

Restorative Practices in
Dependency Court
(HOPE Court)
Cohort 3 - Research Report

Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
and School of Criminal Justice
September 2024



Abraham S. Fischler
College of Education and
School of Criminal Justice
**NOVA SOUTHEASTERN
UNIVERSITY**

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES	5
CONCEPTUAL BASIS	6
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE	7
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS	9
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM	10
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN CRIMINAL COURTS	12
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN JUVENILE JUSTICE CASES	13
CHILD MALTREATMENT INCIDENCE	13
DEPENDENCY COURT	14
IMPACT ON YOUTH	15
CHILD EXPERIENCES OF DEPENDENCY COURT	17
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AND DEPENDENCY COURT	17
METHODOLOGY	18
PARTICIPANTS	19
DEMOGRAPHICS	20
INSTRUMENTATION	24
DATA COLLECTION	28
DATA ANALYSIS	30
RESULTS	32
HOPE COURT STAKEHOLDER SURVEY RESULTS	32
HOPE COURT YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS	53
YOUTH AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS	61
<i>Youth are Engaged and Have a Voice in the Dependency Process (Youth-Centered Process)</i>	62
<i>Youth Have a Reliable Support Network of Trusted Adults in their Transition to Adulthood</i>	67
<i>Meeting Youth Needs through Frequent, High-Quality Communication and Collaboration</i>	70
SUMMARY OF INTEGRATION OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN HOPE COURT	74
DISCUSSION	83
APPENDIX A	95
APPENDIX B	96
APPENDIX C	97
APPENDIX D	98
APPENDIX E	99
APPENDIX F	102
APPENDIX G	103
APPENDIX H	104
APPENDIX I	106
APPENDIX J	107

Introduction

A substantial percentage of youth who age out of the foster care system experience serious, negative outcomes. Based on data from the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2020), less than 50% of these youth graduate from high school; 33% are pregnant by age 18; 47% are unemployed at age 26; 30% are diagnosed with an emotional, behavioral, or developmental condition with at least 50% suffering from post-traumatic stress symptoms; and 10% are on probation. Contributing to these unfavorable outcomes are unresolved traumatic experiences and a lack of planning, preparation, and life skill-building.

There are approximately 1,500 youth who are 18 years of age and older currently served by Broward County's Transition to Independent Living (TIL) system of care. There are 1,170 youth in foster care in Broward County (The Fostering Care Improvement Organization, 2020). Of those, approximately 5% are 17 years old and will be aging out of foster care on their 18th birthday. With many of these youth aging out of foster care annually and historically negative consequences for TIL youth, Broward County requires an effective system to prepare these adolescents for self-sufficiency and success in adulthood.

Youth aging out of foster care can receive state benefits after their 18th birthday through state-funded programs such as Extended Foster Care (EFC) and Postsecondary Education Services and Supports (PESS). These programs provide significant financial, housing, and supportive services to assist in the transition to early adulthood for youth who otherwise would have very limited support. Nevertheless, a large percentage of youth do not take advantage of these programs. Analysis of data provided via the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) database covering youth who aged out between 2014 and 2018, indicated that between 60% to 70% of youth who were eligible for these programs did not participate, opted out before their

eligibility period ended, or were terminated and did not return to one of these programs.

Furthermore, the largest number of opt-outs and unsuccessful terminations occurred in the first two months of participation. TIL youth who are unable to maintain their state benefits frequently lose their housing or become involved with the criminal justice system.

HOPE Court is an innovative approach that was recently piloted to support youth aging out of the foster care system without intact families. HOPE Court employs restorative practices within the dependency court system in Broward County to ensure TIL youth have a voice in their dependency court process and transition plan. HOPE Court was designed to build the necessary connections, relationships, and social capital to empower youth in their individualized preparation and transition to independent living. This is accomplished through the provision and modeling of empathy, restorative practice-based court hearings that engage youth, as well as supportive circles that teach life skills, encourage positive choices, and increase healthy behaviors in a safe, conducive, and youth-led environment. Pre-court listening circles and the reframing of conflict during judiciary proceedings creates collaboration among child welfare entities. Accordingly, restorative legal processes, supportive youth circles, and TIL planning comprise the programmatic components of HOPE Court to ultimately increase youth engagement in the EFC and PESS programs after their 18th birthday. The inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes associated with the HOPE Court approach are depicted in the program logic model provided in Appendix A. The first cohort of HOPE Court was initiated in March 2020. The second HOPE Court cohort was initiated in June 2022, and the third HOPE Court cohort was initiated in November 2023.

Restorative Practices

As indicated previously, HOPE Court is grounded in a restorative practices approach. Restorative practices are an emerging area in social science that aims to strengthen relationships between individuals and facilitate social connections within communities (International Institute for Restorative Practices, n.d.). The HOPE Court framework encompasses the following fundamentals: (1) individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems when a fair process is observed (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003); and (2) individuals are “happiest, healthiest, and most likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in authority do things WITH them, rather than TO them or FOR them” (Costello et al., 2010, p. 96).

The development of the contemporary restorative practices model stemmed partly from a case in which a probation officer mediated the meeting of two teenagers and the victims of a vandalism case (Wachtel, 2016). This historic event in 1974 was unusual as both the victim and offenders had a facilitated discussion to assist in resolving the impact of damage caused by the offense. After a productive session, the offenders decided to make amends, thus resulting in the peaceful restoration of damaged property. The success of this approach ultimately contributed to the first victim-offender reconciliation program in Canada (McCold, 1999; Peachey, 1989). The positive effects of this approach impacted North America and Europe throughout the later portions of the century, with organizations adding various collaborative components, including conferences and circles, to increase the efficiency and value of these practices (Umbreit, 2000). Restorative practices have been utilized in over 80 countries because of promising outcomes (Van Ness, 2005), across a diverse range of settings including high schools, criminal courts, and family courts (Acosta et al., 2019; Daicoff, 2015).

Conceptual Basis

The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) defines restorative practices as “the use of informal and formal processes that precede wrongdoing, those that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing” (Wachtel, 2016, para. 6). The extant literature does not provide a singular definition of what constitutes restorative practices; in fact, Pavelka and Thomas (2019) broadly view it as any action or event that results in healing.

Restorative justice can be thought of as a subset of restorative practice, which is “reactive, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs” (Wachtel, 2016, para. 6). Restorative justice is an approach to justice that primarily focuses on addressing the harm caused by a crime or an offense and is described by Dandurand and Griffiths (2006) as follows:

Restorative justice refers to a process for resolving crime by focusing on redressing the harm done to the victims, holding offenders accountable for their actions and, often also, engaging the community in the resolution of that conflict. Participation of the parties is an essential part of the process that emphasizes relationship building, reconciliation and the development of agreements around a desired outcome between victims and offender. Restorative justice processes can be adapted to various cultural contexts and the needs of different communities. Through them, the victim, the offender and the community regain some control over the process. Furthermore, the process itself can often transform the relationships between the community and the justice system as a whole (p. 6).

In a similar manner, restorative practice includes repair and reconciliation that is not necessarily associated with criminal cases. It includes techniques such as restorative circles, community building circles, and peer mediation, among others (Marsh, 2017).

Braithwaite's reintegrative shaming theory is most commonly used to explain restorative justice practices (Wilson et al., 2017). He views what is referred to as reintegrative shaming as a way to get the community involved in condemning the wrongdoing of the offender. As long as the offender makes amends and repairs the harm caused, they can be reintegrated back into society. Importantly, Braithwaite notes that the shaming needs to be reintegrative rather than stigmatizing (Wilson et al., 2017).

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice describes a collaborative process in which all affected groups come together to fix the damage caused by the offender (Pavelka & Thomas, 2019). Weitekamp and Parmentier (2018) view this collaborative process as having three primary goals: victim reparation, offender responsibility, and communities of care reconciliation. Specific approaches that are frequently used include:

1. **Peace Circles-** This practice occurs when all stakeholders sit in a circle facing each other, allowing each individual a turn to discuss concerns and ways of moving forward. The goal is to repair tension and grow together (Mills et al., 2012).
2. **Family Group Conferencing-** Similar to Peace Circles, this practice allows for a facilitator to mediate a conversation between the victim, family members, or other pivotal personnel involved in the situation. However, the main difference being participants are given contractual documents to sign to ensure productive steps are taken (Umbreit, 2000).

3. **Reparative Boards-** Particularly used in youth justice, this practice involves the offender and a group of citizens working together to create an outline for reparations that can be made for the particular crime. The offender who was found guilty must provide documentation and/or evidence of working towards those agreed reparations (Wilson et al., 2017).
4. **Victim Support Circles-** Not always used by individuals that committed crimes but rather for kids who are troubled and living in unfortunate circumstances. It is advantageous for younger victims to talk to licensed professionals about the current state of their situation and how they can move forward (Bottoms et al., p. 157).
5. **Victim Impact Panels-** Using this approach, victims are given the opportunity to meet a different victim from a similar crime to bond and obtain support. The main purpose of this practice is to divert the attention from what the offender did, to create a path to move forward collaboratively (United Nations, 2016).
6. **Victim-offender Mediation-** This practice involves the direct meeting between the offender and the accused. The purpose of this practice is for questions that can be asked to either side to obtain more clarity of the situation and why it happened (Wilson et al., 2017).

Since the 1980s, First Nation people and local justice officials in the Yukon have developed partnerships between communities and formal justice agencies to build shared responsibility for handling criminal conduct through Community Peacemaking Circles (Coates et al., 2003). Proponents of circles as a means for “doing justice” contend that this approach is more effective because it draws on inherent values of traditional native ways. It does so by explicitly empowering each individual in a circle as an equal, and by clearly lifting up the

relationship between justice and the physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions of participants in the context of their community and culture (Coates et al., 2003).

Restorative Practices in Schools

Restorative practices, which are focused on building community and repairing harm, have also been utilized in school settings as alternative approaches to disciplinary measures such as suspension and expulsion. Restorative practices in school settings differ from the use of restorative justice in the criminal justice system in its proactive approach by the school community to facilitate leadership and build community and social capital. “Crucially, restorative practices require that all parties be present and involved in relationship building and restitution, rather than removing or providing more restrictive placements for students who may have caused harm or alienating victims from school” (Green et al., 2019, p. 169). Restorative practices approaches in school settings may include but are not limited to connection circles and restorative conversations, problem-solving circles, restorative remediation, and community group conferences. With regard to community group conferences, all members involved (e.g., accused, victim, parents, community members) work together with a trained facilitator to identify the root cause of the offense and look towards making amends to repair the harm, restore community and create trust (Green, et al., 2019). The approach is tailored depending on the unique situation; Pranis (2015) argues there is a level of healing and connection that should take place during these discussions.

In a study examining the use of restorative practices in 18 schools, all schools included in the study showed decreases in discipline referrals and out-of-school suspensions (Kline, 2016). Discussions concerning responsibility and accountability were found to help students understand the severity of their actions. It was also found that the accused had “empathy with the feelings of

others affected by [their] own actions” (p.101). These findings are supportive of the reasoning behind implementing group conferences, as healing and restoration of the community were both achieved.

In a randomized controlled study of the implementation of restorative practices in the Pittsburgh school system, the use of restorative conferences and responsive circles resulted in a reduction in suspension rates and an improvement in the overall school climate (Augustine et al., 2018). Furthermore, a systematic review of 10 studies of restorative justice practices in U.S. schools found that, in a majority of the schools, social relationships improved, and discipline referrals were reduced (Katic, 2020). However, there was ambiguity in the operational definitions of restorative justice across the study schools.

Restorative Justice in the Child Welfare System

Similar to the use of restorative justice in school systems, other areas have benefited from its implementation, including the child welfare system (Walker, 2012). The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2020) defines the child welfare system as a group of services that aim to improve the well-being of children who have been neglected or abused. These services include investigating reports of potential child abuse, providing support to families and safe shelter to youth. In the restorative justice literature, the use of terms such as “offender” and “victim” are common practices; however, in the context of the child welfare system, a different approach is necessary as family issues often arise due to child abuse or neglect. Restorative practices are seen as ways to strengthen child and family rights (Pennell et al., 2011).

Walker (2012) provided a case example illustrating the impact that restorative justice can have in prioritizing the health of a family. The case highlights a female youth with a history of drug addiction and a troublesome relationship with her single mother. The youth was placed in

the foster system and was alternating between living with her mother and foster parents. After a physical altercation between the youth and her mother, the youth left for her foster parent's house. At this point, the mother got both upset and worried and called the police. After speaking with the daughter, the police contacted a youth justice coordinator. This individual was introduced to mediate a peaceful conference between all stakeholders. The youth justice coordinator encouraged all parties to calmly discuss their view of the situation. The parties were encouraged to take a step back and think about what is in the best interest of the daughter. The youth justice coordinator helped facilitate an agreement for the daughter to continue living with her foster parents, while her mother was allowed to visit on weekends and big breaks (Walker, 2012). This collaborative approach arguably had a better outcome compared to adverse legal proceedings that can negatively affect children and families (Block, 2010).

Restorative practices have been used in the child welfare systems of multiple countries. Fox (2009) indicated that family group conferences are used in child welfare cases to resolve conflict in England. Beck and colleagues (2010) mention New Zealand's use of family group conferencing to positively impact child welfare cases. Moreover, Lehmann and colleagues (2012) noted that about 40 child welfare studies of the use of family group decision making have demonstrated that engaging family members in decision making resulted in improved child outcomes.

EPIC 'Ohana offers conferencing and facilitates the E Makua Ana Youth Circle program for current and former foster care youth in Hawaii. The Youth Circle program is youth-driven and solution-focused, and results in a plan for independence. The youth decide who will attend (the support team), how the circle will open, what food will be served, and ultimately, what the plan for independence will comprise. The team meets with the youth for 2-3 hours and generates

options across key areas for the youth including, housing, finances, education, employment, etc. The transition plan resulting from the meeting is then shared with the youth and team members (EPIC ‘Ohana, Inc., n.d.). The program offered by EPIC ‘Ohana served as an inspiration and reference point for some aspects of the current HOPE Court model; namely, the virtual vision board workshops. Representatives from EPIC ‘Ohana were consulted early in the development phase of the HOPE Court program.

Restorative Justice in Criminal Courts

Perhaps the most widely used application of restorative justice occurs in the criminal justice system. Restorative justice has been used worldwide, engaging police, prosecutors, judges, probation officers, prison, parole officers and other stakeholders (Van Ness, 2005). Police in South Africa implemented a restorative justice project with the Community Peace Committee to offer adult offenders an opportunity to learn from their mistakes and demonstrate good conduct (Sharma, n.d.). Austria allowed prosecutors to lead a restorative process that can in turn decrease the sentence of an adult who has less than five years of incarceration (Löschnig-Gspandl, 2001). After the Supreme Court decision in *United States v. Booker*, Judge Gernter publicly raised the need for restorative justice in the federal justice system (Luna & Poulson, 2006). In a meta-analytic review of restorative practices in criminal court, across 22 different restorative justice programs, group conferencing and victim offender mediation were found to increase offender satisfaction, increase victim satisfaction, increase offender compliance, and decrease offender recidivism (Latimer et al., 2005).

Even after an individual is found guilty and incarcerated, restorative practices have been employed. Peace tables were created in a Columbian prison to encourage gang leaders to discuss and resolve disputes (Van Ness, 2005). In correctional facilities within the U.S., different

mediation techniques have been used to address conflict and improve the relationship between prison staff and prisoners (Roeger, 2003).

Restorative Justice in Juvenile Justice Cases

Restorative practices have been utilized in juvenile justice systems across the world (Van Ness, 2005). For example, in New Zealand, legislation was passed to give police the power to refer juvenile offenders to a restorative alternative (Morris & Maxwell, 2017). Through this approach, youth offenders are given a chance to make amends by making an apology to the victim, carrying out community service, or paying restitution.

Rodriguez (2007) found that juvenile participants in a restorative justice program in Arizona had lower recidivism rates compared to youth in a comparison group. The program had a greater effect with girls, first-time offenders, and offenders with one previous offense. A meta-analysis of 84 evaluations conducted within 60 research studies, restorative justice programs, compared with traditional juvenile justice programs, demonstrated a moderate reduction in delinquent behavior (Wilson et al., 2017). The authors also found positive delinquency outcome effects for programs that used victim-offender conferencing and family group conferencing. However, given methodological weaknesses, “the evidence from these conferencing programs is promising, but inconclusive” (p. 36). Youth and victims involved with restorative justice programs had a greater perception that the process was fair and were more satisfied with the court process compared with youth in traditional juvenile courts.

