, local businesses and local volunteer organizations. Coordinators varied in their strategies to engage the community, the proportion of their time they spent trying to engage the community and the degree of success that they achieved in engaging the community.

Relevance to the Evaluation

Community engagement and support was considered an important component of the project not only to facilitate the delivery of the community projects, but also to enhance the spread of awareness regarding mentoring and to build support to sustain the objectives of the project.

Project Goals and Objectives

Community engagement and support ties in with all three project goals to enhance the mentoring capacity of communities, increase the engagement of boys in transformative activities and to foster ongoing learning and support the spread of successful mentoring initiatives in the Kootenay Boundary region. Without some level of community engagement and support, none of these goals are likely to be achieved.

Project Proposal Evaluation Questions

This section partially answers two project proposal evaluation questions:

- Process Question 1: How will we know we succeeded with the regional event, Mentors Make a Difference? (number of attendees, geographic diversity and range of organizations involved in the event and the degree of excitement the event created in the community); and
- Process Question 4: How will we know that a regional framework and support for increasing mentoring is in place for the long-term? (user stats from online network)

CAI Performance Measures

This section also provides results for several CAI performance measures including:

- CAI Performance Measure 1: Description of local and regional cross-cultural and cross-sector partnerships and networks (including networking, cooperating, partnering and merging);
- CAI Performance Measure 2: Description of populations that are being reached through the project during the planning stage, implementation and evaluation;
- CAI Performance Measure 5: Description and level of resources that are being leveraged (outside of the funding provided through the CAI); and
- CAI Performance Measure 6: Descriptions of how CAI funding has facilitated the involvement of community organizations in mental health and substance use issues that do and do not ordinarily engage in such work and how local awareness was fostered within the community of mental health/illness and problematic substance abuse.

Emergent Data

Community engagement and support was also highlighted as a key element of project success early in the project. In the initial Steering Committee focus group, the importance of community engagement emerged as a strong theme. One Steering Committee member observed:

> *"Part of what we want to do is shift the ownership away from social service organizations to communities. So I totally support what is being done in Grand Forks because that is what we need to do to sell it...I think it is a cornerstone of our sustainability plan – engage with the community to the point where the community values this as a community well being effort, not a social service exercise. And we will be more or less successful in doing this."*

The relevance of community engagement and support to the evaluation was also supported by later data. In the coordinator focus group, coordinators indicated that community support was important not only for their ability to deliver their project, but also just the benefit of

connecting with other people working with youth and boys. Coordinators were asked to indicate the importance of community engagement to the sustainability of this initiative. Three coordinators indicated that community engagement was essential to the sustainability of the initiative, while the other two indicated that it was important or very important. Four coordinators listed external community support either in the form of a local steering committee, local mentors, in-kind donations of space, general support, and donations as one of the two most important forms of support they received in their project.

One participant observed,

> *"More community engagement is the key to sustainability. A key part of the agenda of this project was to get communities to see the mentorship of boys as a broad strategy to improve community well being. Communities grumble about boys and their lack of engagement, which can lead to vandalism and crimes. If you could have healthier or more engaged boys, communities should see this as a good thing."*

Pre-Project Engagement

Prior to the submission of the Community Action Initiative proposal, the Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative undertook a fairly comprehensive process to assess community needs and existing services. This process included a survey and eight meetings with 78 participants in communities across its service area and resulted in several summaries of the types of interventions needed for boys and young men to reduce the risk for mental health problems and addictions.

The community of Trail also undertook a comprehensive assessment in the summer prior to the commencement of the project called *The Boys Connection Project*. The Boys Connection Project was intended to link to the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project by providing preliminary research, data collection and project promotion on the number and types of activities available for boys in the Greater Trail Area, their current usage rates and capacities. It was also intended to provide some analysis of the number of unconnected boys in the community, barriers to their connection, and solutions to increasing their connection to pre-existing services. This was accomplished through questionnaires sent out to all known community organizations that provide services to boys in the Greater Trail Area.

Time Spent Engaging the Community

In the coordinator focus group, coordinators indicated that they spent the following proportions of their time trying to engage the community during their project:

Table 11: Proportion of time spent engaging the community

Community	Proportion of Time Spent Engaging Community
Nelson	10%
Castlegar	30%
Trail	70%
Kaslo	5%
Boundary	10%

It should be stressed though that the task of engaging the community was not solely that of the project coordinators. The primary role of the coordinators was to deliver a service to boys. The Mentors Make a Difference Conference was to be a key approach to generating community engagement and support.

Strategies used to Generate Community Engagement/Support

Different coordinators utilized different strategies to generate community engagement and support including email, personal phone calls, newsletters and community meetings. Each coordinator also had their own pre-existing contacts within their community upon which to draw.

Table 12: Strategies used to generate community engagement/support

Community	Email	Mail-outs	Personal Phone calls/meetings	Radio/ Newspaper Interviews	Community Meetings	Advocacy by ED/Board Involvement	Community Service by Boys	School or Agency Newsletter	Coordinator Personal Connections	Posters/Ads	Local Steering Committee
Nelson			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Castlegar	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
Trail	✓		✓						✓		
Kaslo			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Boundary			✓		✓				✓		

Some communities had help in generating support. For example, the regional coordinator had a lot of contacts in Trail and helped with an email campaign to get people to the Mentors Make a Difference Conference. Nelson benefitted from having the Mentors Make a Difference Conference and the Kootenay Boundary Community Services Cooperative (Co-op) located in their community. In one community, the coordinator was reluctant to over-advertise the project as it was targeted at at-risk boys and he wanted to be sensitive to the families and boys involved in the project.

On a regional level, a Kootenay Family Magazine article, the Co-op website and newsletter as well as the Wiki set up by the regional coordinator also provided some level of awareness in each of the communities.

Coordinators were asked to identify the strategies that they felt were most effective in engaging the community in the coordinator focus group. Note that some strategies were successful in some communities and not in others and therefore appear on both lists. They provided the list in Table 13.

Sharing success stories at community meetings was highlighted as an unexpected but effective means of engaging the community. Unfortunately, in most projects, this could not be done until the project was almost over and there were success stories to share, but is something to keep in mind for future projects. In interviews, the engagement of the boys was identified as a key strategy for engaging the community. The boys themselves served as ambassadors for the project, sharing their stories with their parents, friends, teachers and principals. This was particularly the case in Boundary, Kaslo and Castlegar. One coordinator observed:

> *"Interest was generated mostly by the boys themselves. Their enthusiasm brought out parents, grandparents and other casual observers to many of the activities."*

Table 13: Most and least successful strategies for community engagement

Most Successful	Least Successful
Personal phone calls/meetings	Trying to engage small organizations with limited resources
Using existing community connections	Community meetings
Sharing success stories	Newspaper articles
Community meetings	Email
Asking for money from the business community	Mail-outs
Finding organizations that support the project goals	
Mentors Make a Difference Conference	
School newsletters	
Newspaper articles	
Posters/Ads	

Another participant echoed that the boys were a key element of community engagement and indicated that, in Kaslo, the boys playing a game in which they did community services on the main street of the community seemed to be a useful tool for raising awareness and generating community engagement. Participants also stressed the value of having an engaged Executive Director advocating for the project at a Board and community level and having a local steering committee consisting of representatives of various organizations.

A regional communications strategy and local/regional men and boys events were suggested as potential other strategies to engage the community that were not tried but should be considered in the future.

In addition, it was suggested in the coordinator focus group that a focus on particular individuals within organizations that could be engaged and become champions within their organization, rather than approaching organizations as a whole could be a more successful approach to engaging the community.

Organizations/Individuals Engaged by Community

Each community engaged different organizations and individuals in different roles ranging from mentoring to project design. Four out of the five communities indicated that support from their School District was the most important community support that they received. Most of the organizations directly involved in the project ordinarily engage in work related to mental health and substance use issues to some degree. There was some involvement by members of the public, businesses and local governments that likely do not engage in work related to mental health and substance use on a regular basis, but not as much as would have been desirable to enhance the sustainability of the project.

Table 14: Organizations engaged and roles by community

Organization	Ongoing Mentoring	Referrals/ Info regarding Boys	One to Three Time Mentoring	Donations of Food, Funds, Space or Equipment	Mentor Training	Local Steering Committee	Contact with parents	Project Design	Project Promotion	Attended Community Meeting
Nelson										
Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)						✓		✓		✓
Child and Youth Mental Health						✓		✓		✓
School District		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kutenai Art Therapy Institute	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓
Nelson Waldorf School		✓		✓						✓
Aboriginal Trainer					✓					
Men from Community	✓									
Castlegar										
MCFD		✓								
Kootenay Family Place		✓								
Child and Youth Mental Health		✓								
School District		✓								
New Life Youth Group	✓									✓
Tae Kwan Do Academy	✓									
Guitar Instructor	✓									
Men Against Violence Against Women			✓							
New Life Assembly				✓						
Kinnaird Park Youth Group			✓							

Kinnaird Park Community Church				✓						
Cub Scouts			✓							
Air Cadets			✓							
Local Businesses				✓						
Trail										
School District		✓		✓		✓				
Trail Library			✓	✓			✓	✓		
Trail Smoke Eaters Hockey Team			✓							
City of Trail				✓						
Sanctuary Pre-Teen Centre				✓						
High School Students	✓		✓							
Air Cadets			✓							
Local Businesses				✓						
Kaslo										
School District		✓		✓		✓			✓	
Local Artisan, Musician and Writer			✓							
Kaslo Seniors' Centre			✓							
Kaslo and Area Youth Centre				✓						
Freedom Quest										
Local Bike Shop			✓							
Local Businesses				✓						
Boundary										
MCFD						✓	✓		✓	
School District		✓		✓			✓			
Local Recreation Board							✓			
Youth Activity Providers							✓			
Kettle River Wildlife Association			✓	✓						
Métis Association				✓			✓			
Men from Community			✓							

Resources Leveraged Outside of CAI Funding

All of the project communities leveraged some resources outside of the CAI funding to support their projects. In some communities, this was primarily donations of cash to support particular events. In other communities, ongoing in-kind donations of space, equipment and time were provided. The table below outlines the total estimated dollar value of the donations received based on the budgets submitted by the project coordinators and Executive Directors.

Detailed budgets were only received from three out of the five communities and the dollar value of some contributions was not estimated. Some estimates of donations were provided by the communities that did not submit detailed budgets. Due to the varying levels of detail associated with the information received, the amounts are not totaled.

Table 15: Resources leveraged outside of CAI funding

Community	Cash Donations	In-kind Donations of community space, food and equipment	In-kind Donations of time
Nelson	$0	Kutenai Art Therapy Institute (venue): $300 School District (ongoing venues and gym equipment) Nelson Waldorf School (venue, grounds and equipment)	Coordinating Agency (Admin and Assistant Mentor): $15,000 Kutenai Art Therapy (Practicum Students): $1,800 Volunteer Mentors: $7,200 Steering Committee: $2,500 Teacher Counselor Consultations
Castlegar	Teck: Zellstoff-Celgar: Bagels and Brew: Tommy's No Frills:	New Life Assembly (van) Canadian 2 for 1 Pizza (food) Eddy Music (guitars)	
Trail	Teck: $1,700 Community Futures: $500 Hil-Tech: $400 Hall Printing: $35 Canadian 2 for 1 Pizza: $200 Kootenay Savings: $300	City of Trail (swim/skate passes) City of Trail (venue) School District (venue)	
Kaslo		Community Member (food): $200 School District (ongoing venue) School District (gym equipment)	Coordinating Agency (admin): $2,200 Volunteer soap-stone carver Volunteer writer Volunteer artist
Boundary	Coordinating Agency: $1,500	School District (ongoing venues) School District (gym equipment)	Coordinating Agency (admin): $3,630 Volunteer archery instructors

Attendance at Mentors Make a Difference Conference and Community Meetings

The following table lists the number of attendees from each community at the Mentors Make a Difference Conference and at local community meetings if they were undertaken.

Table 16: Attendance at Mentors Make a Difference conference and community meetings

Community	Mentors Make a Difference	First Community Meeting	Second Community Meeting
Nelson	20	25	11
Castlegar	10	9	Not held
Trail	9	Not held	Not held
Kaslo	2	12	11
Boundary	6	No data	No data
TOTAL	47	46	22

In total, 66 people attended the Mentors Make a Difference Conference. Nineteen attendees from outside the region or surrounding areas were not included in the totals above, as it was not always clear which community they were associated with. There were five attendees from outside the region, six attendees from Rossland, which could be considered as part of the Trail total, and eight attendees from the Slocan Valley and areas surrounding both Nelson and Kaslo. The higher attendance of people from Nelson at the Mentors Make a Difference Conference may be in part related to the fact that the conference was held in Nelson.