Child Maltreatment Incidence

Approximately 600,000 to 677,000 cases of substantiated child maltreatment are reported in the U.S. each year (Lawler et al., 2016; Zeanah et al., 2018; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2023). It is estimated that around 37 percent of children will experience a child

protective services investigation by the age of 18, with African American children having the highest rate (53.0%) and Asians/Pacific Islander children having the lowest rate (10.2%; Kim et al., 2017). There were 3.9 million total referrals of maltreatment claims that were reported in 2021 that included around 7.1 million children (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, 2023). Also, approximately 20% of children who had maltreatment referrals were removed from their homes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was assumed that there would be a spike in child maltreatment cases; however, there was a 27 percent decrease in reports (Baron et al., 2020). This may have occurred as a significant portion of maltreatment cases are typically referred by mandated reporters in school; in 2018, of the over 4.3 million cases of child maltreatment reported, approximately 20 percent were reported by school staff (Baron et al., 2020). In addition, research found that areas with a greater percentage of their population remaining home during the pandemic had a higher incidence of child maltreatment, consisting primarily of neglect, compared to areas with fewer people staying home (Bullinger et al., 2021). It is important to note that emergency rooms, although reporting a decrease in overall visits by children, had an increase in visits due to accidental injuries for children. Many of these injuries could be classified as neglect as parents often left their children unattended during the time they were injured (Bullinger et al., 2021).

Dependency Court

Dependency court hears cases pertaining to minors involving child abuse, abandonment, or neglect allegations. In these proceedings, the court makes decisions about the child such as if they will be removed from the custody of the caregiver and the circumstances by which the child

may return. The primary goal of dependency court is to provide for the welfare and safety of the child. In the U.S., there are over 300 dependency courts specifically for prioritizing the safety and reunification of youth (Ahlin et al., 2021). In certain high-risk situations, a dependency court case may occur simultaneously with a criminal court case, as many of these high-risk situations involve physical or sexual abuse (Hobbs et al., 2014). Cases can involve neglect, abuse, and criminal activity (Bottoms et al., 2009).

Although these cases revolve around the well-being of the child, in many cases the child is not present during their dependency court hearing. Additionally, if the child is present, they will often not take the stand. The child is often informed of the ruling after the court has made a decision by the State official assigned to them (Quas et al., 2009). Post-response services from the applicable child protective services agency are often provided to families and child victims going through dependency court. Services are typically provided based on assessments of the family's situation and needs, and post-response services were given to approximately 58% of cases in 2021 (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, 2023), with over 1.1 million children receiving services.

Impact on Youth

Traumatic events experienced by youth may have lifelong impacts; specifically, trauma can lead to severe mental health problems such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depressive disorders, and anxiety disorders. In fact, young adults who were in the foster care system experience PTSD at twice the rate of Vietnam War veterans (Kerns et al., 2014). Over 90% of youth involved with the justice system report having at least one trauma (Rosenberg et

al., 2014). They also have a high incidence of specific mental health issues including PTSD (over 45%), depression (almost 50%), and substance abuse (roughly 61%).

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) refer to chronic or severely stressful experiences, such as domestic violence, discrimination, and parent death, that occur before 18 years of age. Greater exposure to ACEs has been associated with poor mental health and health outcomes in childhood and adulthood (Anda et al. 2006). Not surprisingly, a strong association has been found between the occurrence of child maltreatment and ACEs (Brown et al., 2019). In addition, certain types of stressors and maltreatment tend to coincide with each other such as emotional maltreatment and caregiver divorce or broad household dysfunction and family violence. Moreover, the experience of dependency court itself often causes significant unintentional stress for youth (Kletzka & Siegfried, 2008).

Many youth who enter the dependency court system remain involved with the justice system as juvenile delinquents or adult criminals. These children are often referred to as crossover youth, or youth who engage in delinquent behavior after being maltreated during their childhood (Herz et al., 2010). Youth maltreated during childhood are more likely to commit offenses later in life (Ryan et al., 2013). Studies have shown that anywhere from 9% to 29% of children in the child welfare system engage in delinquent behavior during their lifetime (Herz et al., 2010). Of the juveniles who commit crimes, about a third are still in an active dependency case during their first arrest (Ryan et al., 2013). Herz et al. (2010) found that half of the juveniles reported having some type of mental health issues and approximately a fifth of them were abusing alcohol and drugs.

As indicated previously, many of the children in the child welfare system experienced neglect or abuse. Around 90% of homeless youth report at least one type of maltreatment from a

caregiver before they had left home (Bender et al., 2014). Abuse from a caregiver is one of the main factors contributing to youth homelessness (Britton & Pilnik, 2018) and homelessness increases the likelihood of youth committing crimes later in life (Bender et al., 2014). Of homeless youth from the ages 18 to 24, around 78% have been arrested and approximately 60% have gone to jail (Yoder et al., 2014).

Child Experiences of Dependency Court

One study found that many children in dependency court have a limited understanding of the proceedings taking place (Cooper, 2010). Although youth involved in the court system generally have a better understanding of judicial terminology and the overall court process compared to those who have never experienced it, many who had been in the system the longest still had areas or aspects of the process that they did not comprehend.

Additionally, maltreated youth often experience negative feelings toward the dependency court process as a whole (Block et al., 2010). The greater their understanding of the legal system, the higher their level of negative emotions regarding the judicial system (Block et al., 2010). Also, Cooper (2010) found that children are more likely to report higher levels of distress and anxiety over a lack of understanding of judicial procedures and terminology. Although many youth tend to experience negative emotions regarding the court system, they generally had positive emotions related to seeing family members in court (Block et al., 2010; Hobbs et al., 2014).

Restorative Practices and Dependency Court

There is no extant research literature regarding the use of restorative practices in dependency court. However, the utilization of restorative justice across other settings such as the education and judicial systems can provide insight into the role it can have in dependency

courts. The purpose of this research study was to investigate HOPE Court, an alternative to the current dependency system in Broward County for older teens. It utilizes restorative practices to ensure foster care youth have a say in the dependency court process and their transition plan, and that they have a connected support network of adults to help them successfully transition to independent living. Through participation in HOPE Court, a youth's relationship with social workers, service providers, and the legal system is established and maintained using restorative practices and community building.

Methodology

An explanatory case study using an embedded single-case design (Yin, 2018), bounded by time (one year) and place (HOPE Court), which employs qualitative and quantitative methods, was used to investigate the implementation of the third cohort of the HOPE Court program. The embedded case study design allows for an in-depth investigation of a single case (HOPE Court) through analysis of subunits (those individuals that experience and contribute to HOPE Court; namely, the youth, Judge, Case manager/social workers, Guardians Ad Litem, Life Coaches, attorneys, and caregivers). "The ability to look at sub-units that are situated within a larger case is powerful when considering that data can be analyzed within the subunits separately (within case analysis), between the different subunits (between case analysis), or across all of the subunits (cross-case analysis). The ability to engage in such rich analysis only serves to better illuminate the case" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 550). The results of the cohorts 1 and 2 studies enabled the development of a conceptual framework and propositions to guide the subsequent explanatory case study of HOPE Court using the same design and case boundaries (Yin, 2018). The explanatory approach was used to examine the implementation of HOPE Court; namely, to

determine how restorative practices are utilized in a dependency court process, how youth and stakeholders experience a dependency court program that utilizes restorative practices, and how restorative practices impact youth and stakeholders in the dependency system. The propositions derived from the analysis of cohort 1 data and supported by cohort 2 results are as follows:

1. *Youth engagement* will increase due to the frequency of contact, youth-centered approach, and connection with adult team members.
2. *A supportive network of trusted adults* will be created for youth as a result of frequency of contact, collaboration among team members, and restorative practices elements.
3. *Communication and collaboration to meet the needs of youth and facilitate a successful transition in the dependency process* will increase in HOPE court due to frequency and quality of interactions facilitated through the HOPE Court model.

Participants

A purposive sampling approach was used to identify participants representing “subunits” of the single case (HOPE Court). Participants consisted of 13 youth enrolled in HOPE Court and 13 adults (stakeholders) working in or affiliated with HOPE Court that participated in an interview. One of the 13 youth was not available to participate in the individual interview and complete the HOPE Court Participant Survey due to extenuating circumstances. Stakeholders consisted of Child Advocates (Case Managers), Life Coaches, Guardians ad Litem, Attorneys ad litem, and other professionals who work with HOPE Court. Twenty-two (22) youth who were not enrolled in HOPE Court and 14 adult participants also completed the Vision Board Workshop Survey upon completion of the Virtual Vision Board Workshop activity.

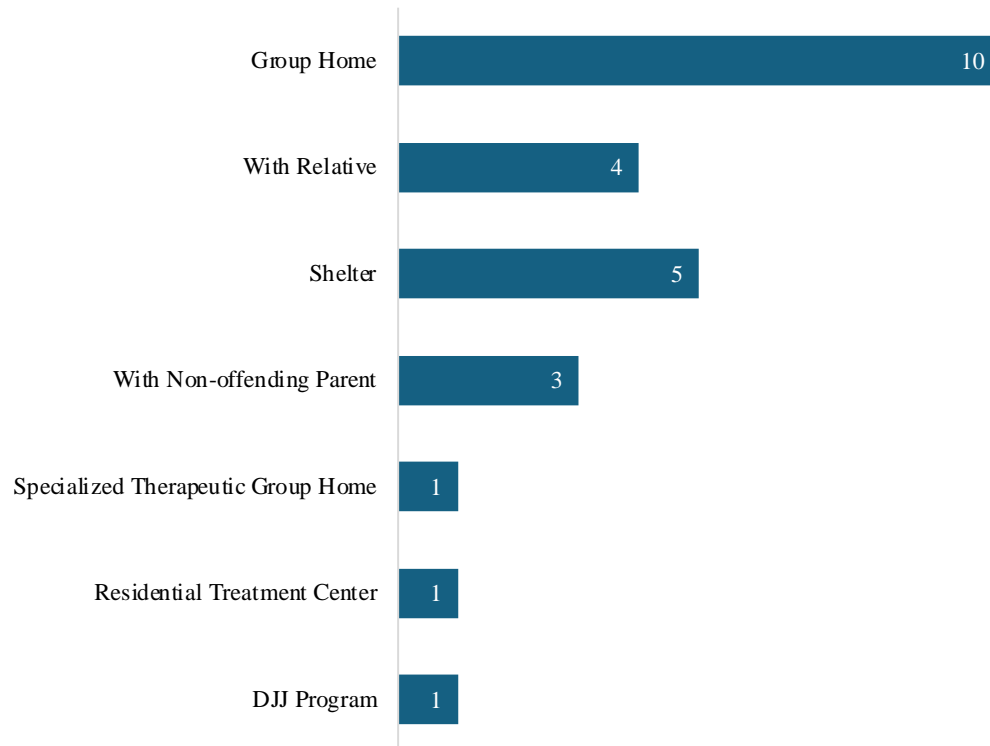
Youth participants entered HOPE Court between 16 and 17 years old. Given the variation in circumstances surrounding guardianship for youth (e.g., termination of parental

rights, parents' whereabouts unknown), steps were implemented to ensure approval from the appropriate guardian was secured prior to approaching the youth to participate in the study. Stakeholders (e.g., Judge, Case Manager/Social Workers, Guardians Ad Litem, Life Coaches, Attorneys, etc.) were recruited via email communication sent by the researchers. Specifically, an email was sent by a member of the research team to all staff/affiliates of HOPE Court with information about the study and contact information of the researchers. Potential stakeholder participants were asked to contact the researchers with any questions or if they would like to participate in the study. Approval of the research protocol was obtained from the Nova Southeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) Human Protections Review Committee (HPRC) prior to conducting the study.

Demographics

Youth participant demographics were collected using a Demographic and History Form, completed by the youth's case manager in July and August 2024. This form was administered to provide additional context for youth participants, including experience with placements and history of adverse events. No identifying information was collected on the form and a research ID number was used instead of the participant's name.

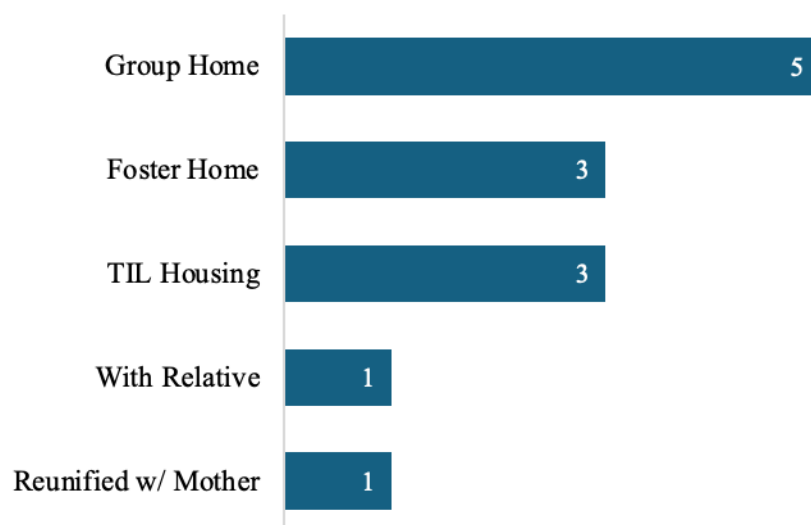
Based on demographic information collected, the youth ranged in age from 17 to 18, and the mean number of years that youth had been in care was 2.9 years ($SD = 2.9$). Additionally, the mean number of placements since entering care was 4.3 ($SD = 3.1$). Figure 1 shows the frequency and types of placements for all the youth participants since coming into care.

Figure 1*Types of placements since coming into care (n = 13)*

Youth participants had been in their current placements for an average of 5.9 months ($SD = 12.3$ months). However, the median duration was only two months, reflecting that most participants had been in their placements for just one or two months. This discrepancy is due primarily to one outlier who had been in their current placement for 48 months, significantly inflating the average (see Figure 2 for the types of current placements). Furthermore, 5 out of 13 youth (38%) were reportedly currently placed in a group home, 3 participants (23%) were living in a foster home, 3 participants (23%) were placed in TIL housing, 1 participant (8%) was living with a relative, and 1 participant (8%) was reunified with their mother.

Figure 2

Youth participants' current placements (n = 13)



Figures 3 and 4 present the participants' highest grade completed and current educational setting.

Figure 3

Highest grade completed (n = 13)

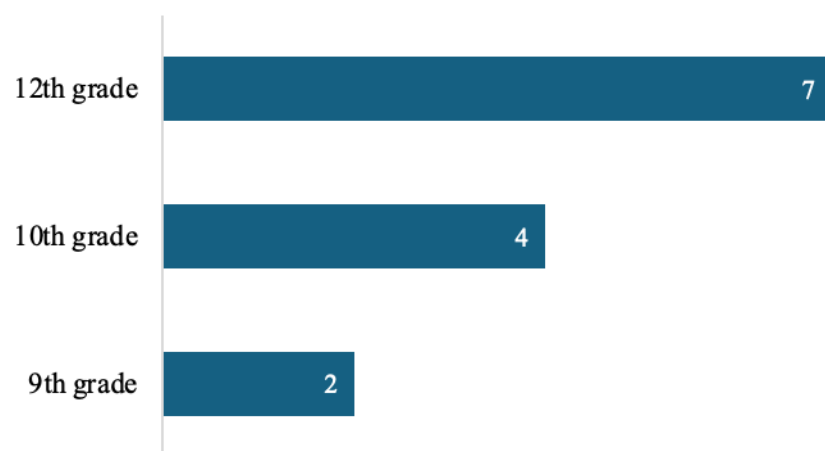
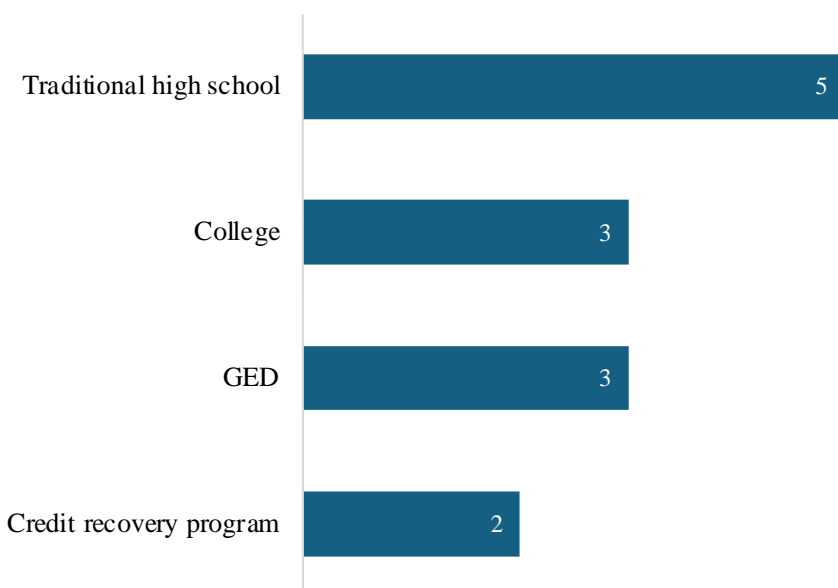
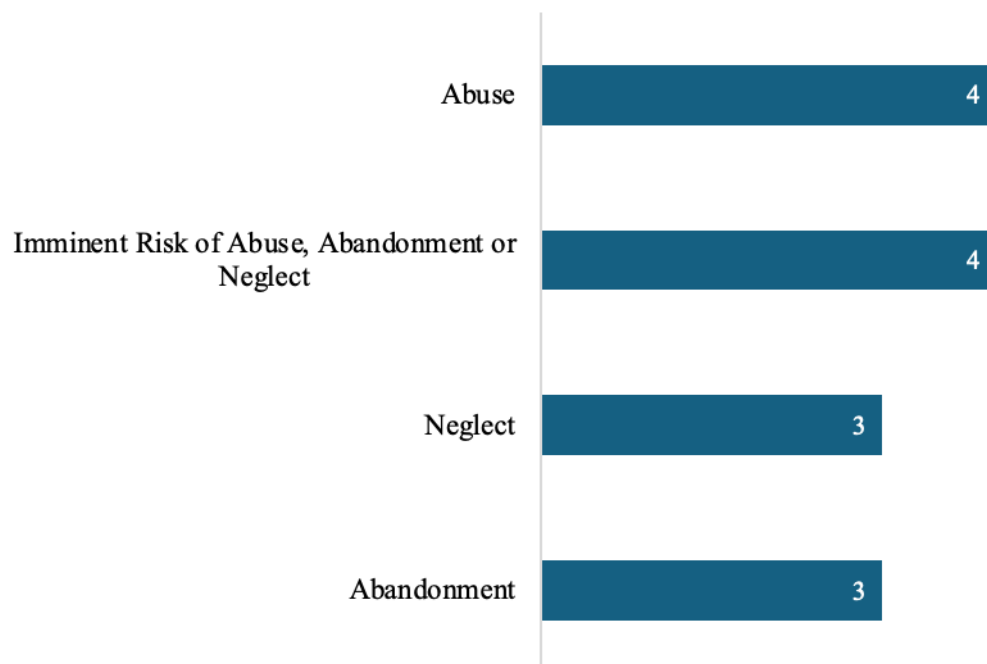


Figure 4*Current educational setting (n = 13)*

Participants' reasons for entering into care varied and are reported below in Figure 5. Four of the participants (29%) were reported to have experienced abuse, 4 participants (29%) experienced imminent risk of abuse, abandonment, or neglect, 3 participants (21%) experienced neglect, and 3 participants (21%) experienced abandonment. Moreover, regarding past delinquency, 5 out of 13 (38%) were reported to have a history of delinquency.

Figure 5*Experiences Prior to Entering Care (n = 13)*

Instrumentation

The youth and stakeholder interview protocols, HOPE Court Youth Participant Survey, Vision Board Workshop Youth Post-Assessment Survey, Vision Board Workshop Stakeholder Post-Assessment Survey, Empathic Assertion Training Survey, Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Survey, Nonviolent Communication Training Survey, Demographic and History Form, and Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form used in the study of cohort 3 were developed by the research team with input from individuals with expertise in restorative practices, survey development and qualitative research, as well as professionals with substantial experience in the dependency system. Instrument development was guided by current

dependency system practices and assessments in Florida, restorative practices principles, and the research aims.

HOPE Court Youth Participant Survey. Youth participants completed the HOPE Court Youth Participant Survey once they had completed approximately eight months of HOPE Court. The survey, which assesses participants' perceptions of their engagement with the Court, their support network, and other services provided, consists of 20 “yes/no” response items and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Participants are asked to “Please answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ in response to each of the following statements related to your experiences with HOPE Court. If you are not sure how to answer, say ‘I don’t know.’” See Appendix B for HOPE Court Youth Participant Survey results.

Youth Interview Protocol. The HOPE Court Youth Participant Interview Protocol consists of six questions including prompts, which asks youth about their experiences with multiple aspects of HOPE Court (see Appendix C for the Youth Participant Interview Protocol).

Stakeholder Interview Protocol. The HOPE Court Stakeholder Interview Protocol consists of ten questions including prompts, which asks stakeholders about their experiences with multiple aspects of HOPE Court (see Appendix D for the Stakeholder Participant Interview Protocol).

Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form. The Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form enables the observer to assess whether restorative practices elements were observed during the HOPE Court activity (i.e., pre-court listening circles, HOPE Court hearings) within the categories of (a) communication and (b) engagement and process (see Appendix E for the Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form).

Vision Board Workshop Youth Post-Assessment Survey. The Vision Board Workshop Youth Post-Assessment Survey is administered to youth upon completion of the Vision Board Workshop and consists of 4 Likert-scale items that assess (a) how much the youth learned about their strengths, (b) how helpful the workshop process was in assisting the youth with learning about benefits that are available, (c) how confident the youth feels that their team will help support them to meet the goals they created, and (d) how hopeful they feel about their future. The survey also contains two open-ended items related to (a) the youth's favorite part of the vision board and (b) other thoughts or comments pertaining to the vision board workshop (see Appendix G for the Vision Board Workshop Youth Post-Assessment Survey). For youth who were not in HOPE Court, the Vision Board Workshop Survey did not include the item regarding how confident the youth feels that their team will help support them to meet the goals they created.

Vision Board Workshop Stakeholder Post-Assessment Survey. The Vision Board Workshop Stakeholder (Adult) Post-Assessment Survey is administered to stakeholders (adult support team members) upon completion of the Vision Board Workshop and consists of 10 Likert-scale and two open-ended items. Items assess (a) how much stakeholders enjoyed the process, (b) how well the circle provided the youth with understanding and information regarding transitional independent living resources and benefits, (c) how well the circle provided opportunity for a strong youth voice, (d) how well the process supported youth to achieve their goals, (e) how well the circle provided emotional support and connection for the youth, and (f) how important the circle was to an effective transition for the youth. The survey also asks respondents to compare the Vision Board process with the typical Transition to Independent Living (TIL) process on the following indicators: (a) youth engagement, (b) adult support of

youth, (c) youth understanding of resources, (d) connection and encouragement. The survey contains two open-ended items related to (a) the stakeholder's favorite part of the vision board and (b) anything they would change about the circle (see Appendix H for the Vision Board Workshop Stakeholder Post-Assessment Survey).

Empathic Assertion Training Survey. The Empathic Assertion Training Survey is administered to HOPE Court stakeholders upon completion of the Empathic Assertion Training session and consists of 6 Likert-scale items that assess (a) how helpful the training was in meeting their needs for learning and growth, (b) how much they felt inspired and encouraged in their work as a result of the training, (c) how much they think that the information provided will support/help/assist them in their specific work/career, (d) how much they think that the information provided will benefit them in their personal life, (e) how well the training provided them with helpful information regarding communicating with teens who have experienced trauma, and (f) how well did the training provide practical ways to communicate/address conflict (see Appendix I for the Empathic Assertion Training Survey).

Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Assessment. The Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Assessment Survey is administered to HOPE Court stakeholders upon completion of the Introduction to Restorative Practices Training session and consists of 8 Likert-scale items which assess (a) how helpful the training was in meeting their needs for learning and growth, (b) how much they felt inspired and encouraged in their work as a result of the training, (c) how much they think that the information provided will support/help/assist them in their specific work/career, (d) how much they think that the information provided will benefit them in their personal life, (e) how well they understand restorative practice and its theories as a result of the training, (f) how much the training helped them to understand how to be a

restorative practitioner, (g) how well did the training provide them the experience of connection in a circle, and (h) how worthwhile the training was for them (see Appendix J for the Restorative Practices Training Assessment Survey).

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) Training Survey. The Nonviolent Communication (NVC) Training Survey is administered to HOPE Court stakeholders upon completion of the NVC Training session and consists of 7 Likert-scale items that assess (a) how helpful the training was in meeting their needs for learning and growth, (b) how much they felt inspired and encouraged in their work as a result of the training, (c) how much they think that the information provided will support/help/assist them in their specific work/career, (d) how much they think that the information provided will benefit them in their personal life, (e) how well the training provided them with new ways to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and needs, (f) how well the training provided them with new ways to listen to their youth clients, and (g) how much they think the training will help them to improve their connection with others (see Appendix K for the Nonviolent Communication Training Survey).

Data Collection

Multiple data sources were collected, which is a strength of case study research and allows for “an in-depth study of a phenomenon in its real-world context” (Yin, 2018, p. 127). These included the utilization of the HOPE Court Youth Participant Survey, Youth Demographic Form, youth and stakeholder training/workshop surveys, observations of pre-court listening circles and court hearings, and semi-structured interviews with HOPE Court youth and stakeholders.

Youth participants were administered the HOPE Court Youth Participant Survey and an individual semi-structured interview once they completed approximately eight months of HOPE Court. The survey assessed participants' perceptions of their engagement with the court, their support network, and other services provided. A member of the research team scheduled a day and time to conduct the interview and administer the assessment via Zoom that was convenient to the participant (e.g., after their pre-court listening circles session). The survey questions were read to the participant and the research team member completed the survey form. A semi-structured interview guide was used to facilitate the interview and included questions related to participants' experience of the HOPE Court program. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Stakeholders (Judge, Case Managers, Guardians Ad Litem, foster parents, and other HOPE Court adult staff/participants) were asked to participate in an individual interview at approximately eight to ten months from the start of HOPE Court for cohort 3. The interviews took place via Zoom at a time that was convenient for participants. A semi-structured interview guide was used to facilitate the interview and included questions related to stakeholders' experience of the HOPE Court program. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Observations of HOPE Court proceedings and pre-court listening circles occurred via Zoom. Specifically, a Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form was completed, and field notes were generated during observations and analyzed to better understand the implementation of HOPE Court and utilization of restorative practices in the dependency court process.

A participant demographic and history form was also completed one time by the youth participant's case manager/social worker and provided to the research team. The participant

demographic and history form included the reason the youth entered the child welfare system (e.g., abuse, neglect, abandonment), the number and type of placements, history of delinquency, and level of education.

Surveys were administered to youth and stakeholders via SurveyMonkey upon completion of each workshop/training to assess satisfaction and effectiveness on specific indicators. For youth participants who were not in HOPE Court, survey questions on the Vision Board Workshop Survey were read to the participant and the research team member completed the survey form.

Data Analysis

Survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, including frequency analysis. Items interpreted by the research team to be positive responses (e.g., “Very well” and “well;” “very helpful” and “helpful”) were graphed (see Figures 6 to 14) as “positive;” whereas neutral responses (e.g., “somewhat,” “a little”) were graphed as “neutral.” “Negative” responses were graphed as “negative” and included responses such as: “unhelpful,” “very unhelpful,” “not at all,” “unconfident,” “very unconfident,” and “not at all worthwhile.” To analyze qualitative data, using a data analysis spiral (Creswell, 2013), interview transcripts were read by the investigators and notes/memos were generated as the transcripts/notes were initially reviewed. The next step in the data analysis process consisted of segmenting the text and assigning a descriptive label (i.e., code) to each segment. According to Gibbs (2018), “coding is a way of indexing or categorizing the text in order to establish a framework of thematic ideas about it” (p.54). Codes derived from the text were both “a priori” and “in vivo.” Open coding entails extracting from the data what is happening without imposing interpretation based on preconceptions. The next step in the analytic process was the grouping of codes into categories, to connect the codes and to

attribute meaning (interpretation) to the units of data to generate themes (Creswell, 2013). Data were analyzed to determine how restorative practices are utilized in a dependency court process, how youth and stakeholders experience a dependency court program that utilizes restorative practices, and how restorative practices impact youth and stakeholders in the dependency system. Given that the results of the analysis of cohort 1 data enabled the development of a conceptual framework and propositions to guide the subsequent explanatory case studies, data analysis for cohort 3 data entailed pattern matching (Yin, 2018). Pattern matching allowed for the comparison of case study findings to initial predictions (propositions). The propositions derived from the analysis of cohort 1 data and supported by cohort 2 results are as follows:

1. *Youth will be engaged and have a voice in the dependency process* due to the frequency of contact, youth-centered approach, and connection with adult team members.
2. *A supportive network of trusted adults* will be created to facilitate transition for youth as a result of frequency of contact, collaboration among team members, and restorative practices elements.
3. *Communication and collaboration* will increase to meet the needs of youth and facilitate a successful transition in the dependency process in HOPE court due to frequency and quality of interactions facilitated through the HOPE Court model.

Pattern matching was utilized to determine the degree to which the overall pattern of results matched the predicted one (propositions). Quantitative findings were triangulated with qualitative results to support the interpretations.

Results

The results of the data analysis are presented below by (a) workshop/training survey results, (b) results of youth and stakeholder interviews, including whether the overall pattern of results matched the initial propositions, and (c) a summary discussion regarding the integration of restorative practices in HOPE Court, including fidelity to the model, and the effect on youth outcomes.

HOPE Court Stakeholder Survey Results

Empathic Assertion Training Survey Results – October 2023

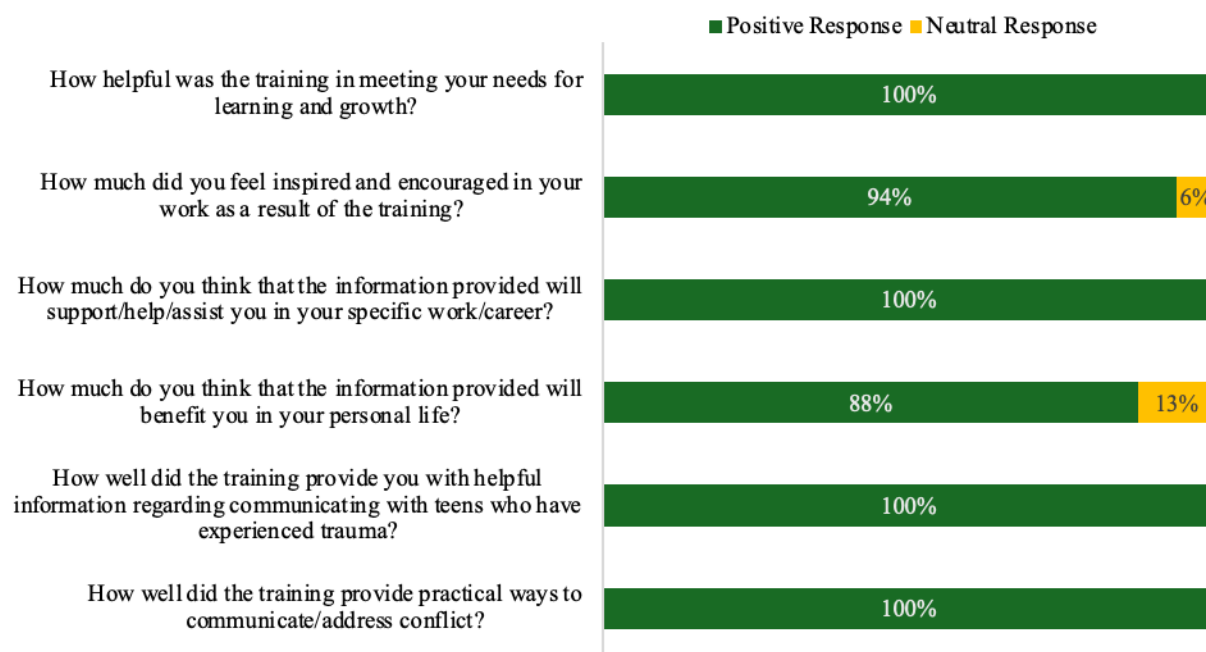
The Empathic Assertion Training Survey was administered to HOPE Court stakeholders upon completing the Empathic Assertion Training session, held at the start of HOPE Court cohort 3. Fifteen stakeholders completed the survey (see Table 1 and Figure 6). The results revealed that almost all of the respondents found the training to be a positive experience with respect to the following areas:

- Met their needs for learning and growth
- Felt inspired and encouraged in work
- Thought that the information provided would support/help/assist in work/career
- Thought that the information provided would be of benefit to their personal life
- Provided helpful information regarding communicating with teens who have experienced trauma
- Provided a practical way to communicate conflict