The following table highlights the number of attendees from various types of organization by community at the Mentors Make a Difference Conference based on the attendee's registration forms:

Table 17: Affiliations of Mentors Make a Difference Conference attendees by community

Community	KBCSC /CAI	Local Community Service Agency	School District/ Independent School	Local or Provincial Politician	Other Service Organization	College or University Student	School PAC or DPAC	Mentor	Other / Independent	Total
Nelson	4	2	6		5	1		1	1	20
Castlegar		3		1	2	3			1	10
Trail		2	2	2	2		1			9
Kaslo		1				1				2
Boundary		2	1		2				1	6
Rossland	2				1	1	1		1	6
between/around Nelson and Kaslo			2		2	1			3	8
Other	3				2					5
Total	**9**	**10**	**11**	**3**	**16**	**7**	**2**	**1**	**7**	**66**

In addition, in the Mentors Make a Difference Conference evaluation, participants were asked to describe their role in the community with respect to mentoring. In total, 44 conference participants completed the evaluation form. The profiles of the respondents were as follows (Notes: Respondents could pick more than one description for themselves. The number in brackets next to the percentage is the actual number of respondents):

Mentor	55% (24)
Parent	50% (22)
Interested in learning	36% (16)
Supervisor of mentors	27% (12)
Interested in becoming a mentor	20% (9)
Other	27% (12)

The respondents that selected "other" indicated that they are youth workers, teachers, counselors, pastors, directors of mentoring agencies and former mentors.

The majority of the 44 conference attendees who completed the conference evaluation form (80%) indicated that the information provided at the conference was very useful, while 20% classified it as somewhat useful. The degree to which the Mentors Make a Difference Conference served as a training opportunity for mentors will be reviewed in the next section.

Wiki User Stats

As outlined previously, the project Wiki was intended to serve as a means of raising community awareness regarding the project, but also as a means of promoting networking among individuals and organizations engaged in the implementation of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project and involved in mentoring in the Kootenay Boundary region. Overall, the use of the Wiki was fairly limited both in terms of its use as a means of raising community awareness and its use as a networking hub.

Unique Visitors and Page Views

Unique visitors and pages view data provide some sense of how many people are using the Wiki as a source of information and how effective it is as a means of raising community awareness. Over the course of the project, the number of unique visitors per day ranged from a low of 1 per day to a high of 41 unique visitors per day with the average appearing to be in the range of 15 unique visitors per day. Page views per day ranged from a high of 189 per day in February, when the Wiki editing was in progress, to an average range of between 0 and 25 views per day during most periods. Other spikes in page views appear to coincide with editing periods. Overall, 62.5% of unique visitors are from Canada and 35.4% are from the United States. The home page was the most popular page in terms of page views (over 600 views), followed by the Mentors Make a Difference conference (over 300 views) and the project and resource pages, which all had fairly similar view rates (around 200 views each).

Members, Edits and Posts

The number of members, and their edits and posts to the page are indicative of the degree to which individuals and organizations engaged in the project utilized the Wiki as a platform for networking and discussion. In total, 34 individuals signed up as members. These are the individuals that could make edits to the Wiki text or post messages in response to Wiki text. In practice, only two members, one of which is the regional coordinator who established the Wiki made edits to the Wiki in 2011 or 2012. In addition, only one member other than the regional coordinator posted a message on the Wiki. Overall, the membership and the number of edits and posts suggest that the Wiki has not served as an on-line network for individuals and organizations engaged in mentoring in the Kootenay Boundary region.

The generally limited use of the Wiki was supported in interviews. Most participants were not aware of the Wiki, or had not used it and did not see it as a viable means of communicating or establishing a learning network on a regional level.

The use of the Wiki and the potential role of the Wiki in facilitating the creation of an ongoing regional learning network are discussed further in the section on Project Sustainability and Expansion.

Awareness Raised regarding Mental Health/Illness and Problematic Substance Abuse

The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project was not intended to directly raise awareness in the community regarding mental health/illness and problematic substance abuse. Rather, by working with boys aged 7 to 12, and increasing protective factors and resilience and fostering attachment, social inclusion, healthy activity and self-worth, the overall purpose of the project was to prevent the onset of mental health and substance abuse issues amongst that population. Thus, the extent to which the project raised awareness in the community regarding mental health and problematic substance abuse is very hard to measure. Community organizations and individuals engaged in the project were informed of the overall purpose of the project and were made aware of the hypothesized link between working with boys aged 7 to 12 and preventing the onset of future mental health and substance abuse issues. Thus, to some extent, community awareness regarding mental health/illness and problematic substance abuse may have been increased as a result of the project, but not likely to any great degree.

Overall Sense of Community Engagement and Support

Evaluating the overall level of community support and engagement that emerged from the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is a challenge due to the lack of objective data. At best, coordinators, regional staff and other key informants interviewed can offer their reasoned opinions with regard to the level of community support and engagement generated. The number of individuals and organizations engaged in each community and their roles in project delivery provide some insights, as do meeting and conference attendance numbers.

Coordinators were asked to estimate what percentage of their community is aware of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. Their estimates ranged from 3 to 50% but most of them acknowledged that they had no idea. When asked if the project had created a buzz or excitement in their community, only two coordinators indicated that it had created some excitement or excitement in their community. Most participants indicated that they did not have a good sense of how much community support or engagement was generated by the project.

Several participants stressed the significant level of support received from specific community organizations and individuals. One coordinator noted:

"The interest and support from local communities was exceptional and continues, with interested parties working to identify ways of sustaining many of the activities."

Participants from Castlegar and Kaslo indicated that while their communities were not as actively engaged during the project, they became more engaged as the project drew to a close:

"Once the 'heavy-lifting' was done, different groups were more keen to ask if they could assist."

"I see this first year as an awareness campaign to get people thinking about contributing their time as a mentor or to support the kids in town in their own way through their business or on their own."

All of the coordinators observed that asking individuals/organizations to donate time, even just to attend community meetings, was a challenge. One coordinator noted,

"A lot of these people are volunteers and this is just one more thing that they have to do. People pick and choose what they are willing to leave work for and contribute their time to very carefully."

This was echoed by another coordinator who observed that even in the case where organizations have paid employees, those employees are already stretched thin. Both of these coordinators indicated that they had much more success in getting local businesses to contribute funds, than getting volunteers to contribute time.

Some participants felt that broad community support/engagement did not occur as a result of the project. It was noted that attendance at the community meetings in general was lower than hoped for and only three local politicians attended the Mentors Make a Difference Conference and there does not seem to be a lot of evidence of broad community support beyond the community organizations and individuals that engaged in the project. It was felt that in one community, very few people were aware of the project. In almost all of the communities, there was fairly significant engagement by a few specific organizations, and less engagement from others. One participant noted about a particular community,

"There was a variety of bits of engagement."

Discussion and Conclusions

The literature highlights the importance of designing mentoring projects within the social and cultural context of the community, understanding the needs of the community and involving community stakeholders, including parents, in project design and implementation. Community needs assessments were undertaken for both the overall project region and for one specific community (Trail). Community engagement was sought by all coordinators using a variety of methods and to varying degrees of success. Overall, 43 organizations were involved in the project across five communities. Their roles varied from the provision of referrals and donations to project design advice. Some community organizations in some communities, particularly the School District and other social service agencies were very involved in the implementation of the project. The degree to which the broader community, including local politicians, became aware of the value of mentoring boys is not clear, but felt to be low. The degree to which parents were engaged, other than as members of the general community, appeared fairly low and ad hoc based on chance encounters with the coordinator during drop offs or within the community, but specific data was not collected on with respect to parental engagement.

There was an overall sense by some participants that there was greater broad community engagement and knowledge about the project in the communities in which:

- two community meetings were held,
- the local community service agency and its partners were more heavily involved in project design and delivery,
- more people/organizations were significantly involved and therefore able to talk the project up,
- the coordinator had a lot of pre-existing connections and talked the project up in the community, and
- the boys were engaged on an ongoing basis and would spread the word among their parents, friends and teachers.

It was also felt that the smaller communities might have had more awareness because word travels more quickly in a smaller community.

Recommendations

Based on the data collected with regard to community engagement, the following are recommended for consideration in future projects:

1. Develop an overall communications plan or strategy;
2. Undertake more regional level communication including regular updates from all project communities;
3. Develop a formal mechanism for involving parents;
4. Build specific requirements for community engagement into the project contracts including requirements for regular updates to the regional coordinator to feed into the regional communications, and the requirement for at least one community meeting; and
5. Encourage local community service agencies to more actively promote the project.

Mentoring Capacity

This section reviews the degree to which mentoring capacity was improved in the region as a result of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. Data for this section was primarily gathered through coordinators case study reports, interviews with coordinators, regional staff and key informants (including four mentors), the coordinator focus group, the Mentors Make a Difference Conference evaluation, a survey of mentors conducted on-line and a mentoring focus group undertaken in one of the project communities.

Coordinators varied in their strategies to increase mentoring capacity, the proportion of their time they spent trying to increase mentoring capacity and the degree of success that they achieved in increasing mentoring capacity.

Relevance to the Evaluation

Project Goals and Objectives

Improving the capacity of communities to successfully mentor boys is one of three main goals of the Helping Become Healthy Men project and is an important component of the working theory of change associated with the project. A model of improving outcomes for boys by engaging them in transformative activities with male role models is not going to be effective in the absence of male mentors to engage the boys in the activities.

Project Proposal Evaluation Questions

Improving mentoring capacity is the focus of two project proposal evaluation questions:

Process Evaluation Question 1:   How will we know we succeeded with the regional event, Mentors Make a Difference?
Process Evaluation Question 2:   Did we train mentors in the region – and how well?

In addressing process evaluation questions 1 and 2 above, this section will also in part address:

Summative Question 2:   Which elements of the project should be expanded or spread – and how?

Time Spent Improving Mentoring Capacity

In the coordinator focus group, coordinators indicated that they spent the following proportions of their time trying to engage and train mentors:

Table 18: Proportion of time spent engaging and training mentors

Community	Proportion of Time Spent Engaging and Training Mentors
Nelson	30%
Castlegar	15%
Trail	0%
Kaslo	10%
Boundary	10%

Numbers of Mentors by Community

Each community differed in terms of the number of mentors they were able to recruit and train and in turn the total number of hours mentoring that was offered in each community, which was determined by the number of mentors and the number of hours per week they spent mentoring. The table below, which is a repeat of the table provided in the community overview section earlier in this document, highlights the number of ongoing and one to three time mentors engaged and trained in each community. It also indicates whether they were new mentors and whether they were remunerated for their participation.

Table19: Number of mentors recruited and trained by community

Community	Frequency of Mentorship		Recruited through project		Remuneration		Training		TOTALS		
	Ongoing Mentors	One to Three Time Mentors	New	Existing	Paid	Volunteer	Through Project	Before Project	Total Mentors	Total Mentoring Hours	Approximate Hours per Ongoing Mentor
Nelson	8	3	9	2	3	8	9	2	11	258	32
Castlegar	12	1	0	13	2	11	0	12	13	416	35
Trail	0	22	22	0	0	22	0	0	22	60	0
Kaslo	2	5	6	1	4	3	0	1	7	148	74
Boundary	2	5	6	1	2	5	0	1	7	236	118
TOTAL	24	36	43	17	10	50	9	16	60	1118	47

Successes and Challenges in Recruiting Volunteer Mentors

Different coordinators utilized different strategies to try to identify and recruit mentors. It is important to distinguish between paid mentors and volunteer mentors. In three communities, one or more of the mentors in addition to the coordinator were paid to participate as mentors. This discussion focuses on the recruitment of volunteer mentors.

Most of the coordinators utilized direct contact by phone or in person as their main strategy for recruiting volunteer mentors. Three coordinators used their existing community connections and contacted all of the people that they thought might be interested. One coordinator additionally requested his/her agency or other organizations to develop lists of potential mentors to contact, based on the list of activities that the participating boys wanted to undertake. One coordinator observed:

> *"The strategy was a campaign of one-on-one recruitment which identified a significant number of men who were interested and had a variety of interests and skills to offer the group."*

In addition, in Nelson and Boundary other mentors became interested and contacted the coordinator as word of mouth spread about the project and/or men observed their children enjoying the activities.

Most of the coordinators found recruiting mentors challenging as many of the individuals contacted were not willing or able to engage in mentorship for a variety of reasons. As one coordinator observed:

> *"Some mentors, while capable, eager and available, were not available at times suitable to the program. Other potential mentors had challenges with the concept of being an adult interested in youth. They often felt they needed a skill or that they didn't have anything to offer. They were hesitant to try new things."*

The key barriers identified by the coordinators in the coordinator focus group and interviews are outlined in Table 20.