Table 1
Empathic Assertion Training October 2023 Survey Results

	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?	12	85.7	2	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
	A Great Deal		Somewhat		A Little		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the training?	14	93.3	1	6.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?	15	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?	13	86.7	2	13.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Very Well		Well		Somewhat		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How well did the training provide you with helpful information regarding communicating with teens who have experienced trauma?	11	73.3	4	26.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well did the training provide practical ways to communicate conflict?	10	66.7	5	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 6
Empathic Assertion Training October 2023 Survey Results



Empathic Assertion Training Survey Results – February 2024

The Empathic Assertion Training Survey was administered to HOPE Court stakeholders upon completing the Empathic Assertion Training session in February 2024. Four stakeholders completed the survey (see Table 2 and Figure 7). Similar to the October 2023 results, the findings revealed that almost all the respondents found the training to be a positive experience with respect to the following areas:

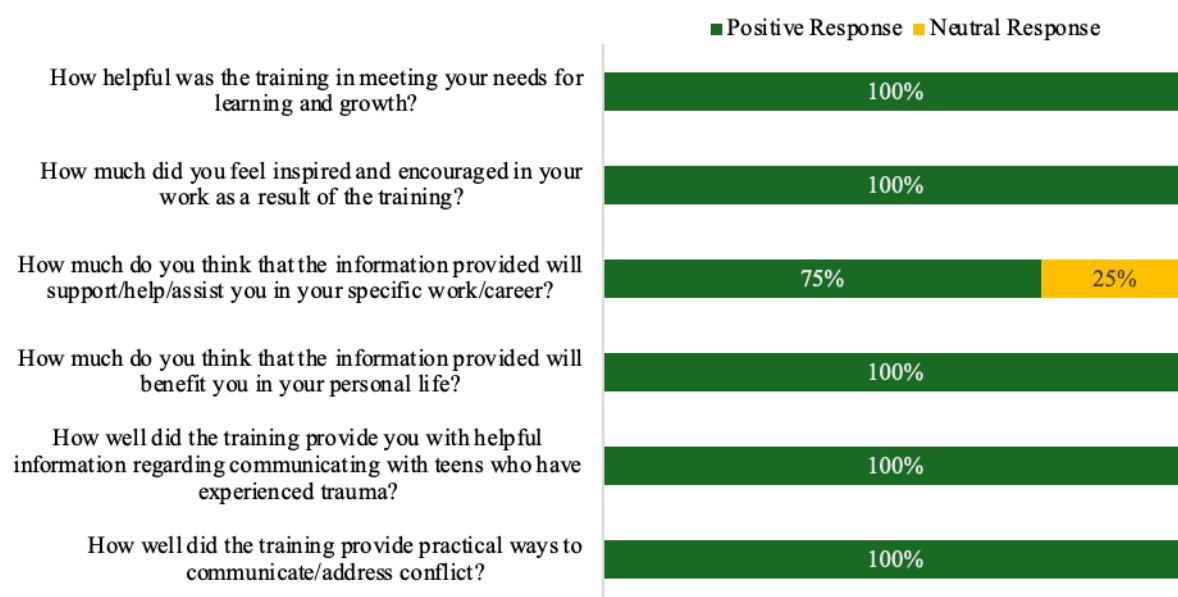
- Met their needs for learning and growth
- Felt inspired and encouraged in work
- Thought that the information provided would support/help/assist in work/career
- Thought that the information provided would be of benefit to their personal life
- Provided helpful information regarding communicating with teens who have experienced trauma

- Provided a practical way to communicate conflict

Table 2*Empathic Assertion Training February 2024 Survey Results*

	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	A Great Deal		Somewhat		A Little		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the training?	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Very Well		Well		Somewhat		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How well did the training provide you with helpful information regarding communicating with teens who have experienced trauma?	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well did the training provide practical ways to communicate conflict?	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 7
Empathic Assertion Training February 2024 Survey Results



Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Survey Results – October 2023

The Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Survey was administered to HOPE Court stakeholders upon completing the Introduction to Restorative Practices Training session in October 2023. Sixteen stakeholders completed the survey. The results are presented in Table 3 and Figure 8. Almost all of the respondents had positive responses regarding the following areas related to the training:

- Helpful in meeting needs for learning and growth
- Felt inspired and encouraged in their work/career
- Thought that the information provided will benefit them in their personal life
- Understood restorative practices and its theories
- Understood how to be a restorative practitioner
- Felt that they would be able to use what they learned to be a restorative practitioner
- Considered the training to be worthwhile

Table 3*Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Survey Results – October 2023*

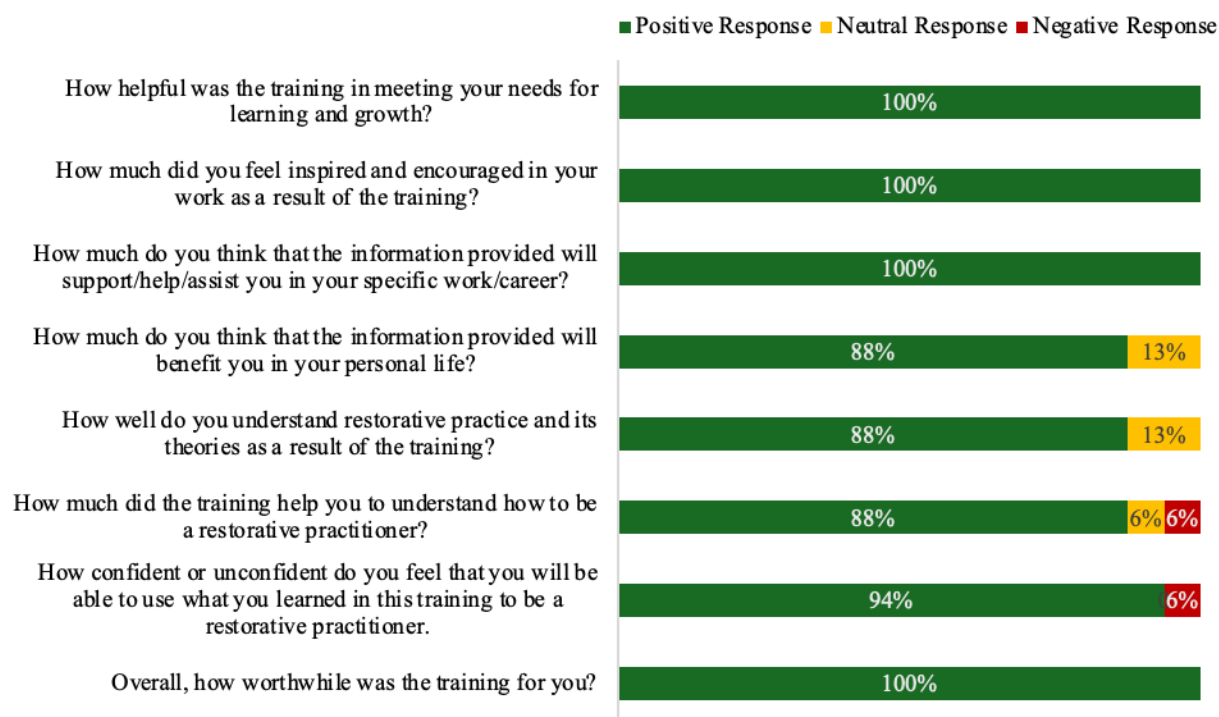
	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?	15	93.75	1	6.25	0	0.0	0	0.0
	A Great Deal		Somewhat		A Little		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the training?	16	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?	16	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?	14	87.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much did the training help you to understand how to be a restorative practitioner?	14	87.5	1	6.25	1	6.25	0	0.0
	Very Well		Well		Somewhat		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How well do you understand restorative practice and its theories as a result of the training?	10	62.5	4	25.0	2	12.5	0	0.0

	Very Confident		Confident		Unconfident		Very Unconfident	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How confident or unconfident do you feel that you will be able to use what you learned in this training to be a restorative practitioner?	7	43.75	8	50.0	1	6.25	0	0.0

	Very Worthwhile		Worthwhile		Somewhat Worthwhile		Not at All Worthwhile	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Overall, how worthwhile was the training for you?	11	68.75	5	31.25	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 8

Intro to Restorative Practices Survey Results - October 2023



Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Survey Results – February 2024

The Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Survey was also administered to HOPE Court stakeholders upon completing the Introduction to Restorative Practices Training session in February 2024. Four stakeholders completed the survey. The results are presented in Table 4 and Figure 9. Almost all the respondents had positive responses regarding the following areas related to the training:

- Helpful in meeting needs for learning and growth
- Felt inspired and encouraged in their work/career
- Thought that the information provided will benefit them in their personal life
- Understood restorative practices and its theories
- Understood how to be a restorative practitioner
- Felt that they would be able to use what they learned to be a restorative practitioner
- Considered the training to be worthwhile

Table 4

Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Survey Results February 2024

	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?	3	75.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0
	A Great Deal		Somewhat		A Little		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

training?

How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
--	---	-------	---	-----	---	-----	---	-----

How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
---	---	-------	---	-----	---	-----	---	-----

How much did the training help you to understand how to be a restorative practitioner?	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
--	---	-------	---	-----	---	-----	---	-----

	Very Well		Well		Somewhat		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How well do you understand restorative practice and its theories as a result of the training?	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

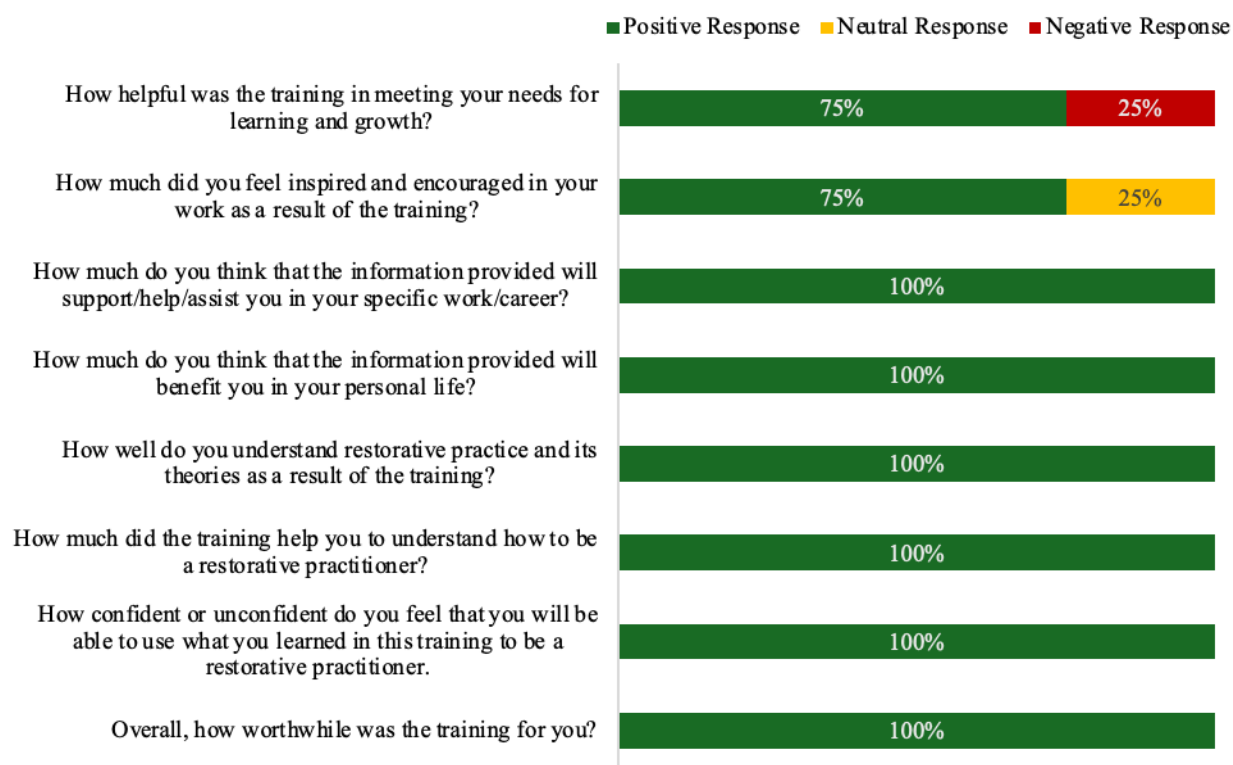
	Very Confident		Confident		Unconfident		Very Unconfident	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How confident or unconfident do you feel that you will be able to use what you learned in this training to be a restorative practitioner?	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

	Very Worthwhile		Worthwhile		Somewhat Worthwhile		Not at All Worthwhile	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%

Overall, how worthwhile was the training for you?	4	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
---	---	-------	---	-----	---	-----	---	-----

Figure 9

Intro to Restorative Practices Survey Results - February 2024



Nonviolent Communication Training Survey

Nonviolent Communication Training Surveys were administered to HOPE Court adult team members upon completion of the Nonviolent Communication Training. Seventeen participants completed the survey. Results are presented in aggregate (see Table 5 and Figure 10). The results indicated that all the respondents had a positive experience with the training with respect to the following areas:

- Met needs for learning and growth
- Felt inspired and encouraged in their work

- Supported, helped, or assisted them in their specific work or career
- Thought it would benefit them in their personal life
- Thought it would help them improve their connections with others
- Provided new ways to communicate thoughts, feelings, and needs
- Provided new ways to listen to youth clients
- Felt that it was worthwhile

Table 5
Nonviolent Communication Training Survey Results

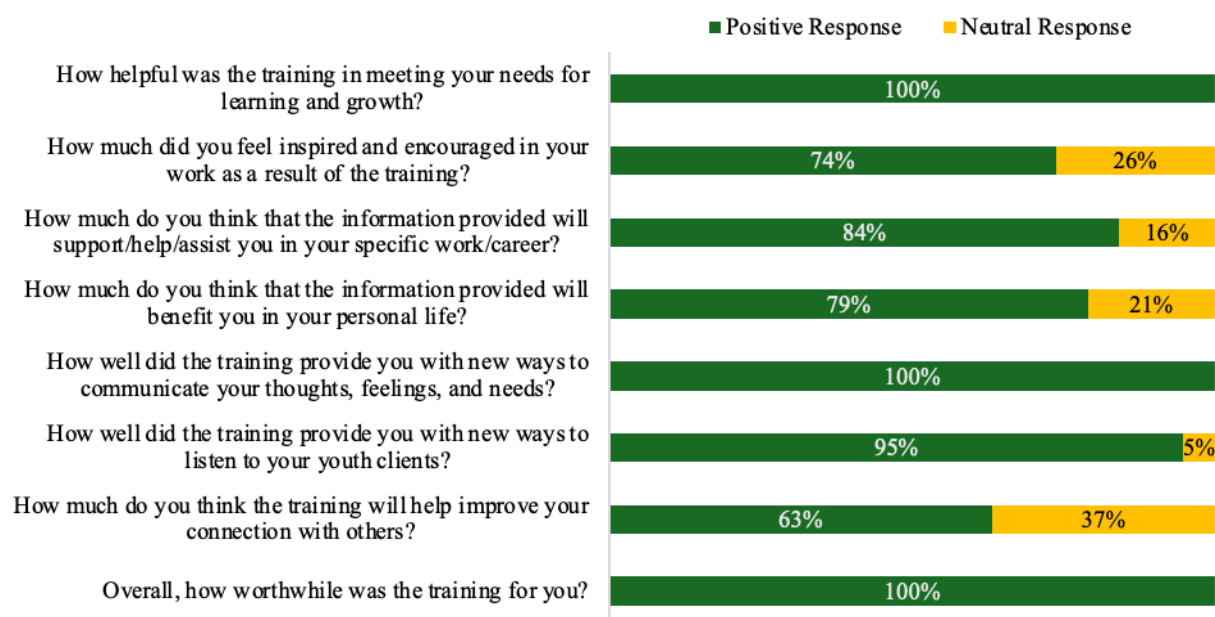
	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?	13	76.5	4	23.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
	A Great Deal		Somewhat		A Little		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the training?	12	70.6	5	29.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?	14	82.4	3	17.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?	13	76.5	4	23.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
How much do you think the training will help improve your connection with others?	10	58.8	7	41.2	0	0.0	0	0.0

Very Well Well Somewhat Not at All

	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How well did the training provide you with new ways to communicate your thoughts, feelings, and needs?	12	70.6	5	29.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well did the training provide you with new ways to listen to your youth clients?	11	64.7	5	29.4	1	5.9	0	0.0

	Very Worthwhile		Worthwhile		Somewhat Worthwhile		Not at All Worthwhile	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Overall, how worthwhile was the training for you?	10	58.8	7	41.2	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 10
NVC Training Survey Results



Vision Board Adult Team Member Survey Results

Vision Board Workshop Surveys were administered to HOPE Court adult team member participants following each Vision Board Workshop. Three adult team members completed the survey. Results are presented in aggregate (see Table 6, Figure 11, and summary of open-ended responses). The results indicated that all the respondents had a positive experience with the workshops with respect to the following areas:

- Enjoyed participating in the workshops
- Thought that the circle provided the youth with understanding and information regarding transitional independent living resources and benefits
- Provided an opportunity for strong youth voice
- Supported youth to achieve their goals
- Provided emotional support and connection for the youth
- Considered it to be important for an effective transition for the youth

In addition, all the respondents thought that the vision board process provided a greater opportunity for connection and encouragement for youth compared with the typical TIL process. All respondents also thought that the vision board process provided greater benefit regarding youth engagement, adult support of youth, and youth understanding of resources.