Table 20: Key barriers to being a mentor

Key Barriers to being a Mentor
Lack of time
Lack of interest
Lack of time in the afternoon when boys are available
Fear/concerns associated with dealing with boys and their potential behavioural issues
Speed, cost and complexity of the criminal record check process
Feeling unworthy of being role model/Feeling like they don't have anything to offer
Concerns about the pedophile stigma
Lack of awareness of importance of mentorship
Inability to connect with boys
Inability to make a commitment

In addition to the barriers recruiting mentors, a few coordinators found that retaining mentors is also challenging due to changes in the mentor's life, bad mentoring experiences, inability to appropriately connect with or supervise the mentor, unreliability and unwillingness to adhere to the rules associated with engaging with the boys.

Different coordinators utilized different strategies to address these challenges. One coordinator observed:

> "I just told the mentors to listen to the boys, to talk to them. I told them that you don't have to be a social worker to be a mentor."

In Kaslo, Nelson and Boundary, it was decided to pay one ongoing and two one time mentors for their time. In Kaslo, this was done in order to have sufficient mentorship available for the boys. In Nelson, one of the mentors was paid from the beginning to plan and deliver the educational component of the programming.

Some of the key strategies utilized by coordinators to overcome the barriers to attracting mentors are outlined in Table 21.

Table 21: Key strategies to overcome barriers to being a mentor

Key Strategies to Overcome Barriers to Being a Mentor
Stressing that the potential mentor has something to offer to boys
Bringing passion and enthusiasm for the project
Finding people who care about boys
Offering training and supervision
Eliminating the need for criminal record checks by placing the mentors in larger groups with supervision
Offering some sort of financial recognition in the form of honorariums
Utilizing pre-existing mentors

When they encountered barriers, coordinators also had to choose how much time they spent trying to recruit mentors versus delivering some sort of programming to boys. In three cases, after initial efforts to recruit mentors, the coordinators shifted their focus to ensuring that they provided activities for the boys. As one coordinator observed:

"Everyone said no… So I decided, I've got people and I don't have time to find more. Let's just use the people I've got and see how it goes. It's a trial anyway."

Training and Supervision of Mentors

Training and supervision of mentors is an important element of building mentoring capacity. Mentor training through the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project was provided through the full day regional Mentors Make a Difference Conference held in Nelson in April 2012 and through training provided by the individual project communities. Different project communities took different approaches to offering their own training to mentors. Trail offered no training at all, Kaslo, Boundary and Castlegar offered more ad hoc one-on-one coaching and Nelson offered a full day of formal training.

In the communities that did not offer formal training, a variety of reasons were offered. One coordinator observed that the mentors only had a limited amount of time and that requesting them to undertake training as well as mentoring would be "too much". Another coordinator noted that he was utilizing pre-existing mentors and they were all aware of the basics of mentoring. A third indicated that there was not enough lead-time to organize training and get the projects up and running.

Mentors Make a Difference Conference

The Mentors Make a Difference Conference was intended to be a key component of the training offered to mentors participating in the program. The conference was a full-day session that included networking, learning about the community projects, a keynote speaker on the 40 developmental assets for adolescents age 12 to 18 based on years of research, and opportunities for sustainability planning in community breakout groups. The reviews of the Mentors Make a Difference Conference were very positive. The majority of the 44 conference attendees who completed the conference evaluation form (80%) indicated that the information provided at the conference was very useful, while 20% classified it as somewhat useful.

When asked about their satisfaction with the conference, the majority of the respondents (84%) indicated that they were very satisfied with the conference, while 16% indicated that they were somewhat satisfied. When asked if they were more or less excited about mentoring subsequent to the conference, 97% of respondents indicated that they were more excited about mentoring.

Key reasons mentioned for being more excited about mentoring included: having more resources, tools and ideas for building assets and mentoring (8 respondents), understanding that simple things can make a difference to children (7 respondents), understanding how needed mentoring is (6 respondents), and feeling more networked, supported and connected to other mentors and like-minded individuals in the region (5 respondents).

All of the project coordinators agreed in interviews and the coordinator focus group that the Mentors Make a Difference Conference was an important opportunity for networking and learning about mentoring.

Nevertheless, the Mentors Make a Difference Conference, while clearly a success, was offered fairly late in the project to serve as an effective means of training the mentors for the mentoring they would undertake as part of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. It is also difficult to discern how many mentors participating in the project attended the conference. Only one project mentor self-identified as a mentor in the conference registration form and three mentors (other than the project coordinators) indicated that they attended the conference in the survey of mentors. Nevertheless, 24 conference attendees self-identified as mentors in the conference evaluation, so it is possible that additional project mentors attended the conference.

Formal Training

The formal mentor training offered in Nelson included work with a professional art therapist, environmental educator and Aboriginal Elder psychotherapist and trainer. The mentors also watched mentor training videos and received one-on-one coaching from the coordinator. Of the mentors in the community that completed the survey of mentors, 80% rated the training as very effective and 20%

rated it as somewhat effective. It appears that the training was very important to help the mentors learn about how to mentor, understand why mentoring was needed and feel confident that they had something to offer as a mentor. One mentor observed:

"For me, it was just what I needed at this stage in my development in order to free up my potential and to encourage me to risk stepping out into the unknown. After the day of group training, I had a level of trust in my fellow mentors and the project coordinator that I would be supported."

Another mentor commented:

"The training was really important to get the mentors enthusiastic and make them feel like it was something they could do."

This was echoed in interviews:

"The training was really important to provide me with a framework for mentoring. It was also a chance to discover the talents and gifts of the other mentors. It became clear to me that mentoring was needed and that I was the person to do it. I also realized that there is nothing wrong with mistakes. I knew a lot of these things, but the training put a container on it."

Most of the suggestions for improving the training in this community revolved around the format in which it was offered – two sessions instead of one, more time with the Aboriginal Elder and honouraria to recognize the time contribution.

Ad Hoc Training

The ad hoc training provided in Castlegar, Boundary and Kaslo varied. In Kaslo and Castlegar, it consisted of mostly on the job training – with some pre-briefing with regard to group structure, dynamics and rules in one community, and modeling of appropriate mentoring behaviour by experienced mentors in the other community. As one coordinator observed:

"Mostly, it was a quick pre-introduction to the group; some of the individuals and special needs. I gave them a few simple coaching and mentoring skills to use in the group, such as asking questions instead of giving advice, helping boys to explore their feelings, to be okay with expressing their feelings, how to approach breakdowns in the group dynamics, filled them in on our Agreements we had made as a group, and explained the intention to make the group an inclusive group, where no-one got kicked out, only supported and encouraged to work through difficulties with the knowing that they had full choice to be there or not."

In the third community, the ad hoc training was described as follows by the coordinator:

"I trained them in being able to be there for them, a sounding board, just friendship, offering guidance and just being able to listen if they want to talk, one on one time with them having fun with them. They don't care how much you know, they want to see how much you care first. They want to see that you are going to stick around and care for them and if you do then they will listen to advice that you have to give. You don't need to have a degree to offer good advice, just listen, hear, and show that you care about them. And be consistent."

Data is available from six mentors in the communities where only ad hoc training was offered (two interviews, four surveys). The mentors completing surveys were unclear as to whether more formal training would have helped them. However, one of the mentors interviewed from these communities felt more strongly that training would have been of assistance. He pointed out that he was not certain what the project was trying to accomplish and what he was trying to achieve as a mentor and that this negatively affected his ability to make a difference in the lives of the boys he was working with. He also indicated that it would have been helpful to have some information regarding the boys being mentored in terms of their background, challenges and specific needs.

Importance of Training

In retrospect, most of the coordinators agreed that more formal training in the form of a day or half day workshop would have been helpful to ensure that the mentors had a common understanding of what they were doing and what they were trying to achieve. One coordinator observed:

"It would be good to have an event where we would share some stories, talk about successes so that people can get hyped and then have a speaker so people can speak to mentorships, what does it look like, what are some viable options, what are some tools for your tool-belt and basic stuff like that, but just to bring people together so they know we are connected and we have a mentoring community here."

In the coordinator focus group, coordinators suggested that this training should be engaging and should underscore the value of mentoring.

Ongoing Training and Debriefing

In Nelson, the importance of ongoing training, supervision and debriefing for the mentors was also stressed. The mentors debriefed for fifteen minutes following each mentoring session. The mentors that participated in the mentor focus group in Nelson emphasized the importance of this debriefing opportunity to check in on how the day went, what worked and what did not and just a chance to reconnect as mentors.

The mentors in Nelson also seemed to appreciate the mentor focus group day as a larger opportunity to debrief and share their stories and experiences as mentors. It was a very rich day that allowed the men to consider why they wanted to be mentors, what they learned from their mentoring experience and how the boys experienced their mentorship. Although no data are available with respect to their future mentoring, the opportunity to debrief seemed to solidify these men's intentions to continue to mentor.

The Mentoring Experience

Data regarding the men's mentoring experience was gathered through interviews with four mentors, interviews with the project coordinators, the survey of mentors conducted on-line and a mentor focus group conducted in one of the communities. Only nine mentors completed the survey of mentors and, thus, the results must be viewed in that context. Nevertheless, it highlighted some interesting aspects of some mentors' experiences.

Positive Elements of the Mentoring Experience

When asked about their mentoring experience in the survey of mentors, respondents gave the following responses:

- Very Positive   78%
- Somewhat Positive   11%
- Not Very Positive   11%

Analysis of the survey comments with regard to why they mentor suggest that men mentor because they:

- have observed that there is a need;
- want to contribute;
- see it as an opportunity to learn; and/or
- believe they have skills to offer.

When asked what was positive about their mentoring experience, survey respondents noted the following:

- making connections with the boys;
- hearing the stories of the boys and mentors;
- seeing the mentor group grow and become confident;
- learning;
- making a difference for one boy;

- knowing that the boys were appreciative of the activities and of the mentors;
- hearing about the benefits from parents and community members; and
- seeing the boys grow individually and as a group.

Some of the comments provided in the survey responses provided critical insight into what the mentors experienced and learned:

"As a man, have the courage to show up, be vulnerable and attentive and part of young boys' lives. Both will benefit enormously."

"I learned that it doesn't take much effort to make a difference in someone's life."

"Never to underestimate the intelligence, curiosity, intuition, creativity and kindness of the boys... They were mostly very amazing and interesting young men."

These responses were added to through the interviews with mentors and the mentor focus group. Mentors interviewed spoke of simple moments where they saw the boys get excited about something, have a breakthrough in terms of making friends, not want to leave, or have an 'aha' moment. They also spoke of the value of working with the other mentors and recognizing their own gifts as mentors – that it was an honour to be trusted by the other mentors. In the mentor focus group, a strong theme revolved around recognizing the value of what they were contributing to the boys.

Video footage of one of the Nelson mentors speaking about his experience is also available on the project Wiki at: http://helpingboysbecomehealthymen.wikispaces.com/e.+Nelson+-+Supporting+Positive+Mental+Health+and+Resilience+in+Boys

While the number of mentors participating in interviews and surveys is not sufficient to draw any strong conclusions, it should be noted that, in the community in which the mentor focus group was conducted, which is also the community in which the mentors were offered formal training, the mentors appeared to consider their experience more positively than in the other communities, as reflected in both survey and interview responses. The mentors in the Nelson focus group indicated that they felt they took a risk by mentoring and that they are "all braver as a result of it" and were more in touch with what they, as men, could offer to boys. One mentor observed:

"We had a real sense of accomplishment and teamwork. The mentors were feeling valued and valuable and able to contribute."

This suggests that perhaps the formal training and follow up focus group are important in order to prepare the mentors and allow them to consolidate their experiences subsequent to mentoring. Mentors at the focus group spoke of being "really grateful for the opportunity to connect with everyone" to discuss their experiences.

When asked what was negative about their mentoring experience, survey respondents noted the following:

- finding the time;
- trying to connect with the boys;
- learning how to work best with the other mentors;
- working with the differing needs and behaviours of the boys;
- offering something of value; and
- managing 8 to 12 year old boys.

The challenges of working with the different needs of the boys and managing young boys in a group seemed to be one of the main challenges associated with the mentoring experience. Mentors in interviews and the focus group spoke of the chaos of dealing with a group of boys. The mentors in almost all of the communities spoke of the challenges of managing a group of boys and trying to deliver some programming. In Kaslo it was decided to hire an assistant mentor to help work with the boys and shift from more tightly scripted programming to more open-ended programming. In Boundary, it was decided to stick with very unstructured programming as that seemed to be what the boys wanted. In both Nelson and Castlegar, one or two mentors elected not to continue mentoring, potentially as a result of some of the challenges in dealing with the boys. One mentor from Kaslo observed:

"The boys were too young and too distracted."

However, after some initial surprise with respect to the level of energy and chaos, mentors in some communities decided to view this as a positive. One mentor in the Nelson mentor focus group observed:

"Even when it was crazy, that was the way it was supposed to be."

The mentor focus group discussed coming to a recognition of the need for boys to be able to take risks and to express the energy of being boys. Another commented:

"We did not always get to a deep level with the boys but we got something."