Table 6
Vision Board Adult Team Member Survey Results

	A Great Deal		Somewhat		A Little		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you enjoy participating in the vision board circle?	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0

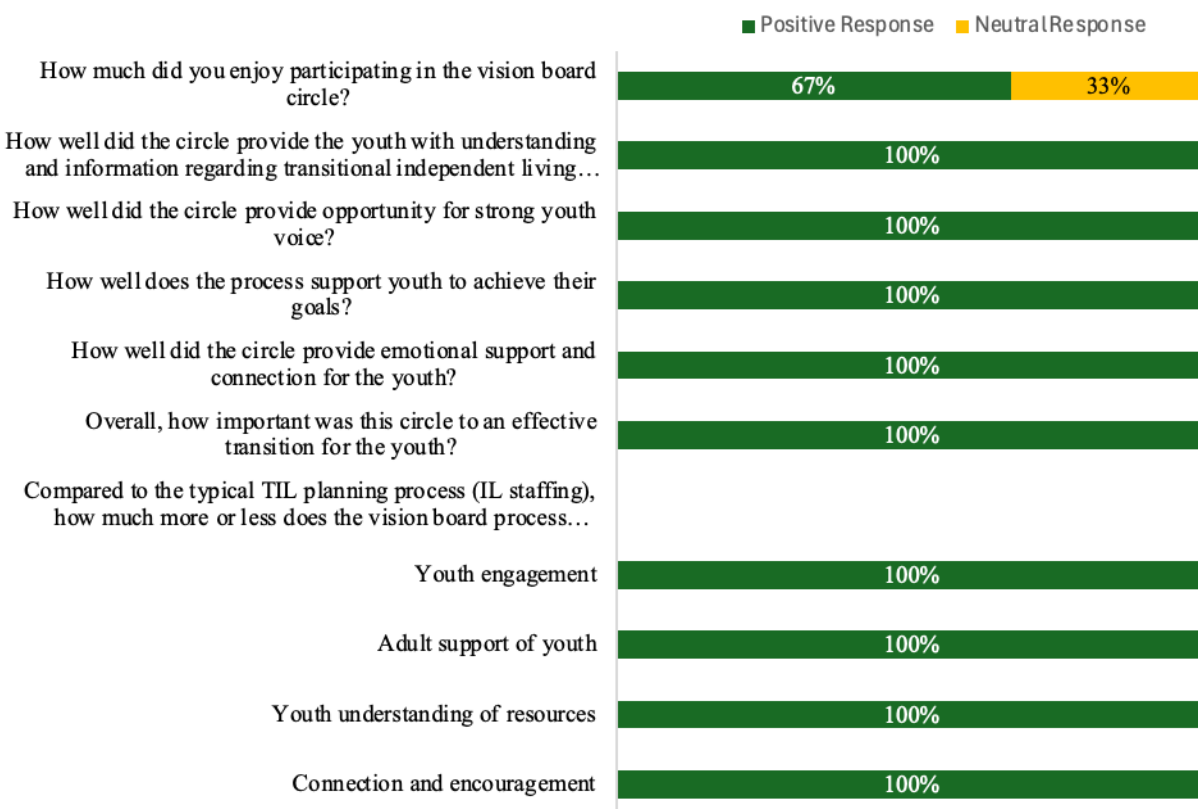
	Very Well		Well		Somewhat		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How well did the circle provide the youth with understanding and information regarding transitional independent living resources and benefits?	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well did the circle provide opportunity for strong youth voice?	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well does the process support youth to achieve their goals?	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well did the circle provide emotional support and connection for the youth?	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

	Very Important		Important		Unimportant		Very Unimportant	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Overall, how important was this circle to an effective transition for the youth?	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

	Much More		More		Neither More nor Less		Less		Much Less	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Compared to the typical TIL planning process (IL staffing), how much more or less does the vision board process provide opportunity for:										
Youth Engagement	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Adult Support of Youth	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Youth Understanding of Resources	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Connection and Encouragement	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 11
Vision Board HOPE Court Adult Team Survey Results



Summary of Open-Ended Responses. HOPE Court adult team members were asked, “What was YOUR favorite part of the circle?”. An analysis of their responses generated the following findings, which are organized by theme.

Focus on Youth Goals and Aspirations

A respondent valued discussions centered around the youth's short-term and long-term goals. They found these conversations to be crucial in helping youth identify their aspirations and take concrete steps toward achieving them.

- "Discussion on youth's goals, both short and long term."

Encouragement and Support for Youth

A team member appreciated the moments when they could provide positive reinforcement and encouraging words to the youth. They found this aspect of the circle to be impactful in boosting the youth's morale and self-confidence.

- "Providing encouraging words to the youth."

Recognition of Youth's Strengths

A respondent valued the opportunity to help youth recognize their strengths and potential. They emphasized the importance of empowering youth by affirming their abilities and encouraging them to believe in themselves and their limitless potential.

- "Helping XXXX see his strengths and showing him that the sky's the limit."

HOPE Court adult team members were also asked, "Is there anything you would change about this circle?". An analysis of their responses generated the following findings.

Satisfaction with the Current Format

Two respondents expressed no desire to change the circle, indicating their overall satisfaction with the current setup.

- "No"
- "No"

Preference for In-Person Interaction

One respondent suggested conducting the circle in person instead of online. The respondent felt that an in-person format may be more engaging and reduce distractions.

Vision Board Adult Participant Survey Results

Vision Board Workshop Surveys were administered to adult participants, who were not HOPE Court team members, following the Vision Board Workshops. Fourteen adult team members completed the survey. Results are presented in aggregate (see Table 7, Figure 12, and summary of open-ended responses). The results indicated that all the respondents had a positive experience with the workshop with respect to the following areas:

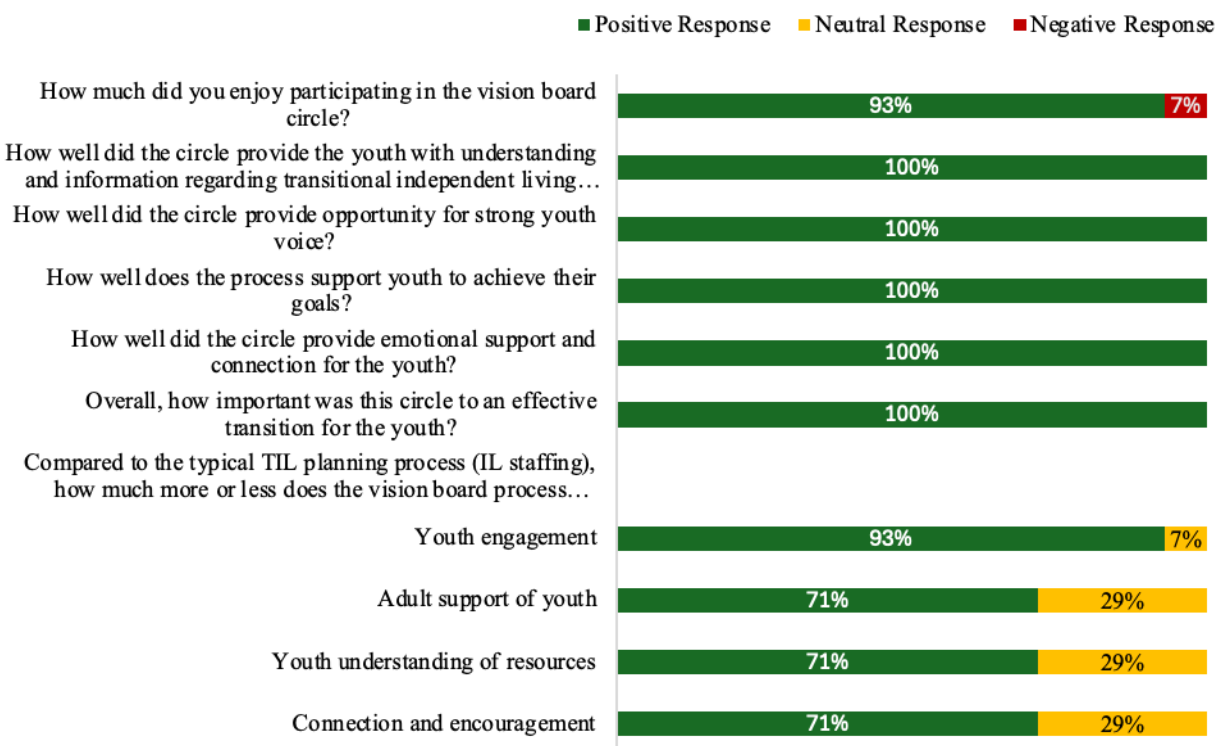
- Enjoyed participating in the workshops
- Thought that the circle provided the youth with understanding and information regarding transitional independent living resources and benefits
- Provided an opportunity for strong youth voice
- Supported youth to achieve their goals
- Provided emotional support and connection for the youth
- Considered it to be important for an effective transition for the youth

Table 7
Vision Board Adult Participant Survey Results

	A Great Deal		Somewhat		A Little		Not at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you enjoy participating in the vision board circle?	13	92.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1
	Very Well		Well		Somewhat		Not at All	

	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How well did the circle provide the youth with understanding and information regarding transitional independent living resources and benefits?	12	85.7	2	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well did the circle provide opportunity for strong youth voice?	13	92.9	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well does the process support youth to achieve their goals?	13	92.9	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
How well did the circle provide emotional support and connection for the youth?	11	78.6	3	21.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Very Important		Important		Unimportant		Very Unimportant	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Overall, how important was this circle to an effective transition for the youth?	13	92.9	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 12
Vision Board Adult Participant Survey Results



Summary of Open-Ended Responses. Staff were asked, “What was YOUR favorite part of the circle?”. An analysis of their responses generated the following findings, which are organized by theme.

Youth Empowerment and Voice

Staff appreciated the opportunity for youth to participate and have their voices heard actively. They valued the process that enabled the young people to express their opinions and participate in decision-making, highlighting the importance of youth empowerment in the circle.

- "allowing the youth to have a voice."
- "Allowing the young person to be a part of the process to voice their opinion."
- "The fact that they are interacting with the youth and providing a great deal of information."

Encouragement and Support

Respondents found the moments of encouragement and support given to the youth to be particularly impactful. They noted the significance of providing reassurance, recognizing growth, and sharing positive words at the end of the circle, which fostered a supportive and affirming environment for the youth.

- "The team approach and reassurance given to the youth."
- "Reassuring the child that she will have continued support."
- "My favorite part of the circle was having the opportunity during several moments to express encouragement to the minor and to reflect on how he has grown throughout this dependency process."
- "When everyone gave encouraging words at the end."
- "The end where we all shared an encouraging word for the youth."

Positive Recognition and Strength Identification

This theme reflects the staff's appreciation for activities that focused on identifying and acknowledging the youth's strengths and positive attributes. Listening to teenagers speak positively about themselves and recognizing their strengths was seen as a powerful and uplifting component of the circle.

- "Where we all identify a strength we have observed in the youth."
- "Listening to the teenager talk positively about herself."

Interactive and Immersive Experience

Staff enjoyed the circle's interactive elements, which allowed the youth to engage more deeply with the content. The use of interactive tools and software was noted as an effective way

to present information and involve the youth in the process, making the experience more engaging and comprehensible for them.

- "The interactive components allow for the client to be immersed in the subject."
- "The circle is Interactive, they use a software that allows for the youth to see everything broken down."

Perception of Care and Engagement

A respondent mentioned their appreciation for the overall atmosphere of care and attention created during the circle. They valued the efforts made to show genuine care and concern for the youth, which enhanced the engagement and impact of the circle activities.

- "I liked how they made it seem like they cared."

Staff were also asked, "Is there anything you would change about this circle?". An analysis of their responses generated the following findings, which are organized by theme.

Satisfaction with the Current Format

Most respondents expressed no desire to change the circle, indicating overall satisfaction with the current format and structure. They felt the experience was positive for both youth and staff.

- "No change is needed at this time."
- "Nothing, It was a great experience for both youth and case manager."
- "No"
- "No"
- "No"
- "No"
- "N/A"
- "The circle is adequate."

Suggestions for Improvement

A few respondents suggested specific changes to enhance the circle experience. These suggestions included shortening the duration to prevent zoom fatigue and adjusting the presentation of specific topics to be more engaging and easier to understand.

- "I would make it slightly shorter. While it is an encouraging time, zoom fatigue can kick in, especially when the minor is being presented with the large amount of information related to aging out and benefits. Just for reference, the one I participated in was about 2 hours long."
- "I didn't like how the housing was introduced and explained."

HOPE Court Youth Survey Results

Vision Board Youth Survey Results

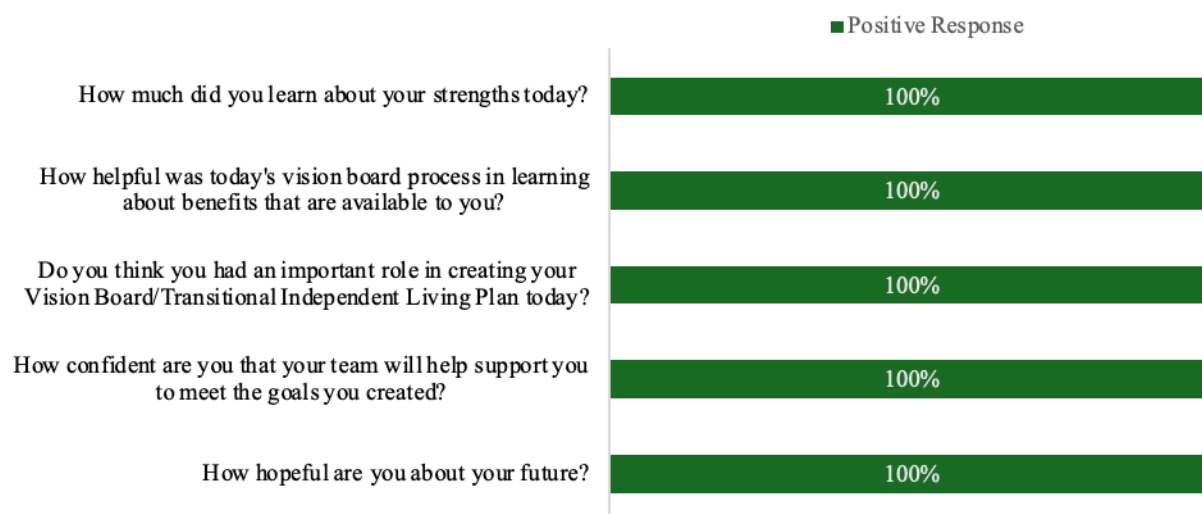
A Vision Board Workshop Survey was administered to one HOPE Court youth participant following the Vision Board Workshop. Results are presented in Table 8 and Figure 13, and a summary of the open-ended responses. The youth participant indicated that the vision board workshop resulted in them experiencing the following:

- Learned a substantial amount about their strengths
- Helped them learn more about the benefits that were available to them
- Felt more confident that their team would help support them in meeting the goals the youth created
- Felt more hopeful about the future

Table 8.
Vision Board Youth Survey Results

	Very Much		Quite a Bit		Very Little		Nothing at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you learn about your strengths today?	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How helpful was today's vision board process in learning about benefits that are available to you?	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Yes		Maybe		No			
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Do you think you had an important role in creating your Vision Board/Transitional Independent Living Plan today?	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
	Very Confident		Confident		Unconfident		Very Unconfident	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How confident are you that your team will help support you to meet the goals you created?	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%

How hopeful are you about your future?	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
--	---	-----	---	-------	---	-----	---	-----

Figure 13*Vision Board HOPE Court Youth Survey Results*

Vision Board Workshop HOPE Court Youth Survey Open-Ended Responses

Summary. The HOPE Court youth respondent was also asked, “What was your favorite part of the vision board?” and they indicated they were “Learning I appreciate it.” Also, they were asked, “What are other thoughts or comments you have?” and indicated, “Maybe not so long,” suggesting that the workshop could be shorter.

Survey Results for Youth Not in HOPE Court

Vision Board Youth Survey Results

A Vision Board Workshop Survey was administered to 22 youth participants who were not in HOPE Court but participated in a vision board workshop. Results are presented in Table 9 and Figure 14, and a summary of the open-ended responses. The participants indicated that the vision board workshops resulted in them experiencing the following:

- Learned a substantial amount about their strengths
- Helped them learn more about the benefits that were available to them
- Felt they had an important role in creating their vision board/transitional independent living plan
- Felt more hopeful about the future

Table 9

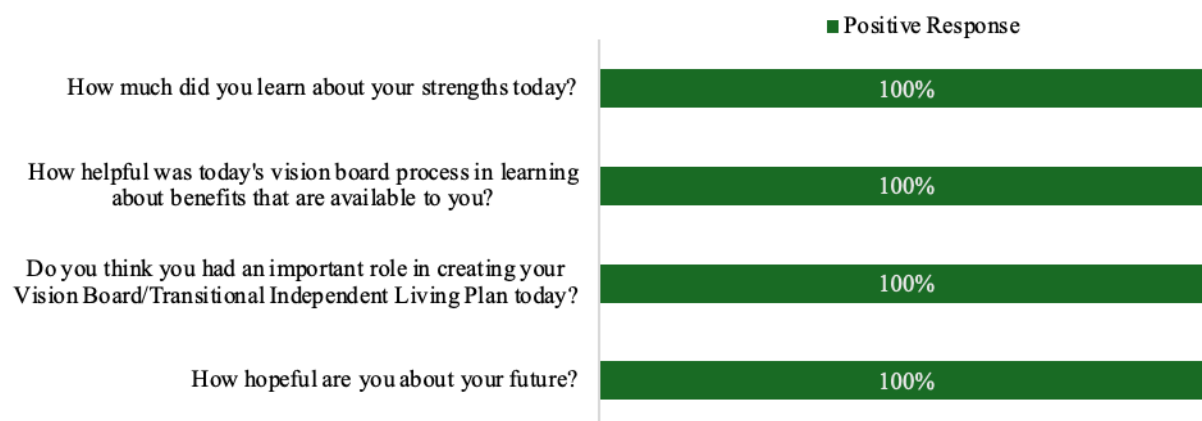
Vision Board Youth Not in HOPE Court Survey Results

	Very Much		Quite a Bit		Very Little		Nothing at All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How much did you learn about your strengths today?	14	63.6	8	36.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Very Helpful		Helpful		Unhelpful		Very Unhelpful	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How helpful was today's vision board process in learning about benefits that are available to you?	20	90.9	2	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0

	Yes		Maybe		No	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Do you think you had an important role in creating your Vision Board/Transitional Independent Living Plan today?	22	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Figure 14

Vision Board Youth Not in HOPE Court Survey Results



Vision Board Workshop Youth (Not in HOPE Court) Survey Open-Ended

Responses Summary. Youth who were not in HOPE Court but who completed the Vision Board Workshop survey were asked, “What was your favorite part of the vision board?”. An analysis of their responses generated the following findings, organized by theme.

Specific Topics of Interest

Many respondents highlighted specific topics discussed during the vision board workshop as their favorite parts. These topics included housing, health, school, and various benefits. These topics were crucial to the youth, indicating their practical concerns and interest in gaining information and clarity about their future.

- "Talking about housing."
- "Probably talking about the health section."
- "Probably the house part; that was the one part I was nervous or anxious about because I wanted answers."
- "Talking about school."
- "Talking about trade schools."
- "Talking about housing and Medicaid and stuff (Sunshine Health benefits)."
- "Talking about short term and long term goals and graduating and talking job assistance."
- "Steps being explained about housing situation."

Learning and Information Sharing

Respondents appreciated the information shared during the workshop, such as benefits, resources, and long-term and short-term goals. They found the process informative, educational, and valuable for their personal planning.

- "Learning all the benefits."
- "Having things broken down, learning the information, clarification and repetition."
- "Getting to know what I can use, whatever I need, like the benefits, including self-care and doctor's appointment."
- "Talking about my short & long term goals."
- "Beginning part asking about long-term and short-term goals."
- "You sharing the resources and letting me know I am not alone."

- "I don't know. I just like that it was informative. I felt like I didn't waste my time doing it."

Positive Feedback and Encouragement

Some respondents mentioned that receiving compliments and positive feedback during the workshop was their favorite part. This shows the importance of affirmation and encouragement in helping them feel valued and confident.

- "The compliments!"
- "All the compliments that I received."
- "Seeing you guys name the words that describe me."

Overall Positive Experience

A couple of respondents expressed general satisfaction with the entire vision board workshop, indicating they found the overall experience to be beneficial and engaging.

- "Everything was pretty cool, all of it really."
- "Very hopeful."

No Favorite Part

Two respondents indicated that they did not have a favorite part of the vision board workshop, suggesting difficulty in identifying a specific aspect they liked.

- "None."
- "None."

The youth were also asked, "What are other thoughts or comments you have?". An analysis of their responses generated the following findings, organized by theme.

Positive Feedback and Appreciation

Several respondents expressed their gratitude and positive impressions of the vision board workshop. They highlighted their enjoyment of the session, appreciated the respect and attention they received, and found the information provided to be valuable and engaging.

- "You guys are great. This was a 10/10. I was very nervous. This was great and I really enjoyed it!"
- "Thank yall. A lot of stuff I didn't know was options especially the medical part."
- "Not really, good job explaining and with details, very engaging, I didn't get distracted, good job drawing me in and keeping me focused."
- "How you guys were so respectful and giving me the utmost attention and I thank you for that. You guys were so kind."
- "No. Ya'll did a great job!"
- "I liked everything."

Suggestions for Future Workshops

One respondent suggested increasing the frequency of these workshops, emphasizing that having more regular meetings would be beneficial as youth often change their minds about their goals. They felt more frequent sessions would provide better support and guidance.

- "Needs to be more of these meetings before we turn 18 because we change our minds a lot. Stuff like this needs to be more frequent, like every 2 months or 1 month basis."

General Enjoyment and Engagement with the Concept

A respondent mentioned their appreciation for the vision board concept, finding it a helpful tool for organizing their thoughts and plans. They enjoyed the activity even though it was challenging to articulate precisely why.

- "I really liked this vision board idea...don't know how to explain...like the meeting/vision board & organizing everything."

No Additional Thoughts or Comments

Many respondents indicated they had no additional thoughts or comments. This suggests that they were either satisfied with the experience or did not have further input to share.

- "None"
- "Nothing"
- "Nah"
- "No"
- "None"
- "Don't think so."
- "None"
- "Nothing"
- "None"
- "None"
- "None"
- "None"

Youth and Stakeholder Interviews

The results of the analysis of youth and stakeholder interviews are organized by a discussion of each proposition, which was derived from the analysis of cohort 1 data and further supported by the results of cohort 2. The propositions used to guide the analysis are presented below:

1. *Youth will be engaged and have a voice in the dependency process* due to the frequency of contact, youth-centered approach, and connection with adult team members.

2. *A supportive network of trusted adults* will be created to facilitate transition for youth as a result of frequency of contact, collaboration among team members, and restorative practices elements.
3. *Communication and collaboration* will increase to meet the needs of youth and facilitate a successful transition in the dependency process in HOPE court due to frequency and quality of interactions facilitated through the HOPE Court model.

The discussion of each proposition is organized as follows: (a) youth are engaged and have a voice in the dependency process (youth-centered approach), (b) youth have a reliable support network of trusted adults in their transition to adulthood, and (c) youth needs are better met through frequent, high-quality communication and collaboration. As was evident in the results of cohorts 1 and 2 stakeholder and youth interviews, HOPE Court represents a substantial shift from typical dependency court processes and proceedings. Discussion of the differences between HOPE Court and typical dependency court as experienced by youth and stakeholders is threaded throughout the presentation of each proposition.

Youth are Engaged and Have a Voice in the Dependency Process (Youth-Centered Process)

Analysis of cohort 3 interview data supported the proposition that youth will be engaged and have a voice in the dependency process due to the frequency of contact, youth-centered approach, and connection with adult team members. As was noted in prior cohorts, youth and stakeholders described HOPE Court as a youth-centered process, which prioritizes youth voice and engagement. Stakeholders cited (a) the higher frequency of court hearings, contact with the Judge and adult support team members, and the increased number of adults working with them and on their behalf, (b) the centering of the youth in hearings/activities

within HOPE Court; particularly, creating opportunities for youth to express themselves, participate in decision-making, and advocate for themselves when needed, (c) creating a more “comfortable,” “casual,” non-judgmental, “fun,” and “relaxed” judicial environment, (d) demonstration of empathy and caring for the youths’ well-being, and the trust and connection developed with team members as contributing to youth engagement and voice. When asked to describe how HOPE Court differs from traditional dependency court, one stakeholder noted, “

...this is vastly different in that, like, the whole thing is really centered around the kid.

And so, I definitely feel like the, the children notice it obviously; and I feel like it helps them engage more, and it gives them kind of a bigger stake in the proceedings, and they’re more likely to show up to the hearings because of it.

Stakeholder and youth participants reported favorable impressions of the HOPE Court hearings when compared to traditional dependency court hearings. Each hearing is scripted to ensure consistent integration of restorative practices and begins with an ice breaker question, which stakeholders indicated helps to humanize the judge and adult team members and make the youth and adult team members feel more comfortable. As noted in observations of court hearings, examples of ice breaker questions included, “If you could live anywhere for a year, where would you live?” “If you were to have a sea creature as a pet, would you rather have a narwhal or an octopus,” and “What is the one skill you would like to be able to learn instantly?” The youth is given the option to go first or last, and all HOPE Court team members, including the judge, answer the question. As was noted in cohort 2, for several of the youth the initial question was reported to be their favorite part of HOPE Court. Youth are centered in the HOPE Court hearing and given the chance to speak

first, followed by the supportive professionals who are then offered the chance to ask questions and comment.

One stakeholder stated,

In the past I've gone to court individually with my young person and it's always kind of been a sense of, you know, stress or tension. This opportunity through HOPE Court, you know, there's always, you know, food and snacks, and everyone's in a good mood, and it's definitely a little more casual. It's less of, you know, an actual court experience where they're nervous or on edge. They're definitely a lot more comfortable in this hope court setting.

Similarly, another stakeholder noted,

With HOPE Court, I think it's more interactive; the kids are able to sit down with the judge and all of the other parties and deep dive into what's going on with their cases, to get the additional assistance that they may need. I like that HOPE Court allows them to have like pre-circles and additional meetings. Because they have a lot of questions. Aging out is very scary...

Youth participants also spoke to feeling “comfortable” in the HOPE Court setting, and appreciated the opportunity to be heard, participate in their own case, and ask questions of the Judge and adult team members, which represented a difference for them when compared to typical dependency court. One youth participant indicated that HOPE Court made her “feel happy because I feel like I had a voice. I wasn’t just being shut out. I was being heard.” When asked how HOPE Court has been different from previous court experiences, one youth noted,

A lot of the people are very engaged, and I also feel more open to talking in a sense. I love that you guys do start with doing a question because it helps get comfortable and open up in a sense, because going to these hearings with a bunch of people, its nerve wracking...

Another youth participant stated,

It's a different thing. We do the little circle thing with the question in the beginning and then, it's more like about me and my problems like 'What do I need figured out right now?' or "What are you going through that you need us to help out with?" It's practically about me and my needs.

Youth survey results also reflected engagement with the HOPE Court process. All twelve of the youth participants who completed the survey (100%) answered "yes" on the following survey items: (1) I attend my HOPE Court hearings, (2) I'm ok asking questions when I am in the courtroom, (3) I'm ok with sharing my thoughts when I am in the courtroom, (4) My concerns are heard and addressed in the courtroom, and (13) During my time in HOPE Court, I felt seen, heard, and valued by my Judge and support team (see Appendix B for HOPE Court Participant Survey results).

Across HOPE Court activities (pre-court listening circles, hearings, vision board workshop), youth are centered in the process and their voice is prioritized in the dialogue regarding the youth's status and needs. The initial circle go-around (i.e., feelings check-in or ice-breaker question) was also utilized in pre-court listening circles to center the youth and improve connection and comfortability between the youth and adult team members and among stakeholders, as well. Youth were often given the option to do a circle go-around question (ice-breaker) or to do a "feelings check-in." One stakeholder noted,

Everything is always youth centered. So, with the circle, a set of guidelines, or rules, are established before, you know when we have the first one, and like all the conversations it starts with asking the youth first. So, I feel like with youth, like I said they're used to being talked at instead of talked to. So, when everything starts, it's like, "Oh, good morning, everyone. Good morning, Johnny." Just throwing a name out there. "Good morning, Johnny. How was your day? How are you feeling? Did you do anything interesting today?" Like focusing on the youth, making them feel important and like I said, encouraging them to speak and just also letting them know that they're important and not just a bystander to everything that's happening concerning them. And I think that's usually how they feel. So, the fact that it starts with them. There's a question usually like a fun question, "Oh, would you rather eat a salad for the rest of your life or a hamburger?" They ask the youth if they want to go first instead of just you know, if they want to answer the question first, so instead of just saying "answer this question"...and giving them choices. Like, I said, which is another thing that I feel like a lot of them feel they don't have.

Youth indicated that HOPE Court helped them to feel supported and "comfortable," and referred to the adult team members, including the judge, as "nice," caring," "helpful," understanding, and "kind." Youth participants indicated they felt the adult team members listened and were understanding, with one participant stating, "...I don't feel judged inside the courtroom." When asked about HOPE Court circles, one youth participant responded:

Um it's been like reconstructive because I had to like construct myself to be open and have conversation and learn and I had to learn to be a little more social and not as closed

off. In normal court hearings you know you say the “yes” or “no” or you just answer questions and in HOPE Court it’s more engaging, um so I had to learn.

Youth Have a Reliable Support Network of Trusted Adults in their Transition to Adulthood

Results of the analysis of cohort 3 youth and stakeholder interview data, and youth survey results supported the proposition that within HOPE Court a supportive network of trusted adults will be created to facilitate transition for youth as a result of frequency of contact, collaboration among team members, and restorative practices elements. Consistent with the results of the analysis of cohorts 1 and 2 interview data, interviews with both youth and stakeholders in cohort 3 revealed that in HOPE Court, youth have a reliable support network of trusted adults in their transition to adulthood. The professionals involved with each youth represent an expanded team, compared to what would be seen in typical dependency court. The youth’s HOPE Court team comprises the case manager (Child Advocate), Guardian ad litem, Attorney ad litem, Judge, foster parent (if applicable), adolescent care coordinator, and program administrators: HOPE Court Director and Assistant Director. Their team also includes a mentor or life coach, who can provide additional guidance through the transition to independent living. Given the expanded team, there are increased opportunities for youth to build connections with adults in the child welfare system prior to aging out. One stakeholder noted,

I feel like Hope Court is definitely more of a supportive environment. Having the judge involved has definitely helped and it's less of a scary process for the young individual to recognize who their team is, and you know, to see them regularly, I think, is really important...I just feel like it gives them a sense that you know, that they have a support

system. That it's not, you know, them, or maybe you know, one child advocate or one caseworker managing everything. It's definitely a team approach. And there's many different people with many different roles, and I think it gives the young person that sense that they're not in this alone.

As was noted with cohorts 1 and 2, both youth and stakeholders in cohort 3 pointed to the “team” as an important aspect of HOPE Court, with all professionals meeting frequently, and communicating and collaborating effectively to ensure the youth’s needs are met and they are prepared to transition to adulthood successfully. One stakeholder reported,

The big thing for me is the support that the children get, the hands on with all of these different adults who, you know, cause we can all say, “we care, we care, we care.” But these people actually are doing what they say they're going to do. That's a really big deal to these children. People doing what they say. They're going to do the follow through; very, very important to build trust. And I think that gives them a lot. I really think that that's super beneficial for these children.

Adult team members are trained in nonviolent communication and restorative practices and in turn, utilize empathy and affective language to communicate and connect with youth. Communication and connection between youth and team members, as well as among team members, was evident across youth and stakeholder interviews. Youth reported their team members cared for their well-being, were supportive, and valued their input, feelings and concerns. Youth feelings of comfortability, connection and reliance on team members was apparent within interviews. As was noted in interviews with cohort 2

youth, one cohort 3 youth participant likened their HOPE Court team to “family” and stated HOPE Court was,

Like a family. I enjoyed it for real. Like even if I’m mad, y’all will find a way to make me laugh. I don’t know, you guys are so helpful like I don’t know y’all be having me speechless sometimes. What else? I really appreciate everything you guys done for real. Cause like ever since y’all came in, like ever since I joined the program, people started you know listening to me and actually getting the things done. You guys stopped me from running away and stuff like that. I appreciate that.