Overall Changes in Mentoring Capacity

Evaluating the overall changes in mentoring capacity in the Kootenay Boundary Region as a result of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is very challenging. Some of the key criteria to consider are the number of men recruited, the degree to which they were trained, the number of hours they spent mentoring, the nature of their mentoring experience and their intent to mentor again.

In total, 60 men had a mentoring experience as a result of the project. However, some of these men were already mentors. According to the coordinator records, which are incomplete, at least 17 of these men were already serving as mentors in their communities prior to participating in the project and according to the survey, at least 9 of these men had served as mentors before the project. Nevertheless, it is likely that there is between 20 and 35 men who participated in the project had never mentored before. In the community that relied heavily on pre-existing mentors, it is possible that the mentors' experience and commitment to mentoring increased as a result of the project, but those men would likely have already been committed to continue mentoring in the absence of the project.

The number of hours spent mentoring as a result of the project is also relevant. Trail was able to recruit a large number of mentors, but those mentors only spent on average 1 to 3 hours each mentoring boys during the project. In Kaslo and Boundary, a small number of mentors spent a significant number of hours mentoring (72 to 118) but there was not as much sharing of their mentoring experience to attract additional mentors.

The majority of mentors who participated in the survey (9), the mentor focus group (8) and mentor/coordinator interviews (8), felt that their experience was positive or very positive. However given that the survey was anonymous, there is no way of knowing the degree of overlaps between these three groups to get a total number of mentors that expressed that their experience was very positive.

In the survey of mentors, when asked if they intend to mentor boys in some capacity once the project is over, the respondents gave the following answers:

- Yes   67%
- No   22%
- Not Sure   11%

When asked about their perspectives on whether they had built mentoring capacity in their community, all five of the coordinators responded that they had. Several pointed to the fact that there are now at least some men in their community who understand the benefits of mentoring, will advocate for it, and in some cases plan to try to sustain the activities undertaken in the project. One participant from Boundary observed,

"There are at least five healthy males who acknowledge the benefits to youth of an after school program and will continue to advocate and support the concept in any way they can."

A participant from Nelson stressed that even though the Nelson mentors came in with so many strengths already:

"Each of the men trained grew in knowledge and experience in mentoring young boys. In our school district the appreciation of the importance of having men mentor boys has been seen and has created the desire for future opportunities. On a community level, awareness of men coaching / mentoring boys has been heightened as shown by the great attendance at local and regional community events with an outcome of local community members that came together at the regional conference to look at mentoring sustainability."

Participants from Kaslo and Castlegar stressed that for a first-time effort, that the capacity to mentor boys in their community had clearly grown and become more effective.

Discussion and Conclusions

The literature highlights the importance of screening, training, supervision and ongoing support for mentors. In particular, screening should ensure that mentors can meet the time commitments and have an understanding and appreciation for the mentoring role. The degree of focus on mentor recruitment and training clearly varied in each community and each community faced different barriers and advantages in terms of recruiting mentors. Due to the lack of mentors available in most communities, significant screening, other than criminal record checks could not be undertaken as there were not enough mentors available to screen.

Overall, it appears that mentoring capacity was increased in the project communities as a result of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. In total, 60 mentors were involved in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project and offered 1118 mentoring hours. In some communities the capacity was increased more than others. In Trail, the increase was very small. In Nelson, where mentor recruitment, training and ongoing support was a focus and the mentors and spent a reasonable number of hours on average mentoring, it appears that the greatest degree of mentoring capacity was generated in terms of satisfaction with the experience and sheer numbers of men who are prepared and willing to consider mentoring again as a result of this project. The training and ongoing support offered in Nelson emerged as a very key factor in promoting mentor satisfaction with their experience and is strongly consistent with the literature. That is not to understate the efforts and results in the other communities, which are important. Any increase in mentoring capacity is helpful and the extent to which communities learn from their experiences also matters.

Recommendations

1. Focus on helping men understand that they have something to offer and that there is a need for mentorship when recruiting;
2. Provide potential mentors with the opportunity for formal training;
3. Ensure training addresses how to mentor, why to mentor and what to expect from the boys;
4. Consider offering some honorariums or other recognition of the contributions by mentors;
5. Provide appropriate support, supervision and debriefing opportunities for mentors; and
6. Plan regional level mentorship workshops or conferences annually to bring mentors together to share their experiences.

Engaging Boys in Transformative Activities

This section reviews the degree to which boys were engaged in transformative activities as a result of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. Data for this section was primarily gathered through coordinators' case study reports, interviews with coordinators, regional staff and key informants (including four mentors), the coordinator focus group, a survey of boys conducted on-line and a mentoring focus group undertaken in one of the project communities.

Relevance to the Evaluation

Project Goals and Objectives and Theory of Change

Increasing the engagement of boys in transformative activities is the second of three main goals associated with the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. It is based on the following theory of change:

> *Engaging boys in transformative activities that are interesting, fun and potentially risky will increase protective factors and resilience, foster attachment, social inclusion, healthy activity and self worth among the boys involved. This, in turn, will help prevent the onset of mental health and addictions in men, which is the overall purpose of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project.*

This section ties directly in with several project objectives including most of the objectives outlined under Goal 2:

- Objective 2.1: To increase the number of 7 to 12 year old at-risk boys participating in supportive, positive activities with male role models - including recreation, outdoor challenges, arts and youth groups.

- Objective 2.2: To identify individual boys at risk and remove barriers to them participating in community organizations and activities with mentoring elements.
- Implicit Objective: To engage boys in activities that are inclusive, challenging, skill building, perhaps risky and of interest to them.
- Implicit Objective: To ensure the mentoring of the boys (both direct and through activities) was effective in terms of providing male role models, increasing protective factors and resilience and fostering attachment, social inclusion, healthy activity and self-worth.

Project Proposal Evaluation Questions

Engaging boys in transformative activities is the focus of several project proposal evaluation questions including:

Process Question 3:   Are we reaching boys directly with mentors and interesting activities?
Summative Question 1:   How successful are each of the 5 community initiatives at providing mentorship to at-risk boys? Are we influencing boys positively through effective mentoring?

In addition, in evaluating what works in terms of engaging boys, this section will also in part address:

Summative Question 2:   Which elements of the project should be expanded or spread – and how?

Time Spent Engaging Boys in Transformative Activities

In the coordinator focus group, coordinators indicated that they spent the following proportions of their time engaging boys in transformative activities:

Table 22: Proportion of time spent engaging boys

Community	Proportion of Time Spent Engaging Boys
Nelson	30%
Castlegar	25%
Trail	0%
Kaslo	70%
Boundary	65%

A key finding to note from this exercise is that two communities, Kaslo and Boundary, spent the majority of their time engaging boys in transformative activities, while the other communities did not.

Boys Engaged By Community

It is estimated that over 400 boys, aged 7 to 12, were engaged through the projects, although one community that engaged a large number of boys did not keep records and simply provided an estimate of the number of boys that might have attended their community events.

Table 23: Boys engaged by community

Community	Number of Boys
Nelson	139
Castlegar	26
Trail	200 est. (no records)
Kaslo	15
Boundary	56
TOTAL	**436**

Models of Engaging Boys

As outlined previously in this document, all of the communities undertook *group mentoring* with some minor elements of one-on-one mentoring. In most communities, the one-on-one mentoring was undertaken during opportune moments during the group events, although more formal one-on-one mentoring was undertaken in one community.

A major difference among the communities was whether they primarily engaged:

- a large number of boys in one-time events; or
- a smaller number of boys in ongoing weekly or bi-weekly activities.

Two communities also did some engagement of boys by removing barriers to their participation ongoing group or one-on-one lessons including taekwondo, music and art. The communities can be further differentiated based on whether the ongoing weekly activities were through an existing ongoing group, or a group created as a result of the project.

The communities that engaged smaller number of boys in ongoing activities tended to focus more on at-risk boys, while the communities that engaged a larger number of boys in one-time activities focused more on the general population of boys.

Table 24: Models, levels of contact and focus on at-risk boys by community

Community	Number of Boys	Model	Level of Contact with the Boys	Focus on At-Risk Boys
Nelson	139	11 one-time events	▪ 8 5-hour events for 57 boys with 14 to 17 boys at each event ▪ 6 2-hour events for 82 boys with 9 to 13 boys at each event	No (but at-risk boys were identified & cared for)
Castlegar	26	1 one-time event 1 existing ongoing group Some engagement in lessons	▪ 1 36-hour event with 14 boys ▪ 2.5 hours/week in existing group for 26 boys and continuing ▪ 12 hours/month in existing group for 26 boys ▪ One-on-one mentorship for some boys ▪ 1 hour lessons for 5 boys (3 ongoing; 2 for 2 months)	Yes
Trail	200 est. No records	9 one-time events Some engagement in lessons	▪ 9 2-hour events for 10 to 200 (?) boys ▪ Weekly art classes for 12 (?) boys	Yes (at some events)
Kaslo	12	1 new ongoing group	▪ 2 hour/twice a week activities for 15 boys for 8 months	Yes
Boundary	56	4 new ongoing groups 1 one-time event	▪ 2 hour/once a week activities for 29 boys in groups of 12 to 15 for 7 months ▪ 2 hour/every second week activities for 27 boys in groups to 12 to 17 for 7 months ▪ 1 5-hour event for 36 boys	Yes (but all boys welcomed)

Mentoring Hours for Boys

The communities also varied with respect to the number of mentoring hours that each boy received through the project. The model of engagement selected determined the total number of mentoring hours experienced by each boy, which ranged widely from community to community. Communities that focused on one-time events provided a small number of mentoring hours for a large number of boys, while communities that focused on ongoing activities provided a large number of mentoring hours for a small number of boys.

Table 25: Mentoring hours for boys by community

Community	Number of Boys	Hours of Mentorship for Each Boy
Nelson	139	5 hours for 57 boys 2 hours for 82 boys
Castlegar	14-26	146 hours for 14 boys 130 hours for 12 boys
Trail	200 est. No records	1-3 hours for 12 boys (1-5 hours of community events for 200 boys and girls facilitated by women)
Kaslo*	15	116 hours for 15 boys
Boundary	56	37 hours for 29 boys 21 hours for 27 boys

* Based on assumption of 4 hours/week for 29 weeks.

Number of At-Risk Boys Engaged

Estimating the number of at-risk boys engaged in the projects is challenging at best as none of the coordinators kept records on specific numbers of at-risk boys engaged versus not at-risk boys, different projects had different mixes of at-risk versus not at-risk boys engaged and each coordinator had their own definition of at-risk. Based on percentage estimates, or anecdotal descriptions given by coordinators in interviews, Tabel 26 outlines the estimates of the numbers of at-risk boys engaged through the project.

Table 26: Number of at-risk boys by community

Community	Total Number of Boys	Percentage of At-Risk Boys	Estimated Number of At-Risk Boys
Nelson	139	20%	30
Castlegar	26	55%	14
Trail	200 est. (no records)	15%	30
Kaslo	15	33%	5
Boundary	56	65%	36
TOTAL	**433**	**27%**	**115**

Participants differed with respect to whether they thought it was important to focus on at-risk boys versus the larger population of boys. Those that favoured targeting at-risk boys in Castlegar and Kaslo indicated that the at-risk boys are the ones that need the support of a mentoring relationship the most.

"We decided to focus on the boys who needed it the most. The ones with the shortest attention spans and the most trouble focusing. This limited what we could do as a group and meant that some of the boys who were able to focus decided to participate less."

Other participants pointed to the value of having more of a mix of kids and suggested that some of the higher functioning boys could serve as positive role models and provide peer mentoring. Participants observed:

"Society is not segmented into at-risk versus not at-risk normally. Mixed is best because some youth can set examples and set the bar higher."

"We had more mature kids in some groups who took a leadership role."

A few participants observed that labeling at-risk boys by creating projects that target just at-risk boys is not helpful for the boys. Two participants noted that many high functioning boys need help, positive male role models and opportunities too. In Nelson, where the groups contained lower percentages of at-risk boys than most of the other community projects, the mentors felt very strongly that all boys should be included in mentoring programs. One mentor observed:

"I don't know if targeting helps. We are trying to inspire boys to be leaders. We stop bullying through leaders. It rubs off and all the boys get beneficial results. Kids help each other. There are waves of reverberation of positive energy. If we put energy into a high functioning child, that energy will increase the reverberations and all of the kids will benefit."

Recruiting Boys

The communities varied with respect to the approaches they took to recruiting boys. In one community, which went into school classrooms, the recruitment model was based on identifying schools and teachers that were interested in participating and all of the boys in the classes were engaged. In other communities, one or more agencies and organizations assisted in the identification of appropriate "at-risk" boys to participate in the groups. Word of mouth also factored into recruitment as the participating boys told their friends and parents how much fun the group was and additional boys requested to join as a result. One participant from Boundary observed:

"Some parents called and wanted their kids in. So clearly the kids were talking."

The table below identifies the main methods of recruitment employed in each community:

Table 27: Methods of recruiting boys by community

Methods of Recruiting the Boys				
Community	Interested teachers and schools volunteered their classes	School District identified boys they felt would benefit from the project	Other Social Service Agencies identified boys they felt would benefit from project	Word of mouth among boys and parents
Nelson	✓			
Castlegar			✓	✓
Trail		✓		
Kaslo		✓		
Boundary		✓		✓

In identifying boys, the coordinators and the referring agencies generally did not use strict criteria but tended to focus on boys they felt "would benefit" from the activities for a variety of reasons such as poverty, challenged relationships with parents or guardians, absent parents or guardians, behavioural issues in school, and social challenges.

Once the boys were identified, they were generally invited personally to participate in the project by either their teachers or principal or the coordinator.

As a general rule, no community turned boys away. However, in Kaslo, boys were informed that the group might not be undertaking the types of activities that they wished to based on their stated interests in the first few meetings. Some of these boys elected not to participate as a result. In Boundary, boys were invited to a trial event and about 25% chose not to continue on subsequent to their first or second group activity.

Activities the Boys were Engaged In

The activities the boys were engaged in varied widely from community to community. The activities undertaken in each community as identified by the coordinator are outlined in the table below:

Table 28: What the Coordinators said the boys did by community

Community	Types of Activities Boys were Engaged in
Nelson	Art, Nature exploration, Wide games, Story telling, Food, Environmental education, Opening and closing rituals
Castlegar	Camp, Wide games, Food, Music, Taekwondo, Hanging out, Skits, Life lessons, Pick up sports, Board games, Basic construction skills, Biking, Swimming, Snowboarding, Skiing
Trail	Movie, Book readings, Health and Wellness Fair, Road Sense events, Hockey, Art
Kaslo	Hiking, Art, Dance, Writing, Helping in Community, Conflict Resolution, Wide games, Hanging out, Bike Maintenance, Biking, Swimming, Igloo Building, Celebrating Birthdays, Sharing Circles, Dance Parties, Pool, Ping Pong, Gym Time
Boundary	Football, Gym Time, Archery, Trip to Pines, Hanging out, Food, Wide games, Board games, Pick up sports

The boys were also requested to identify what they did during their participation in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men in the survey of boys. They could select more than one choice from a number of potential responses. Their responses varied from community to community and are indicative to some extent of the focus of activities in each community, as highlighted in the table below:

Table 29: What the boys said they did by community

Activity	Overall	Nelson	Boundary	Kaslo
Something outside	**70%**	61%	86%	56%
Hung out	60%	53%	69%	**78%**
Played games	59%	35%	**94%**	67%
Sports/exercise	53%	28%	86%	**78%**
Talked to male leader	46%	49%	36%	56%
Art or music	40%	**63%**	3%	44%
Learned about something	36%	40%	25%	44%
Helped in the community	11%	4%	8%	56%

In Boundary, the focus was more on games, outdoor activities and sports and exercise. Nelson focused more on art and music and outside activities, while Kaslo focused on hanging out, playing games and sports and exercise. Nevertheless, it appears that all of the project communities fulfilled the requirement of engaging boys in healthy activities.

Boys were also asked in the survey to identify the main barriers to their participation in activities in their community. The main reason, selected by 47% of the respondents, was that they did not have sufficient time to participate in all of the activities in their community. This was the top scoring reason offered in both Nelson and Kaslo. In Boundary however, the top scoring reason was that their parents could not afford it. The differences among the communities are highlighted in the table below:

Table 30: Barriers to activities by community

Reason	Overall	Nelson	Boundary	Kaslo
Parents can't afford it	32%	23%	**48%**	33%
No one to drive me	18%	10%	31%	17%
Don't hear about them	34%	27%	44%	17%
Don't have enough time	**47%**	**50%**	41%	**50%**
Feel weird about joining	17%	15%	17%	33%

The option that sufficient or appropriate activities are not offered in their community should also have been included in the survey options and was not. Thus the responses should be interpreted in that light. One of the things that might be worth noting from these results are that boys from Nelson and Kaslo appear to have more opportunities to engage in activities that they are interested in than boys from Boundary and therefore their reaction or interest in the activities offered through the project may be affected by that factor.

Participants were asked to estimate the percentage of the population of boys in their community that could be at-risk. Although the responses varied depending on the criteria utilized by the respondents, most of the responses were around 20%. It is notable though that the Boundary respondents gave higher estimates, suggesting that the at-risk population could be as high as 50% due to poverty issues, a high aboriginal population and a high population of special needs students. They further noted that there are many cost barriers for boys to participate in activities and that transportation is a huge barrier because most of the boys have to bus home, sometimes half an hour or more and therefore cannot participate in any afterschool programs.

Degree to which the Activities were Fun and Interesting

Evaluating the extent to which the boys considered the activities to be fun and interesting was undertaken quantitatively through several questions in the survey of boys and qualitatively through interviews with coordinators, mentors and other key informants, and the mentor focus group.

In Kaslo, Castlegar and Boundary, the activities were selected based on feedback from the boys during the first few meetings, or in one case through a pre-event survey. Thus, the boys in these communities had some input into what they were doing.

When asked if the activities were fun and interesting in the survey of boys, 56% of the boys responded "yes", while 36% responded "sort of". However, their responses varied a fair bit by community, with the Kaslo respondents indicating very strong enthusiasm for the activities. The results of this question are summarized by community in the table below:

Table 31: Extent to which the boys found the activities fun and interesting

Did you find the activities fun and interesting?				
Community*	Yes	Sort of	Not Really	No
Nelson	50%	39%	9%	2%
Castlegar**	0%	100%	0%	0%
Kaslo	88%	13%	0%	0%
Boundary	62%	32%	3%	3%
Totals	**56%**	**36%**	**6%**	**2%**

* No Trail boys completed the survey of boys.

** Only two Castlegar respondents completed the survey so the results are based on only two respondents and therefore must be interpreted with caution.

Boys were also asked to indicate whether they would like to continue doing the activities. Overall, 54% of boys indicated that they would like to continue doing the activities and 20% indicated that they would sort of like to continue doing the activities. Again there was variation among the communities, with Kaslo and Boundary receiving the highest percentage of "yes" responses from the boys. This is summarized by community in the table below.

Table 32: Extent to which the boys would like to continue doing the activities

Would you like to keep doing the activities or do them again?					
Community	Yes	Sort of	Not Really	No	I don't know
Nelson	38%	25%	23%	6%	9%
Castlegar	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Kaslo	78%	22%	0%	0%	0%
Boundary	72%	11%	8%	0%	8%
Totals	**54%**	**20%**	**15%**	**3%**	**8%**

Participants were asked to assess the extent to which they believed the boys found the activities fun and interesting. Respondents in Kaslo, Boundary and Nelson strongly stressed that they believed that the boys found the activities fun and interesting based on observations of the boys, feedback from the boys and feedback from parents.

This feedback was strongest in the Kaslo and Boundary projects. Participants from those communities observed:

"Both boys and parents who were often in attendance for pick up after group indicated that the boys identified the group as "fun" and we received many questions/requests for a continuation after the announced closing date."

"The boys really wanted to keep going. The group had become an important social part of their lives."

"The feedback was over the top. The boys loved the fact that they could just have fun and play and did not have to line up and do all those things they have to do in school."

"The boys were excited and often would show up in my office and say 'guess what we are doing tonight' or 'guess what we did last night' all the time. The fact that they chose to show up consistently week after week suggests that they were having fun."

Participants in Nelson were still very positive about the degree to which the boys found the activities fun and interesting. One mentor observed:

"There were exciting parts of the day for all the boys. Going outside was probably the most exciting moment. Simple things were exciting, like using the magnifying glasses. There was social camaraderie in the art-making. Lots of the best moments for the boys were just being with their friends. I think all of the boys had a good day."

Another commented:

"One kid's mom said that the kid reported that it was the best day ever. There was not as much relationship development or one-on-one time, but at the end of each day, we concluded with the boys realizing that they had had a good day."

Because of the one-time nature of the Nelson mentoring, the men did not have the opportunity to get as much feedback from the boys about the day, and because the boys only experienced a few hours of mentoring (2 to 5) they perhaps did not have as much opportunity to form strong opinions with regard to the degree to which they enjoyed the activities.

In Trail and Nelson, the participants seemed to have less data with respect to the degree to which the boys liked the activities. They had fewer stories or feedback from the boys to share. However they were able to make observations that the boys thought certain activities were "really cool" or "the boys were laughing and having fun."

The results suggest that, in general, the boys found the activities to be fun and interesting, although it appears that they felt this more strongly in the Kaslo and Boundary community projects. If the activities that the boys were engaged in and the degree to which the boys found the activities fun and interesting are examined in conjunction with each other, there is some suggestion that boys prefer activities such as playing games, sports and exercise, hanging out and doing things outside. Further research, however, is required to draw this conclusion with any certainty. It is possible that the slightly lower ratings in the other communities is related to the fact that boys had less time with the mentors in Nelson and there is less data with respect to the boys' preferences in Castlegar and Trail. The fact that in Kaslo and Boundary the boys had input into the activities that they undertook may also have been a factor in their feelings that they liked the activities and wanted to keep doing them. However, focusing on more games, outdoor time, sports and exercise seems like a potentially promising approach for further mentoring programs. One participant suggested that boys enjoy these activities because this kind of unstructured positive play is missing in many boys' lives.

Participants, mostly from Boundary, observed:

"At the beginning I though the kids needed more structure. Now I see the value in the unstructured activities and in the focus on relationships."

"I think what I learned is about the nature of the gap for young boys. They seem to need to be able to play in a safe environment with positive role models."

"The activity-based stuff is key. It seems like boys like just the flexibility of being part of groups with some say in what they are doing and sometimes they want to just play."

"Simplistically, we have never given boys the opportunity to come together in such an informal way before where everyone is valued and safe."

"The boys loved the fact that they could just have fun and play and did not have to line up and do all of those things that they have to do in school."

In the survey of boys, boys were asked to indicate specifically what they liked about the activities that they were engaged in. They were given a pre-set list from which they could choose as many options as they wished. The table below highlights the results:

Table 33: What the boys liked about the activities

What the Boys Liked about the Activities	Overall	Nelson	Boundary	Kaslo
It was fun	73%	**66%**	**83%**	**78%**
I met new people	41%	33%	53%	44%
The male leaders	37%	22%	**56%**	56%
I developed new skills	36%	22%	47%	**67%**
I learned something	34%	**35%**	31%	33%
Nothing	8%	15%	0%	0%

As the table highlights, the fact that the activities were "fun" was a major component of what the boys liked about the activities, although developing new skills appeared also to be important to the boys in Kaslo, and interacting with the male leaders was fairly important in both Kaslo and Boundary.

Boys were also asked in the survey of boys to indicate what they felt could be improved about the activities. They were again given a pre-set list from which they could choose as many options as they wished.

Table 34: What the boys said could be improved about the activities

What the Boys said could be Improved about the Activities	Overall	Nelson	Boundary	Kaslo
More time outside	**55%**	44%	**66%**	**67%**
More playing games	49%	**48%**	60%	22%
More time doing sports	49%	44%	**66%**	22%
More food and social events	41%	28%	60%	44%
More time hanging with boys	39%	35%	46%	44%
More time doing art or music	25%	28%	20%	33%
More time learning about things	15%	7%	20%	22%
More time talking one on one with the male leaders	10%	7%	14%	11%

More time outside, more time playing games and more time doing sports were the highest ranked selections of the boys overall in terms of improving the activities. These were also the top three selections in Nelson and Boundary, and more time outside was the top ranked selection in Kaslo. In Kaslo, however, more time for social events and hanging with boys were the second and third ranked choices.

Relationships with the Mentors and Other Participants

Data was also collected with respect to how the boys felt about the mentors and how they felt about the other boys participating in the project in order to measure changes in feelings of attachment and social inclusion and the extent to whether the mentoring relationship was in general positive. In particular, in the survey of boys, boys were asked if they liked the mentors, if they felt included by the mentors and by the other boys and if they would go to the mentors if they had a problem or needed to talk about something. Anecdotal information was also collected in this regard through interviews.