Similarly, one youth participant gave the following response when asked about the relationship developed with the adult HOPE Court team members, specifically, the youth’s Guardian ad litem:

Me and her have actually gotten very close. I trust her a lot. She’s very caring. I love that she fights for me. That’s one thing that I’ve always needed. She needs something done, she gets it done for me and that’s one of my favorite things about her. We do have a close and personal relationship outside of that because she’s been there for a lot of things.

Youth participants characterized their HOPE Court teams as caring, understanding, nice, supportive, helpful, and reliable. Youth respondents emphasized that team members were there when they needed them and evidenced follow through with regard to their needs (i.e., getting things done). One youth participant stated that HOPE Court has been,

...a joyful experience...um everyone on the team is very welcoming, very kind, supporting, caring as well, helpful.

When asked to describe a favorite part of HOPE Court, one youth stated, Um having someone to share my accomplishments with; having people to share my accomplishments with.

On the HOPE Court Participant Survey all of the youth participants (100%) answered “yes” to the following items: (5) I can talk to someone from my HOPE Court team if I feel stressed, sad, or angry; (7) Someone from my HOPE Court team will help me if I have problems with my foster care placement, and (19) HOPE Court helped me to feel supported in the process of learning about my transition to independent living. Ninety-two percent (92%) answered “yes” to the following item: 6) Someone from my HOPE Court team will help me if I’m sick or hurt; These results provide further evidence that youth feel supported by their HOPE Court teams through the transition to independent living process.

Meeting Youth Needs through Frequent, High-Quality Communication and Collaboration

Results of the analysis of cohort 3 youth and stakeholder interview data supported the proposition that communication and collaboration will increase to meet the needs of youth and facilitate a successful transition in the dependency process in HOPE court due to frequency and quality of interactions facilitated through the HOPE Court model. Consistent with the results of analysis of cohorts 1 and 2 interview data, interviews with both youth and stakeholders in cohort 3 revealed that the frequency and quality of interactions/communication, as well as a collaborative approach, were reported by stakeholders and youth to be key positive aspects of HOPE Court and contributed to successful transition. As noted in the cohort 1 research report, in HOPE Court, youth are provided more time in the transition to independent living

(TIL) process; namely, youth enter HOPE Court just before, or at the time of their 17th birthday to allow sufficient time to establish relationships with their HOPE Court team, learn critical independent living skills and gain necessary knowledge to prepare them for adulthood. Hearings are held every 6 weeks, as opposed to every 6 months, which is typical for standard dependency court. Additionally, the youth and the youth's HOPE Court team, which may comprise the youth's Child Advocate (Case Manager), Attorneys, Guardian ad Litem, Life Coach, caregivers, etc., meet prior to each hearing in a pre-court listening circle to discuss the status of the youth, with the youth, and address any issues as they arise utilizing empathy and non-violent communication. The ability to communicate and collaborate on a regular and relatively frequent basis, when compared to typical dependency court, was cited by stakeholders as a factor which helped them to more effectively perform their jobs and ensure youth needs are met. The (a) relationship-building and "rapport," (b) shared responsibility of team members, and (c) organization of the process were also identified as important aspects contributing to positive outcomes. When asked "What has been going well with HOPE Court?" one stakeholder stated,

I would say really everything. I mean I've been very glad to be a part of HOPE Court and I've seen, you know the difference when it comes to communication and follow through and assigning responsibility, you know, to specific people and specific tasks. It's definitely a much better approach than otherwise because, you know, in having done this for so long, you know, stuff gets lost along the way, and people don't take accountability. And you know people are difficult to get ahold of, and there's definitely not the sense of community and communication that is so important and so essential when it comes to these young people.

Additionally, the frequency of meetings and follow up of program administrators with meeting outcomes and assigned tasks also was reported to contribute to increased accountability. Stakeholders commented on the benefits of the collaboration and shared responsibility among team members, with one stakeholder noting:

We all have our roles, but it's also very stressful. It's emotionally stressful, it's physically, you know, stressful and having the team approach I think helps everybody. I mean, I'll tell you that's my experience, because I know that there's always somebody that's sort of like watching out for the child. And you know, if I can't do something to help the child, then I know that there are like four other people who can offer support too. The team approach is really helpful, I think, to not just the child, but I don't know, in my personal opinion, I would say to all of the professionals working with the child too.

Consistent with findings from cohorts 1 and 2, stakeholder participants indicated that pre-court circles were helpful in preparing for the upcoming court hearing and in resolving any issues or conflicts prior to the hearing. When asked about experiences with pre-court listening circles, one stakeholder stated,

What's nice is that we meet for the pre-court circle the week or so before the hearing, so that way, I mean, in a perfect world we would all be meeting about things anyway. This sort of, because it has like a paradigm to it and we're all in, you know, we're following that, it works the way that court really should, and these cases should work. You know, we all get to know, we all know what's happening. There's no surprises for anybody. Any issues that need to be brought up have already been brought up before and discussed in the pre-court circle. It's a way for us to sort of present to the judge as a team. You know,

“This is what's happening. This is what we need. This is what we don't need.” You know that kind of stuff. And it really almost like streamlines it.

Similarly, one youth participant stated

I like the pre-courts a lot. Having them helped figure out more so a bullet point on when I would go into the actual hearing, which is helpful for me because I am very forgetful and will say “I don’t know” to everything.

As was noted for cohort 1, stakeholders indicated that this was helpful to facilitate a common understanding regarding the status of the youth, keep apprised of any changes or challenges, and work collaboratively to meet the youth’s needs. Emphasis was placed on the frequency of contact, and communication/rapport among team members, which helped to “get things done.” One stakeholder noted, “It’s seldom stuff falling through the cracks.” Moreover, addressing challenges or conflicts in the pre-court listening circles and consistently working with the youth between hearings allowed for a more productive and positive experience in the court hearing. When asked about the pre-court listening circles, one stakeholder noted,

...In traditional [dependency] court, you have all of these issues and it turns into kind of a fight sometimes in the court hearing and there’s all of these like, the focus becomes more of a battle than a focus on the kid. And so here, it’s nice because you kind of get to sort out the issues before court, and you maybe get to assign someone to help the issues. No one is kind of blindsided in court, and so I think it makes it just makes it better. It makes it more fluid in the court hearing, it makes it more focus on the kid and it feels more collaborative as opposed to being more like, hostile...

As was noted with cohorts 1 and 2, stakeholders noted that HOPE Court represents a contrast to the “adversarial” model typically seen in dependency court. HOPE Court focuses primarily on employing relationship and community building to connect the youth with a team of trusted adults, who are all continuously working between and within court hearings toward the same goal of a successful transition to adulthood for the youth. This entails training of adult team members in restorative practices and non-violent communication, which stakeholders indicated was a benefit to their work with the youth, particularly in understanding youth behavior and communicating with empathy. One stakeholder noted that,

The teaching you receive in HOPE court is like you learn to step back and just kind of, you know, analyze why is this youth behaving like this? What is the underlying issue? There's something else that's going on that's causing them to react this way. So now it gives you that, you know, almost like it gives you a different perspective, like let me just step back and let them vent, and then I can approach it, you know, kind of understand where they're coming from. You empathize with them, and you kind of address things differently. So, instead of speaking out of anger or frustration, you then kind of step back, and you, you know, you speak to the client like, and you know, in a place of empathy and concern versus all the frustration.

Summary of Integration of Restorative Practices in HOPE Court

As indicated previously, HOPE Court is grounded in a restorative practices approach. Through the study's interviews and observations, restorative practices were evident across interventions and activities within HOPE Court. Youth in HOPE Court are provided with an

expanded team, which includes a mentor or life coach, and frequent contact beginning approximately 1 year prior to the youth's 18th birthday. Court hearings are held every 6 weeks to facilitate communication and community building with the youth and team members. According to Costello et al. (2019), "circles are a powerful process to proactively build bonds and a community. They create space to increase social capital and develop norms. Circles also provide a forum to respond to conflict and wrongdoing" (p. 22). Circles were used within core activities, including court hearings, pre-court listening circles, and restorative conferencing or conflict circles, as needed. Each court hearing started with an ice-breaker question and circle "go-around," whereby each participant (youth, judge, and team members) answered the ice-breaker question. Given that all but two of the hearings were all held on Zoom, a "talking piece" (symbolic object held by the person talking, which ensures only one person talks at a time) could not be utilized; however, as was noted with cohorts 1 and 2, hearings were observed to be relaxed and respectful, with youth and team members all having an opportunity to speak without interruption. Additionally, although the courtroom could not be organized in a physical "circle," given the nature of Zoom (i.e., no hierarchical structure or layout) and through the efforts of the judge, program administrators and team members, the intended effect of sitting in a "circle" appeared to be realized. Specifically, youth and stakeholders reported feeling comfortable, connected, safe, and valued, and that their voices were heard. One stakeholder noted,

I see where, when you look at the general population of youth who are transitioning out of foster care versus those who have the HOPE Court component, there's just so much more support. I think the youth feel safer, they have, they're more sure that they're going to be okay versus those who are not. You know, I think they're a little more nervous, the ones who are not a part of HOPE Court. They're a bit more nervous you know, about

aging out. So, I think HOPE Court brings that level of I think somewhat of comfort and stability. They can see that it's going to be there, you know, people are going to be there for them. Supportive adults are going to be there for them. And you know, they know they can always turn to someone if they need assistance.

Court hearings were youth-led, with the youth conversing with the judge and answering questions directly, prior to attorneys and other team members providing input or asking questions. Judicial scripts were created prior to each hearing to ensure fidelity to restorative practices. Pre-court listening circles also took place prior to each hearing. These meetings, which included the youth and all members of the support team, afforded an opportunity to facilitate communication with the youth and team members and address any issues which may have surfaced prior to the court hearing. Restorative practices, which were evident via the pre-court listening circles, included an initial feelings “check-in.” This involved a circle go-around at the start of each meeting, and included discussions of “celebrations” and “mournings.”

According to Costello et al. (2019), “by engaging young people, we can hold them accountable in an active way. Then we are doing things *with* them. But when we hand out punishments, we are doing things *to* them. Or when we take care of their problems and make no demands, we are doing things *for* them” (p. 49). As evidenced via observations and interviews with stakeholders and youth, HOPE Court team members consistently work *with* the youth. In the time between court hearings and pre-court listening circles, team members collaborate (with the youth and each other) to collectively problem-solve concerns and ensure the youth’s needs are met. Youth are paired with a member of their adult support team to meet a specific need or accomplish a task (e.g., complete a SNAP application,

obtain a bus pass, locate a therapist, address issues with a placement), and follow up and expressions of gratitude take place in each pre-court listening circles meeting.

Youth participated in a virtual vision board workshop with their team members to engage in goal setting and develop a plan for their transition to independent living. The virtual vision board workshop process utilized in HOPE Court was adapted from EPIC 'Ohana's E Makua Ana Youth Circle program. In the workshop, one adult team member facilitates the session and one adult team member serves as the "scribe" to document goals and steps to achieve goals. Virtual vision board workshops were held via Zoom, and team members collaborated using a shared MS Word document to track goal-setting and goal-related tasks in the session. The process is youth-driven and solution-focused, and results in a TIL plan, which is provided to the youth and participants following the virtual vision board workshop session. In reference to the virtual vision board workshops, one stakeholder noted that

The vision board is great because we do IL staffings, which is similar to the vision board, but I realized the vision board like, I'm seeing the kids use the vision board post-18 more so than they use their IL staffing, because their vision board a lot of times I've heard them, a few of my HOPE Court cases, say "oh, that's on my vision board," you know like later. This might be 2 months after we're done with HOPE Court...

With regard to the vision board workshop, another stakeholder indicated,

Of all of the things that I think that, I mean I like a lot of things about HOPE Court, but that's probably my favorite, because I feel like it's very individualized. They go over their strengths, they go over their dreams, their goals. If they have any question, they stop, and they make sure that it's understood. So, I actually feel like that is probably one of the best

things about HOPE Court, and I think it should be the standard for all kids that are going to age out in care.

Suggested areas for the improvement of HOPE Court that were indicated by two or more stakeholders/youth during the interviews included to make HOPE Court available to more youth in the dependency system. A challenge was also noted by stakeholders concerning scheduling at times and the high number of meetings/activities compared to cases outside of HOPE Court; however, stakeholders indicated that although this aspect was challenging, the frequency of meetings was beneficial to the youth and contributed to meeting their needs and in achieving positive outcomes in the youth's transition to adulthood. As one stakeholder stated,

It takes up more time with the circles and the, you know, the staffings and then the communication is greater. But it's for a very positive reason, and the outcome is very positive. So even though it may take up a little bit more time generally speaking, compared to my non-HOPE Court cases, I think it's a positive.

Additionally, when asked what it was like to participate in HOPE Court via Zoom, many stakeholders indicated that Zoom allowed for greater participation and ease of scheduling particularly for youth participants, when compared to in-person hearings/activities.

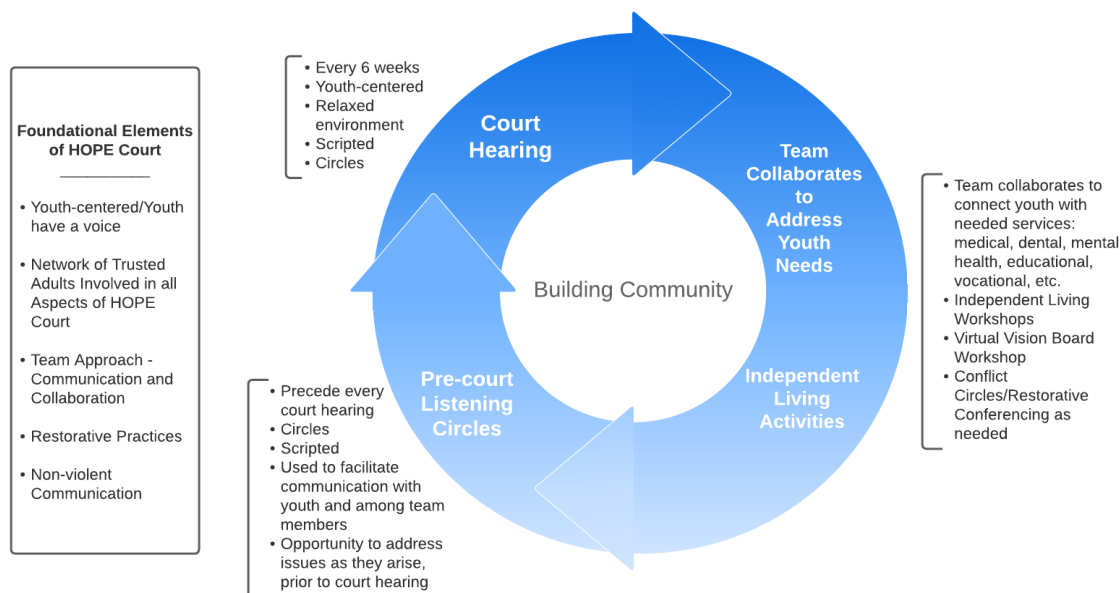
The HOPE Court conceptual model (see Figure 15) was initially developed as a result of the exploratory case study of HOPE Court cohort 1, and further supported and slightly modified as a result of the explanatory case study of cohort 2. Thus, infused throughout the HOPE Court process are the foundational elements, that include:

1. A youth-centered approach in which youth have a voice in the dependency process and in their transition to adulthood;
2. A network of trusted adults to support youth, who are involved in all aspects of

HOPE Court;

3. A team approach which emphasizes communication, collaboration, and follow-through to meet the needs of the youth;
4. Integration of restorative practices throughout all activities and interventions; and
5. Training of adult team members in restorative practices and utilization of non-violent communication.