Boys were asked in the survey of boys whether they liked the man/men who helped with the activities. Overall, 72% of boys said yes, and 21% said sort of, which suggests that positive mentoring relationships were developed. The data does vary from community to community as highlighted in the table below:

Table 35: Extent to which boys liked the men leading the activities

Did you like the man/men who helped with the activities?					
Community	Yes	Sort of	Not Really	No	Only some of them
Nelson	66%	29%	4%	0%	2%
Castlegar	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Kaslo	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Boundary	81%	8%	0%	3%	8%
Totals	**72%**	**21%**	**2%**	**1%**	**4%**

Kaslo and Boundary scored higher in this regard, but this may very likely be related to the longer length of the mentoring relationship in these communities compared with that in Nelson. It is challenging to compare a mentoring relationship that was over 30 or 100 hours in length to one that was 2 to 5 hours in length. Overall, 69% of the boys responding to the survey indicated that they would talk to the men mentoring them if they were concerned about something. The responses by community for that question were very similar to the responses outlined in the table above, with Kaslo and Boundary scoring higher, but again is probably linked to the length of the mentoring relationship. One participant observed:

"The single most beneficial thing about mentorship is relationship and the more ongoing ones are of more value."

Another participant echoed this:

"The ongoing element of mentorship was the best part of this entire project. It fostered deep connection with many of the boys and meaningful connection with all the boys who participated....I see it takes ongoing engagement to really make a difference and be considered a mentor for a young boy."

Nevertheless, the Nelson mentors did feel they connected with the boys, even if it was for a short period of time, but observed that a longer-term relationship would foster a bigger connection. One mentor noted:

"We had 7 men with 13 boys and some of the kids got one-on-one attention. We had a big impact on some of the kids who are not usually the centre of attention in a classroom with one teacher. If we were to work with the kids every other week, we would have a huge effect."

Another Nelson mentor observed:

"One of the most important messages we gave to the boys was – you're okay. We validated the kids."

Likewise, although the survey results for Castlegar are limited, participants felt that strong mentor-boy relationships had formed as a result of the project:

"There have been true, lasting relationships fostered out of this program. Many boys have formed friendships and are being well mentored by men who care about their future."

In total, 74% of the boys who participated in the survey of boys indicated that they felt that the men made them feel like part of the group. The results by community for this question were very close with Nelson and Kaslo scoring slightly higher than Boundary in terms of the percentage of boys indicating that the men made them feel like part of the group.

Boys were also asked to indicate whether the other boys made them feel like part of the group. Overall, only 63% of the boys completing the survey indicated that the other boys made them feel like part of the group. There were also interesting variations in responses to this question by community as highlighted in the table below:

Table 36: Extent to which other boys made the boys feel like part of the group

Did the other boys in the activities make you feel like part of the group?				
Community	Yes	Sort of	Not Really	No
Nelson	74%	21%	3%	2%
Castlegar	0%	100%	0%	0%
Kaslo	86%	14%	0%	0%
Boundary	44%	33%	11%	11%
Totals	**63%**	**27%**	**6%**	**5%**

It is worth noting that Boundary scored lower with respect to this measure as well as the measure with regard to whether the men made them feel like part of the group. This could be related to the nature of the pre-existing relationships in Boundary, or it could also suggest that the Boundary groups focused less on relationship building or was less successful at fostering relationship-building and as a result, the boys in those communities felt less included in the groups than the boys in the other communities. In Kaslo, after some initial attempts at activities that did not work out due to lack of attention or conflicts among the boys, building relationships became even more of a focus. As one participant observed:

"I believe the biggest skill we developed through the project was learning how to get along in a group and to make friends… From the beginning, it was clear that our main goal was to get along and support each other. Next important was what we did (the activities). Getting along and being with the group as it was in the moment always took precedence."

Participants did make reference to sense of belonging and relationship development. In Kaslo and Castlegar, participants observed that some bullying relationships were resolved right at the beginning of the project. One coordinator observed:

"A few long-time bullying relationships got stopped right at the beginning and those boys became friends."

This was a particularly strong theme in Castlegar where two participants pointed to reductions in bullying relationships as one of the major successes of the project. In Kaslo and Castlegar, some of the boys also made friends and learned how better to make friends:

"Some of the boys had a hard time making friends. It was helpful for them to feel like they were part of a group. They came a long way and started to believe they could make friends. They still have a long way to go, but they are no longer driving people away like they once did."

This was also observed in Boundary:

"The boys made new friends and developed respect for kids with different backgrounds. We taught them conflict resolution and how to deal with things differently."

In both Kaslo and Boundary, participants made reference to the notion that the boys felt they had gained social status by being part of something that other boys were not. Participants from those communities observed:

"The boys felt like they were part of something cool."

"The boys thought it was very cool to be in a group that the honour roll students and team captains were not in. The troubled boys were now rock stars and they now had a huge increase in social collateral."

"It gave them something to belong to where they knew they would always be welcome and that they would be respected and supported and encourage to be themselves."

Assessing Change in the Boys

Measuring change in the boys as a result of engaging in the activities undertaken in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is very challenging, particularly in the absence of baseline data, pre-survey data, or data from comparable group of boys who did not experience the intervention of mentoring. The constraints of the evaluation and the number of boys involved simply did not allow for collection of data on measures such as academic outcomes, school behaviour, school attendance and family relationships as are done in more comprehensive analyses of mentoring projects. Yet assessing the degree to which the boys changed as a result of their participation in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is a critical element of assessing outcomes from the project and a key element of answering the summative evaluation question are we influencing boys positively through effective mentoring, and are we meeting the project objective of increasing protective factors such as resilience and self-worth?

In the absence of those types of data, the best data that can be gathered with respect to whether the project activities had a positive impact on the boys are the boys' own assessments of their level of change, and the degree to which the participants observed change in the boys. Stating with certainty that these changes are as a result of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is impossible. However the data provides some useful insights into the types of mentoring activities that could contribute to positive outcomes for boys.

Boys were also asked to indicate whether they learned anything as a result of their participation in the project. Their responses are highlighted in the table below:

Table 37: Degree to which boys learned as a result of the activities

How much did you learn as a result of the activities?				
Community	A lot	A little	Not much	Nothing
Nelson	20%	51%	23%	8%
Castlegar	50%	50%	0%	0%
Kaslo	44%	33%	11%	11%
Boundary	33%	25%	17%	25%
Totals	**27%**	**40%**	**19%**	**14%**

Participants from Nelson, Boundary and Kaslo felt that learning was an important component of the boy's experiences. One mentor from Nelson commented:

"They were excited about even simple things like the magnifying glasses, and being blindfolded outside to see what their senses could pick up. Often it was so chaotic, that we were not getting to a deep level with their learning but we were getting something."

One mentor from Boundary noted:

"They learned how to organize themselves and play without focusing on their electronic devices and without an adult telling them what to do."

At the same time, a few participants noted that they had to keep their expectations in check with respect to how much the boys would learn. One mentor noted:

"We satisfied ourselves that as long as everyone was participating and enjoying some form of activity, we were succeeding."

Boys were asked in the survey to indicate whether they felt better about themselves as a result of the activities. This was intended to measure increases in self-esteem and self-worth. This is a challenging question for boys to answer and probably is a question for which there would be a positive response bias as discussed in the earlier section on surveying children. However overall 39% said yes, and 27% said sort of, which suggests that at least 66% feel at least somewhat better about themselves as a result of the activities. There was some variation among the communities as highlighted in the table below:

Table 38: Degree to which boys feel better about themselves as a result of the activities

Do you feel better about yourself as a result of the activities?					
Community	Yes	Sort of	Not really	No	I don't know
Nelson	32%	29%	20%	5%	14%
Castlegar	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%
Kaslo	57%	29%	0%	0%	14%
Boundary	46%	26%	9%	14%	6%
Totals	**39%**	**27%**	**15%**	**8%**	**11%**

Again the communities that offered more ongoing mentoring relationships scored higher in this regard, which is not surprising as change of this nature is probably more likely to occur with more hours of mentoring.

In the survey, boys were also asked to indicate what they learned about themselves. However, there were no strong trends in the data for this question and the boys in one community filled it out incorrectly resulting in poor quality data. Overall this may have been too difficult a question for the boys to answer and the response choices they were given were too similar to each other.

Participants were very careful about offering opinions with regard to whether the boys felt better about themselves or changed as a result of their participation in the project. Most participants pointed to observations of the boys having fun, and evidence of changes in relationships among the boys and connections among the boys and men and indicated that they just were not sure. When asked if parents or teachers noticed changes in the boys, most participants indicated that it was hard to say. In Boundary, one participant indicated that parents seemed happy because the boys were enjoying the activities and teachers noticed an increase in the social status of the boys who were in the group. In Kaslo, one participant observed:

"Teachers saw big differences in the group and in individuals. The boys are all in the same class. They benefited in terms of how they act amongst each other and their behavior. Teachers observed better behavior and seemed to think that there had been increases in the boys' self-esteem… Knowing that adults are there for them cultivates self-esteem."

Overall, there is too little data to draw any real conclusions about changes in boys' self-worth, self-esteem and resilience, nor is there any basis for saying that changes experienced will be long-term changes. Nevertheless, it appears that the mentoring provided through the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men caused most of the boys to at least state that they felt better about themselves in the period subsequent to the project.

Most Important Factors for Making a Difference for Boys

In an effort to further clarify the key factors that make a difference in mentoring boys, and check in on what was learned through the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project, the coordinator focus group was asked to brainstorm the most important factors for making a difference for boys based on their experiences with the project and elsewhere. The factors brainstormed were grouped based on similarity and then the coordinators were asked to vote on the factors they felt were most important.

The factors identified were grouped into three main spheres relating to relationships, activities and actors. Table 39 outlines the factors in their groupings listed in order of importance based on the votes during the coordinator focus group. The factors are grouped loosely based on similarities.

Table 39: Most important factors for making a difference for boys

Most Important Factors for Making a Difference for Boys
Relationships
Believing in the kids/seeing them /recognizing them as individuals
Establishing an attachment relationship/caring
Showing up and engaging/being consistent
Mentor and boy chemistry/rapport
Allowing for one-on-one mentoring even just briefly
Establishing the right environment – all boys and men
Establishing the right relationships within the group/emotional safety/working together
Activities
Fun
Accessibility/inclusiveness
Giving them an opportunity to contribute and find meaning in the citizenship in the community and group
Helping them to find and express their gifts
Allowing them to express the energy of being a boy and being wild
Giving them the feeling of undertaking and completing a challenge
Food
Learning
Actors
Trained mentors
Kids
Variety of mentors/young and old
Involved and included parents
Involved and included teachers and counselors

One coordinator also pointed out that, to establish a project that reflects all of these factors, funding and community support are required. While the list prepared is not based on scientific study, it does reflect the collective wisdom of a group of individuals who spent the last year engaged in developing and implementing mentoring programs for boys and could serve as a good starting point for future mentoring programs in the region.

Discussion and Conclusions

Overall, 436 at-risk and less at-risk boys were engaged in a wide range of group activities on an ongoing or one-time basis with male mentors through the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project and the majority of the boys indicated that they found the activities fun and interesting and liked the male mentors. The ability to assess outcomes and changes in the boys as a result of the project was limited by the lack of baseline data, control populations, long-term data, and objective measures of change in the boys. When asked if they felt better about themselves as a result of the activities, 39% of the boys said yes, and 27% said sort of, which suggests that at least 66% feel at least somewhat better about themselves as a result of the activities, at least in the short-term. However the probability for some degree of positive response bias is high. Overall, the measurable positive outcomes for boys associated with the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project appear small, but more data would be required to be certain regarding this conclusion.

The literature highlights that positive outcomes for youth are linked to longer duration, greater frequency of contact and greater intensity of contact with mentors. The limited measurable positive outcomes for boys associated with the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project is likely in part linked to the fact that in all of the community projects, the duration and frequency of contact was less than a year and/or less than 12 hours a month. However, the boys who experienced the greatest duration and frequency of contact with mentors stated most strongly that the activities were fun and interesting, that they wanted to keep doing the activities, that they liked the male mentors and that they felt better about themselves as a result of the activities. This suggests that duration and frequency of contact are important factors in generating positive outcomes.

Most of the community projects included a combination of both at-risk and less at-risk boys. Although the literature suggests that at-risk boys may benefit most from mentoring, it does not suggest that combining at-risk and less at-risk boys is undesirable. In fact, if peer mentoring is a significant component of group mentoring, as the literature suggests, then groups that include a combination of at-risk and less at-risk boys may be advantageous.

The literature suggests that moderately structured, youth-led activities are preferred by the youth and may contribute to the most positive youth outcomes. The data collected in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project suggests that boys have a preference for unstructured, fun activities as opposed to primarily learning related activities. Moreover, the projects in which the boys engaged in the most unstructured activities appeared to have the most positive outcomes for boys in terms of the degree to which the boys felt better about themselves as a result of the activities.

Recommendations

1. Establish programs with opportunities for ongoing mentoring relationships with positive male role models;

2. Recognize the importance of mentoring duration and frequency of contact in promoting positive outcomes for boy in mentoring relationships;
3. Engage a mix of both at-risk and less at-risk boys;
4. Ask boys for their input with regard to what activities they wish to engage in;
5. Ensure the boys have opportunities to have fun and contribute to their community;
6. Recognize that sometimes boys need more unstructured play opportunities in a safe environment;
7. Ensure there is some focus on relationship building and conflict resolution skills; and
8. Establish feedback relationships with teachers and parents to gather observations of change in the boys to help foster further learning with regard to what works and what does not work with regard to mentoring boys.

Project Sustainability and Expansion

This section reviews the sustainability planning for the projects that has been undertaken at a regional and at the community level and identifies measures that have been put into place to help promote the expansion and spread of the project to other communities. Data for this section is based primarily on coordinator case studies, interviews, the coordinator focus group and the Steering Committee focus group.

Relevance to the Evaluation

Project Goals and Objectives and Theory of Change

This section focuses on Goal 3 of the overall project, which is to foster ongoing learning and support the spread of successful mentoring initiatives in the Kootenay Boundary Region. It also addresses all of the objectives of that goal which involve learning from the five projects, supporting the spread of successful elements to other communities, establishing a learning network and ensuring that there is a sustainability plan and regional framework in place to support increasing mentoring in the long-term.

Project Proposal Evaluation Questions

This section addresses several of the project proposal evaluation questions including:

Process Question 4:	How will we know that a regional framework and support for increasing mentoring is in place for the long-term?
Summative Question 2:	Which elements of the project should be expanded or spread – and how?
Summative Question 3:	How can the work be sustained to meet the mid and long-term outcomes?

In particular, given that the previous two sections have identified elements of the projects that should be expanded or spread, this section will focus on the 'how' portion of Summative Question 2.

CAI Performance Measures

This section also to some extent addresses CAI Performance Measure 3, which requires a description of evidence-based and culturally appropriate practices and knowledge being created, fostered and shared.

Time Spent on Project Sustainability and Expansion

In the coordinator focus group, coordinators indicated that they spent the following proportions of their time working on project sustainability and expansion:

Table 40: Proportion of time on project sustainability and expansion

Community	Proportion of Time on Project Sustainability and Expansion
Nelson	5%
Castlegar	5%
Trail	10%
Kaslo	5%
Boundary	10%

A key finding to note from this table is that the majority of communities did not spend a significant portion of their time on project sustainability and expansion.

Learning and Sharing Project Results

Key elements of the learning and sharing aspect of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project were the establishment of a learning network, the project evaluation, the sharing of results from the project evaluation. It was stressed that part of the reason that the

community projects were so diverse was that it gave all the participants the opportunity to learn from the projects with regard to what works and what does not. Thus, the fact that some of the projects were more or less successful than others in terms of meeting some of the project goals and objectives is a positive outcome because it gives us the chance to learn more about a variety of approaches to mentoring boys and improving mentoring capacity in a community. As one participant observed:

"We can learn from all of the projects."

Part of this learning and sharing was to be undertaken and shared through a regional learning network. However most of the participants seemed uncertain as to what was intended by a learning network and whether a learning network had been established through the project or not. As one participant noted:

"I was not engaged in the learning network, whatever it is. The evaluation and feedback from the evaluation will be very important in learning."

Another participant noted:

"I think it worked for other communities. But our project was too out of synch with the other projects to take much advantage of it."

The project Wiki was intended to be a component of the project learning network. However, as outlined in the previous section, the user stats for the Wiki were very limited and the coordinators did not see the Wiki as a viable means of networking or communicating with each other or did not have time to use it. One participant observed:

"Wiki was not overall useful for me, but that was more my not spending time to pursue such."

It is unclear what other approaches would be more appropriate in terms of establishing a learning network and who would actually carry out the work to establish and maintain them. As one participant observed:

"We tried the Wiki as a basket for establishing the project learning network. I have been a part of a project where a Wiki was used very successfully this way. The idea of the learning network is to continue to share knowledge so the communities continue to share information regarding mentorship. But how do we do it? The main idea right now is to have a conference every year. People have suggested something like a newsletter or a listserv, but who is going to do it? The point of the Wiki is that everyone owns it and everyone contributes. But this doesn't work if everyone is not on board."

Moreover, as outlined previously in the Support for Project Implementation section, most coordinators felt that although the other coordinators were a very important resource for learning, that informal connection and learning did not occur often enough due to coordinator time constraints during the projects. Nevertheless, one coordinator did point out that this informal learning network, even to the degree that it did occur, was essential and effective.

Most participants pointed to the project evaluation as the most important aspect of learning and sharing project results. The project evaluation is intended to be a key component of identifying and sharing best practices both within the project communities and within the region as a whole. One participant noted:

> *"The written evaluation piece is useful for next steps. Funders want to know what was undertaken. Many funders will not fund a repeat of a project but will fund an expansion or improvement in it."*

Most of the project communities were very supportive of the evaluation and three coordinators spent up to 10 to 12 hours each preparing case reports, filling in tracking spreadsheets, participating in interviews and the coordinator focus group, organizing other participants in their community and filing a final budget report. Nevertheless, only two coordinators kept detailed records with respect to the boys and only three coordinators kept detailed budget records. Not all communities submitted complete records and information for the evaluation.

The project Steering Committee did hold three focus groups related to the project evaluation. The original intention of the focus groups according to the evaluation plan was to review progress and explore the feasibility of spreading projects that appear successful. The Steering Committee did review progress at these meetings and discussed the sustainability of the community projects. However spreading successful projects was not discussed in detail.

The creation and spread of evidence-based and culturally appropriate practices and knowledge through the project (CAI Performance Measure 3) is very challenging to address. Most of the projects did not have a significant cultural component, although in Nelson the mentor training was provided by an Aboriginal Elder, and at least 15% of the boys engaged in the Boundary project would self-identify as aboriginal. Thus, there are few examples of the creation and sharing of specific culturally appropriate practices, although all the projects made efforts to be welcoming and inclusive of boys and mentors of all cultural backgrounds. There was greater focus on creating and spreading evidence-based practices and knowledge through the project evaluation, Steering Committee meetings and the Mentors Make a Difference conference. These efforts have been highlighted in this and previous sections of this report.

Overall, it appears that a long-term broad-based learning network was not established through the project, although there was a fair bit of sharing of information and learning as well as relationship development among the project communities as a result of the Steering Committee meetings, coordinator meetings, Mentors Make a Difference conference and project evaluation.

It was agreed by the project Steering Committee that both the evaluation results and a summary document of the evaluation would be created and shared on the Co-op website and the project Wiki. It remains to be seen whether the project evaluation will result in the sharing of information beyond the project communities, the spread of elements of projects that were considered successful and catalyze the development of a functional long-term broad-based learning network.

Sustainability Planning

Trying to promote the sustainability of the positive elements of the community projects and the regional level project activities is an important aspect of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. Project communities were encouraged on many occasions to undertake sustainability planning and most of them stated a strong commitment to doing so.

Many of the project communities are seeking ways to continue with their projects in some manner either through applying for funding or finding ways for the volunteers to carry on mentoring. Several of the communities already secured some additional funding to undertake further activities related to mentoring. Coordinators and other participants also pointed to the fact that the projects generated some level of awareness and support within the communities with regard to the importance of mentoring, especially in the communities where community meetings were held. This awareness and support may play a role in causing other community organizations to move forward with their own initiatives. The following section provides an update on the status of each of the communities and the region with respect to sustainability planning:

Castlegar

In Castlegar, the church-based Junior Youth Group that all of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men participants joined will be carrying on in perpetuity. Thus, the boys in Castlegar will continue to be engaged in positive activities with male role models. There are also plans and funding (utilizing provincial gaming money) in place to hold another camp in Castlegar to showcase activities to at-risk boys and remove barriers to their participation in those activities.

Kaslo

Kaslo is currently in the preliminary stages of establishing a sustainability plan. However, there is strong support at the community service agency level for continuing the Kaslo project in some manner due to the very high degree of community support for the project

and the very positive feedback from the boys. The local community services agency (North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society) is trying to find ways to continue providing after school activities for boys after once a week and has submitted proposals to the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) and Vancouver Foundation for funding. It is hoped that these programs can start in January subject to funding. Many ideas for future mentoring work are under discussion including increasing the links with the Youth Centre, forming links with Senior High School students as mentors, forming links with the Senior's Centre and organizing overnight camps and outings for the boys. The community services agency also intends to focus more on recruiting, training and supporting mentors in the community and has planned two presentations related to mentoring and parenting for the Fall of 2012 and will offer mentors some support from the agency family support worker. Utilizing some of the community CBT Community Directed Youth Funds for activities for boys and or supporting mentors is also possible and will be decided in a community meeting scheduled for September 2012.

Nelson

There is strong interest from the School District, the local project steering committee, the mentors and the Ministry of Children and Family Development in seeing the project continue in some way. There appears to be a commitment to trying to promote mentoring in a variety of ways in Nelson and the Nelson Steering Committee for the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project will continue to meet around mentorship. The Nelson coordinator is applying for funding to continue the Nelson project. In particular, they are looking for funding to continue and expand mentor training as new potential mentors have expressed a desire to do the training. It is also hoped that funding can be acquired to continue the program that was already run with the men going into the classrooms once or twice and establish a weekly group of boys who will have already met the mentors in their classrooms and may be more interested in participating in the weekly group as a result. Peer mentoring is also being explored. Funding received from Columbia Basin Trust was utilized for a short-term mentoring program for older boys (14 years) regarding issues of male identity and non-violence education. This mentoring was by the Nelson mentors, who participated in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men Project.

The project has resulted in many positive spin offs in the community and the regional project coordinator and one of the Nelson mentors have provided training to the Nelson Recreation staff on youth engagement which was utilized by the trainees in working with children during camps held in the summer of 2012. The Kootenai Art Therapy Institute will be running a boys group in 2012 funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Some of the Nelson mentors may participate. Though groups similar to this have run in the past, there will be a focus on the boys who participated in the Nelson project.

Boundary

There is currently a commitment in the West Boundary to the organization and development of an after school archery club in one of the elementary schools involved in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. Volunteers have already approached the School Board about setting up the club and the coordinator is committed to supporting the project. The School District is interested in supporting the

archery club with some funding. The Boundary community services agency (Boundary Family and Individual Services) is working with the School District to develop a partnership to run after-school programs similar to the ones undertaken in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project, but for a shorter time period and only in the schools identified as having the greatest need. It is hoped that these programs will be running by October 2012.

Trail

A key focus for Trail was to design a project that was sustainable by encouraging other community organizations and groups such as the Trail Smoke Eaters and the Trail Library to develop mentoring programs that they will continue in the absence of project funding. The Trail Smoke Eaters have committed to continuing on in a mentoring role and the library has indicated an interest in continuing to work with children, although they do not plan to organize the Road Sense program again. In addition, the coordinator, through her regular job with the community service agency will be continuing to promote the mentoring work started in the project and is working to set up peer mentoring programs using the leadership students at the local high school to provide mentoring at the pre-teen centre and establishing programs to connect elementary students with seniors. The coordinator will also be preparing a resource guide for youth to highlight the activities already available to youth in the Greater Trail Area. There will also be further efforts to establish connections between existing groups offering activities to children and children in need.

Region

The potential for regional level cooperation was discussed at both the July 3rd and the September 19th Steering Committee meetings and options, such as moving forward with some joint funding applications, collaborating on some small initiatives, keeping each other informed, and investigating the potential for regional-level mentorship training were discussed. Funding possibilities discussed included BC government gaming funding, Healthy Schools funding, the Crime Prevention Action Fund, CBT's social grants funding, CBT's Community Directed Youth Funds and CBT's Community Initiatives funding, as CBT has funded peer mentorship programs in the past. It was emphasized that there is no requirement for moving forward together.

The different project communities and other participants seem to have mixed views regarding a regional approach. Some seem to want a regional approach. As three participants noted:

> *"I think a regional plan would be helpful and would address the need for more community peer support as well."*

> *"There is a richness from a regional approach even though the projects were very diverse because of the sharing and the learning of things that apply to all projects."*

"We need to hear about each other's success stories."

Other communities seem determined to continue on a local community level, and while they may have some interest in a regional level approach are not advocating for it:

"What we can do on a local level will continue."

A Thoughtstream process conducted by the regional project coordinator in advance of the September 19th Steering Committee meeting allowed Steering Committee members to identify and priorities their thoughts with regard to using what was learned from the project, sharing what was learned from the project an the role of the Kootenay Boundary Community Services Cooperative (the Co-op) moving forward.

Priority suggestions for using what was learned identified in the Thoughtstream process included:

- pursuing future funding applications;
- continuing existing projects;
- creating a summary document;
- having a regional meeting/mentoring conference to share results;
- recruiting and supporting key people in each community; and
- sharing what we have learned about engaging boys.

At the September 19th Steering Committee meeting, it was agreed that future funding applications would be considered, a summary document would be created and shared on the Co-op website and the project Wiki and the evaluation results would be posted on the on the Co-op website and the project Wiki and utilized for funding applications.

It was also agreed that it was important to try keep boys mentorship on the agenda of the Co-op and that it could possibly be housed under a broader focus on services for men and boys in general. The Co-op Annual General Meeting in September 2012 will be a key determinant of the resources that can be focused on promoting mentorship for boys and will affect what can be undertaken over the next year. The Everyone's an Asset Builder workshops that will be offered in the project communities by the regional project coordinator in September, October and November 2012 will be an opportunity to bring other people in the community into the conversation and help build a critical mass in the region supportive of mentoring. A Co-op organized learning event focused on mentorship in 2013 was considered a key option for keeping mentorship a focus in the region. It was decided that the Steering Committee would meet again in

November 2012 to finalize some of the aspects of moving forward. The Steering Committee members agreed to try to stay in contact with respect to what funding they were applying for.

Overall Sustainability

The overall sustainability of the project is challenging to evaluate. Certainly each of the project communities appear committed to moving forward with, and seeking funding to support, some form of mentoring initiative for boys in their community. Moreover, based on the discussion at the final September 19th Steering Committee meeting, the project Steering Committee appears committed to continue to try to move the project forward on a regional level in some form and will be continuing their dialogue in this regard.

However, the lack of a clear plan with respect to a regional approach to supporting mentoring initiatives at the time of the conclusion of the evaluation makes the broader regional sustainability difficult to evaluate. It is unlikely that the medium to long term results and impacts of the project are likely to be achieved in the absence of some regionally coordinated approach, unless there is significant commitment on a community level to sustaining the projects. While the communities all seem interested in sustaining the projects, and several have taken clear steps to do so, their long-term commitment and ability to secure funding to support the mentoring of boys is at this point unclear. Some participants had some concerns about the sustainability of the projects. One observed:

"I have some worries regarding sustainability. For sustainability, you need to find traction that is not about finding new funding. You need to find traction in terms of learning on the part of schools, community service agencies, politicians and people who run recreation programs with regard to what boys need."

However, another participant pointed out that it takes more than one year to make a project sustainable:

"I think we would need 3-5 years of running the project before it really took root and became sustainable. It takes time to introduce concepts and new projects to a community and region. This is a project that has its first year under its belt and without a doubt, should be continued."

Regional Framework to Support the Spread of Mentoring

The project proposal makes frequent reference to the establishment of a regional framework to support the spread of mentoring. However it is not precisely clear what this means and it appears that many of the participants in the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project were similarly uncertain.

If the regional framework to support the spread of mentoring refers to the establishment of a learning network and regional sustainability plan to facilitate the spread of mentoring to other communities, then this framework has not yet been established. If the regional framework refers more to the learning already achieved through this project by the communities, the general positive buzz regarding mentoring in the project communities, an informal commitment to share information and the project evaluation, then perhaps a regional framework has been established on some level.

Greater clarity on a regional level with regard to what a regional framework to support the spread of mentoring looks like would be helpful in ensuring that such a framework is established.

Discussion and Conclusions

Overall, all five project communities seem committed to the idea of sharing information and learning from the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project. They all have also undertaken some steps to promote project sustainability. Castlegar and Trail seem to have secured some funding to continue on with some components of the project, and it appears that some project elements will be continued in Boundary on a volunteer basis. Kaslo, Nelson and Boundary are all working to acquire funding through partnerships or grant applications. However in the absence of continued funding, it is not clear how many project components will continue on. The project Steering Committee has also stated a commitment to continue meeting to promote the regional sustainability of the project potentially through joint funding applications and a Co-op organized learning event focused on mentorship in 2013. However a clear plan with respect to a regional approach to supporting mentoring initiatives had not been established at the time of the conclusion of the evaluation.

Although relationships were developed between Steering Committee members and other project participants, and the evaluation results and a summary document of the evaluation will be shared on the Co-op website and project Wiki, it does not appear that a formal learning network or regional framework to support the spread of mentoring has been established as a result of the project and in their absence, it is not clear how widely the learning associated with this project will be shared.

Recommendations

1. Discuss the value of, and the best approach to establishing a formal long-term broad-based learning network;
2. Ensure the results of the Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project evaluation are shared with all of the Co-op partner agencies and all organizations and individuals engaged in mentoring, or involved with boys aged 7 to 12 in the Kootenay Boundary region.
3. Establish a regional agreement to continue to check in regarding individual community mentoring initiatives;
4. Explore possibilities for regional cooperation on mentoring initiatives; and
5. Identify the components of a regional framework to support the spread of mentoring.

Most Important Things Learned or Accomplished

All evaluations should remain open to the possibility of surprise, of unexpected results or learnings for which evaluations questions could not have originally been anticipated. Participants and case study respondents were all asked to identify the most important thing they felt they learned or accomplished. These are presented here just as a check in to ensure that no critical findings were missed in the evaluation. Overall, most of the participants made reference to findings already addressed in the evaluation.

Many participants made reference to learning about the importance of mentoring, and having their communities learn about the importance of mentoring:

> *"Mentoring of boys is important. Just show up as a man and trust that you have something to offer. Pay attention to your relationships. There is community support for this initiative. Our community has a great team of adults wanting to better the lives of boys in our community."*

> *"Enthusiasm for supporting young men in a lot of communities, especially Boundary, Kaslo and Nelson."*

> *"It takes time to make a lasting impact and they deserve it."*

> *"Boys (many of them) are looking for connection and unstructured play."*
> *"This has big potential for changing the contribution of boys to community."*

Other participants made reference to the benefits received by the boys:

> *"Giving so many boys positive reflections on their boyhood and encouragement and hope for their futures."*

> *"The boys in our program benefited hugely from the program, and I think they will feel lost without it. It served those boys who normally are not able to be part of a group, as they have 'abnormal' behaviour issues and have not been raised with culturally-accepted values."*

Some participants felt that learning outcomes were the most important. Participants stressed the value of personal learning and the broader learning of the project communities and Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative:

"The learning was the most important outcome, not any particular results in the kids. But there were some great results for certain kids and mentors."

"Identification of the relative strengths and shortcomings of the local models."

"Being able to work first hand with these boys in order to better understand their strengths, challenges and complexities in an ever changing, highly technical environment."

"At first I was scared to put such a demographic together, but I am not as fearful anymore."

The Helping Boys Become Healthy Men project was in many ways a pilot project to consider the value of mentoring and determine what could be learned about mentoring that could be utilized in future projects. It was approached by the participating social service agencies as an opportunity to experiment with five different community youth mentoring projects and determine what could be learned from each. Thus emphasizing the value of the learning outcomes and ensuring that those learnings are passed on to other communities and utilized to enhance future mentoring programs seems most appropriate at this point.

Conclusions

The Helping Boys become Healthy Men incorporated two main components: 1) a region-wide approach to coordinate mentor training and ongoing community capacity building to engage at-risk boys and 2) five community projects in the communities of Boundary, Trail, Castlegar, Kaslo and Nelson to demonstrate that mentoring and engaging boys in transformative activities have a positive effect on boys. A detailed process and summative evaluation was undertaken based on seven project proposal evaluation questions, the project goals and objectives, 21 CAI evaluation questions and emergent data. Data was collected through coordinator case study reports, a survey of 110 participating boys, a survey of 9 mentors, 17 interviews with project coordinators, regional staff and other key informants in each project community, a mentor focus group, a coordinator focus group, 3 Steering Committee focus groups and a survey of 44 participants at the Mentors Make a Difference Conference.

Overall, 436 boys were engaged in a wide variety of group activities with male mentors over the course of eight months. In total, 60 mentors participated in 1118 hours of mentoring. Although broad community knowledge and support for the projects was felt to be lower than hoped for, 43 community organizations were engaged in a variety of roles including referrals, donations, project design and training. The majority of boys found the activities fun and interesting, liked the men and felt better or sort of better about themselves as a result of their participation in the activities.

The main project evaluation findings were that: more time was required for project coordinators to engage in mutual support, training and framework development; community meetings, agency support and ongoing engagement of boys were essential for increasing community engagement; training and ongoing support are key aspects of improving mentor satisfaction and commitment to mentoring; and greater mentoring duration, frequency of contact and participation in less structured activities appear to result in greater satisfaction on the part of the participating boys and improved outcomes for the participating boys. These findings are broadly consistent with the literature on best practices in youth mentoring.

All efforts were made to collect the best data possible for this evaluation. Nevertheless, these results are very preliminary based on limited qualitative data in some cases. Further research and evaluation of projects, especially research that allows for experimental design, the collection of baseline data on participants, and longitudinal data should be undertaken to confirm best practices in establishing community youth mentoring programs in the Kootenay-Boundary region. The research on youth mentoring is still evolving and it is expected that over the next few years, mentoring practitioners will have a much better idea with regard to what works and what doesn't with respect to improving outcomes for youth through mentoring.

References

Bazron, B. J., L. Brock, N. Read and A. Segal. (nd). *The Mentoring Toolkit: Resources for Developing Programs for Incarcerated Youth (Abridged Version).* National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent and At-Risk. www.neglected-delinquent.org

Borgers, N., E. de Leeuw, and J. Hox. (2000). "Children as Respondents in Survey Research: Cognitive Development and Response Quality," *Bulletin de Methodologie Sociologique.* (66) pp. 60-75.
D' Ardenne, Joanna. (2011). "Cognitive Testing of Web Questionnaires with Children and Young People: Assessments of Visual Design and Technical Feature." *European Survey Research Association*. Lausanne 2011: Presentations and short courses.

Brady, B., P Dolan, M. O'Brien, and J. Canavan. (2005). *Big Brothers Big Sisters Ireland youth mentoring programme: Evaluation report.* Galway Child and Family Research and Policy Unit.

Grossman, J. B., and E. M. Garry. (1997). "Mentoring – A Proven Delinquency Prevention Strategy." *Juvenile Justice Bulletin.* April. www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/164834.pdf

Grossman, J. B. (2009). *Evaluating Mentoring Programs*. Public/Private Ventures Brief. http://www.slideshare.net/sarahmentoring/evaluating-mentoring-programs-ppv

Hansen K. (2007). *One-to-one mentoring: Literature review*. Philidelphia: Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

Karcher, M. J., G. P. Kuperminc, S. G. Portwood, C. L. Sipe, A. S. Taylor. (2006). "Mentoring Programs: A Framework to Inform Program Development, Research and Evaluation," *Journal of Community Psychology* (34:6) pp. 709-725.

Ichikawa, J. and P. Selby. (2009). *COPES Mentor Program: Final Evaluation Report*. Seattle WA. www.casey.org/Resources/.../pdf/**Children**OfPrisonersReport.pdf

McGee, A. and J. d'Ardenne. (2009). *'Netting a winner': tackling ways to question children online: A good practice guide to asking children and young people about sport and physical activity.* Sports Council for Wales. www.sportwales.org.uk/media/.../netting_a_winner_-_english.pdf

MENTOR. (2009). Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3rd Ed. Alexandria, VA. www.mentoring.org

Nugyen, Thu Suong Thi. (2005). "Successful Mentoring in High Schools," *Study of High School Restructuring.* Issue Brief. No. 6, The University of Texas. www.edb.utexas.edu/hsns/HSNSbrief6.pdf

Philip, K. and J. Spratt. (2007). *A synthesis of published research on mentoring and befriending*. Mentoring and Befriending Foundation. http://www.mandbf.org/guidance-and-support/resources/impact-and-evidence/a-synthesis-of-published-research-on-mentoring-and-befriending

Read, J. and K. Fine. (2005). "Using Survey Methods for Design and Evaluation in Child Computer Interaction." Workshop on Child Computer Interaction, Methodological Research at *Interact 2005*, Rome, Italy. www.chici.org/references/**using_survey_methods**.pdf

Rhodes, J. (2001). "Youth Mentoring in Perspective," *The Center* (Summer) Republished *in the encyclopedia of informal education*. http://www.infed.org/learningmentors/youth_mentoring_in_perspective.htm

Rhodes, J. (2002). "Research Corner: Group Mentoring," MENTOR: National Mentoring Partnership. www.**mentoring**.org/downloads/**mentoring**_1323.pdf

Rhodes, J. (2008). "Improving Youth Mentoring Interventions Through Research-based Practice," *American Journal of Community Psychology*. (41) pp. 35-42.

Roberts, H., K. Liabo, P. Lucas, D. DuBois, and T. A. Sheldon (2004). "Mentoring to reduce antisocial behaviour in childhood," *British Medical Journal.* (328) pp. 512-514.

Sipe, C. L. and A. E. Roder (1999). "Mentoring School-Age Children: A Classification of Programs," *Public/Private Ventures*. Winter. http://www.ecs.org/html/Document.asp?chouseid=2850

Tierney, J. P., J. B. Grossman and N. L. Resch. (1995). Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/111_publication.pdf