Figure 15
HOPE Court Model



Fidelity to Restorative Practices

Observations were conducted over a 2-month period across 20 pre-court listening circles and 17 HOPE Court hearings, and a Restorative Practices Fidelity observation tool was completed for each activity to gauge fidelity to restorative practices elements within

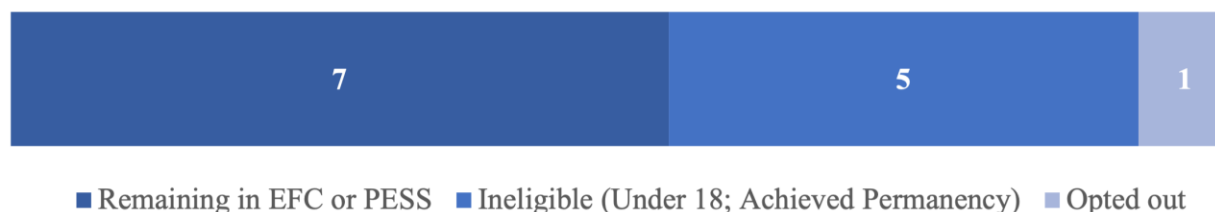
the categories of (a) communication, and (b) engagement and process (see Appendix E for the Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form). Observations were typically conducted for approximately 30 minutes per observation and each observation encompassed one youth included on the docket or scheduled for pre-court circles. One form was completed per youth hearing or pre-court circle observation. Across observations, all restorative practices elements were observed; however, not all elements were observed for each individual youth hearing/circle. Notably, as was noted during cohort 2 observations, restorative practices elements were more frequently observed within each individual youth hearing/circle for engagement and process (respectful, collaborative approach to problem solving and decision making, youth voice is centered in process, participation, high expectations/high standards established for the youth, accountability, high level of support provided to the youth, and fair process), when compared to elements aligning to communication (i.e., empathy, affective language utilized). A script is used to guide circles and affective statements and empathy are not always used since they are not always needed for each youth. Examples of empathic communication observed within HOPE Court activities included, “It sounds like there is a lot you are thinking about...the team is here to support you if you want to talk it through,” “It sounds like you are feeling down, but you have accomplished a lot,” “It sounds like you’re happy about these opportunities,” “I know it feels like a big change but we are all here to support you,” “I am hearing things at home could be better,” and “I’m guessing you’re feeling some ease and peace around that.” Examples of affective language included the following, “I am extremely proud of you. You gave me hope today!” and “We’re so proud of you. It’s so good to hear about all of the amazing things you are doing.”

HOPE Court Youth Outcomes

Regarding youth outcomes, HOPE Court aimed to improve participation rates in the Extended Foster Care (EFC) and Postsecondary Education Supports and Services (PESS) programs, which provide significant financial support, housing, and supportive services to youth once they age out of foster care. For the youth participants of HOPE Court, as of September 1, 2024, 5 participants (38%) were not eligible for EFC or PESS since they had not yet turned 18 or had achieved permanency prior to their 18th birthday; 7 participants (54%) remained in EFC, or transferred to the PESS program, and 1 participant (8%) voluntarily opted out of EFC (see Figure 16 for the number of HOPE Court youth participants remaining in EFC or PESS, or opted out as of September 1, 2024). When considering only youth who had turned 18 as of September 1, 2024, and were eligible for EFC or PESS ($n = 8$), 7 participants (88%) had remained in EFC or transferred to the PESS program as of September 1, 2024. Additionally, all youth (100%) who remained in EFC or PESS continued to voluntarily participate in pre-court circles and/or court hearings. Although the sample size is small ($n = 13$), these results suggest the program is meeting its goal of keeping the youth engaged in EFC or PESS, which is further supported by similar outcomes found in the cohorts 1 and 2 studies. For the youth participants of cohorts 1 and 2 of HOPE Court ($n = 22$), 16 participants (73%) remained in EFC, or transferred to the PESS program, 5 participants (23%) were terminated from EFC, and one participant (5%) had voluntarily opted out of EFC.

Figure 16

Number of HOPE Court cohort 3 youth participants remaining in EFC or PESS, ineligible, or opted out as of September 1, 2024



According to a review of data from the Department's Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) database covering youth who aged out between 2014 and 2018, between 60% to 70% of youth who were potentially eligible for the program did not participate, opted out before their eligibility period ended, or were terminated and did not return. Additionally, the largest number of opt-outs and unsuccessful terminations occurred in the first two months of participation. This means that a 30 to 40% participation rate was observed for all foster care youth who aged out between 2014-18. In contrast, HOPE Court cohort 3 youth have thus far demonstrated a higher participation rate (54%); however, it is important to note that 4 of the 13 youth have not yet turned 18 and therefore, whether they will remain in EFC or PESS is yet to be determined. For those cohort 3 youth that were eligible for EFC or PESS ($n = 8$), 7 out of the 8 participants (88%) remained in EFC or PESS. Additionally, as previously noted, the largest number of opt-outs and unsuccessful terminations occurred in the first two months of participation. For all youth in HOPE Court remaining in EFC or PESS, as of September 1, 2024, the mean time in EFC or PESS was 2 months ($SD = 3.61$) following the youths' 18th birthday. It is important to note that this cohort reflected a younger age than prior cohorts. Thus, for many of the youth they had just recently turned 18 and were only recently eligible for EFC or PESS. Time in EFC or PESS should continue to be monitored to determine if there is improvement on this indicator when compared to non-HOPE Court youth. Finally, analysis of FSFN data revealed that of the 4,789 youth who aged out between 2014-2018, over 42% did not apply for EFC or PESS. In contrast,

of those eligible for EFC or PESS ($n = 8$), seven HOPE Court youth (88%) applied for EFC or PESS (or did not “opt out”). It is again important to note that the sample size is small ($n = 13$), limiting the generalizability of the findings.

Discussion

An explanatory case study was conducted of the third cohort of HOPE Court, a dependency court program in Broward County that employs restorative practices to ensure TIL youth have a voice in their dependency court process and transition plan. Restorative legal processes, supportive youth circles, and TIL planning comprise the programmatic components of HOPE Court with the aim of increasing youth engagement in the EFC and PESS programs after their 18th birthday.

Data analysis resulted in support for the following propositions that were derived from the analysis of cohorts 1 and 2: (a) youth will be engaged and have a voice in the dependency process due to the frequency of contact, youth-centered approach, and connection with adult team members; (b) within HOPE Court a supportive network of trusted adults will be created to facilitate transition for youth as a result of frequency of contact, collaboration among team members, and restorative practices elements; and (c) communication and collaboration will increase to meet the needs of youth and facilitate a successful transition in the dependency process in HOPE court due to frequency and quality of interactions facilitated through the HOPE Court model. Implementation of cohort 3 was in alignment with the HOPE Court model (developed as a result of the exploratory case study conducted with cohort 1 and explanatory case study conducted with cohort 2; see Figure 11), which represents the foundational elements,

cycle of activities, and the infusion of restorative practices into the dependency court process. Restorative practices were found to be implemented across HOPE Court hearings and pre-court listening circles with fidelity as observed using the Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form.

As evidenced in the extant literature, the use of restorative practices has resulted in positive outcomes across disciplines, such as, education (Kline, 2016; Augustine et al., 2018), adult criminal court (Latimer et al., 2005), and juvenile justice (Rodriguez, 2007). Similarly, the use of restorative practices was found to be associated with positive changes related to process aspects and outcomes in the HOPE Court dependency court program. This finding was also evident in the evaluation of cohorts 1 and 2. The results of the cohort 1 study enabled the development of a conceptual framework and propositions to guide the subsequent explanatory case studies of HOPE Court cohorts 2 and 3 using the same design and case boundaries (Yin, 2018). For example, results of the analysis of cohort 1 data suggested that HOPE Court was successful in supporting and meeting the needs of foster care youth in the program and enabling youth to be more engaged and “have a voice” in the dependency system process. Similarly, analysis of cohorts 2 and 3 data revealed that youth were engaged and had a voice in the dependency process, which was attributed to the frequency of contact, youth-centered approach, and connection developed and fostered with adult team members over time. Youth were centered in all HOPE Court activities and youth voice was prioritized in discussions related to the youth’s status/case. Youth and stakeholders also reported strong connections with adult HOPE Court team members, including the Judge, and for all youth who remained in EFC or PESS, these connections have been maintained after they turned 18, via continued contact with team members. As was noted as a result of the analysis of cohort 2 data, for cohort 3, the frequency of

contact with adult team members, supportive approach, and other restorative practices elements (e.g., empathy, collaborative approach, doing things “with” the youth, rather than “to” or “for” the youth) were reported to contribute to the development of a trusted support network of adults to facilitate transition to independent living. The frequency and quality of communication and collaboration was cited as particularly helpful in developing “rapport” with youth and among team members and in meeting youth needs and “getting things done.”

Regarding the intended outcome of increasing engagement in the EFC and PESS programs following the youth’s 18th birthday, youth engagement appeared to continue after HOPE Court youth turned 18, since of the youth who had turned 18 as of September 1, 2024, and were eligible for EFC or PESS ($n = 8$), 7 participants (88%) had remained in EFC or transferred to the PESS program as of September 1, 2024. The 88% participation rate in EFC or PESS for HOPE Court cohort 3 youth who had turned 18 and were eligible for the program is noteworthy, when compared to the 30 to 40% participation rate observed for all foster care youth who aged out between 2014-18. Additionally, all youth (100%) who remained in EFC continued to voluntarily participate in pre-court circles and/or court hearings. For all youth in HOPE Court remaining in EFC or PESS, as of September 1, 2024, the mean time in EFC or PESS was 2 months ($SD = 3.61$) following the youths’ 18th birthday. It is important to note that this cohort reflected a younger age than prior cohorts. Thus, for many of the youth they had just recently turned 18 and were only recently eligible for EFC or PESS. Time in EFC or PESS should continue to be monitored to determine if there is improvement on this indicator when compared to non-HOPE Court youth. Finally, analysis of FSN data revealed that of the 4,789 youth who aged out between 2014-2018, over 42% did not apply for EFC or PESS. In contrast, of those eligible for EFC or PESS ($n = 8$), seven HOPE Court youth (88%) applied for EFC or PESS (or

did not “opt out”). It is again important to note that the sample size is small ($n = 13$), limiting the generalizability of the findings.

Regarding limitations, given that youth participants were interviewed after completing 8 months in the HOPE Court program, participants may have been likely to respond favorably in the qualitative interview to please the interviewer and/or program (i.e., acquiescence bias, social desirability bias). Due to scheduling challenges, research team members, who also served as program administrators, conducted interviews with youth participants. Given the nature of HOPE Court, which aims to create an environment of openness with youth and foster trust between youth and adult team members, program administrators did not believe youth were likely to “hold back” in providing feedback pertaining to their experiences with HOPE Court. This was also considered in the design of the interview protocol and questions were designed to be neutral and facilitate an environment where youth would likely feel open to responding honestly. Additionally, the focus of this study was on the third implementation of HOPE Court (cohort 3); therefore, the youth sample size was small ($n = 13$) and consisted of youth who were selected to participate in HOPE Court. It is important to note that the selection criteria for cohort 3 of HOPE Court only consisted of the following: (a) availability to participate, and (b) age of the youth (i.e., as close to age 17 as possible). Given the small sample size, the generalizability of the results to all foster care transition youth are limited. Additional research is needed to further examine the implementation of restorative practices in HOPE Court and the mechanisms which contribute to positive youth outcomes, which were observed in cohorts 1, 2, and 3. Research conducted with an increased number of youth in HOPE Court and in other settings would be beneficial in gauging effectiveness of the model in facilitating successful transition for foster care youth. Additionally, a longer-term follow-up study, which includes a cost-benefit analysis, would allow

for examination of the outcomes in relation to the costs associated with the program. It is important to ascertain the benefits to youth beyond the 1-year timeframe of the current study. From a longer-term study we would be able to better determine the long-term benefits for HOPE Court participants and economic impact of the program.

Notably, although youth were selected to participate in HOPE Court, their experiences mirror those of most foster care youth. Four of the participants (29%) were reported to have experienced abuse, 4 participants (29%) experienced imminent risk of abuse, abandonment, or neglect, 3 participants (21%) experienced neglect, and 3 participants (21%) experienced abandonment. Moreover, regarding past delinquency, 5 out of 13 (38%) were reported to have a history of delinquency.

Finally, the Virtual Vision Board Workshop was offered to non-HOPE Court youth and workshops were provided concurrently with cohort 3 implementation. Data was collected via the vision board workshop post-assessment administered to both youth and adult stakeholders who participated in the workshops. For the youth survey, all youth participants, not in HOPE Court, who completed the Vision Board Workshop survey (100%; n = 22) indicated positive responses for all items, which suggests participants learned a substantial amount about their strengths, the vision board workshop helped them learn more about the benefits that were available to them, they felt they had an important role in creating their vision board/transitional independent living plan, and they felt more hopeful about the future. The majority of adult participants also responded positively on the survey, further supporting these findings. Although initial results are promising, further research is needed to determine the impact of the vision board workshop on outcomes for youth who are not in HOPE Court in the transitional independent living planning process.

Given that studies have found that many children in dependency court have a limited understanding of proceedings taking place (Cooper, 2010), and that maltreated youth often experience negative feelings towards the dependency court process as a whole (Block et al., 2010), the results of the exploratory case study of HOPE Court with cohort 1 and the explanatory case studies of cohorts 2 and 3 are promising. The results suggest the use of restorative practices in the dependency system for youth aging out of foster care may improve youth understanding, attitudes, and engagement with the dependency court process.

References

- Acosta, J., Chinman, M., Ebener, P., Malone, P. S., Phillips, A., & Wilks, A. (2019). Evaluation of a whole-school change intervention: Findings from a two-year cluster-randomized trial of the restorative practices intervention. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48(5), 876-890.
- Ahlin, E. M., Douds, A. S., & Honardoost, M. Z. (2021). Chapter 6 Juvenile Dependency Courts. In *Taking problem-solving courts to scale: Diverse applications of the Specialty Court model*. essay, Lexington Books, an imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
- Anda, R. F., Felitti, V. J., Bremner, J. D., Walker, J. D., Whitfield, Ch., Perry, B. D., Dube, Sh. R., & Giles, W. H. (2006). The enduring effects of abuse and related adverse experiences in childhood: A convergence of evidence from neurobiology and epidemiology. *European Archives of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience*, 256, 174-186.
- Augustine, C. H., Engberg, J., Grimm, G. E., Lee, E., Wang, E. L., Christianson, K., & Joseph, A. A. (2018). Can restorative practices improve school climate and curb suspensions. *An evaluation of the impact of restorative practices in a mid-sized urban school district*, 1-112.

- Baron, E. J., Goldstein, E. G., & Wallace, C. T. (2020). Suffering in silence: How COVID-19 school closures inhibit the reporting of child maltreatment. *Journal of public economics*, 190, 104258.
- Beck, E., Kropf, N. P., & Leonard, P. B. (Eds.). (2010). *Social work and restorative justice: Skills for dialogue, peacemaking, and reconciliation*. Oxford University Press.
- Bender, K., Brown, S. M., Thompson, S. J., Ferguson, K. M., & Langenderfer, L. (2015). Multiple victimizations before and after leaving home associated with PTSD, depression, and substance use disorder among homeless youth. *Child maltreatment*, 20(2), 115-124.
- Block, S. D., Oran, H., Oran, D., Baumrind, N., & Goodman, G. S. (2010). Abused and neglected children in court: Knowledge and attitudes. *Child abuse & neglect*, 34(9), 659-670.
- Bottoms, B. L., Kovera, M. B., & McAuliff, B. D. (Eds.). (2002). *Children, social science, and the law*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bottoms, B. L., Najdowski, C. J., & Goodman, G. S. (2009). Child Victims in Dependency Court. In *Children as victims, witnesses, and offenders: Psychological science and the law* (pp. 128–146). essay, The Guilford Press.
- Braithwaite, J. (2004). Restorative justice: Theories and worries. In *Visiting Experts' Papers: 123rd International Senior Seminar, Resource Material Series* (Vol. 63, pp. 77-56).
- Britton, L., & Pilnik, L. (2018). Preventing homelessness for system-involved youth. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 69(1), 19-33.
- Brown, S. M., Rienks, S., McCrae, J. S., & Watamura, S. E. (2019). The co-occurrence of adverse childhood experiences among children investigated for child maltreatment: A latent class analysis. *Child abuse & neglect*, 87, 18-27.
- Bullinger, L. R., Raissian, K. M., Feely, M., & Schneider, W. J. (2021). The neglected ones: Time at home during COVID-19 and child maltreatment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 131, 106287.
- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2020). *How the Child Welfare System Works*. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/cpswork/>

- Coates, R., Umbreit, M., & Vos, B. (2003). Restorative justice circles: An exploratory study. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 6(3), 265-278.
- Cooper, A., Wallin, A. R., Quas, J. A., & Lyon, T. D. (2010). Maltreated and nonmaltreated children's knowledge of the juvenile dependency court system. *Child Maltreatment*, 15(3), 255-260.
- Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2009). *The restorative practices handbook for teachers, disciplinarians, and administrators*. International Institute for Restorative Practices.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Daicoff, S. S. (2015). Families in circle process: Restorative justice in family law. *Family Court Review*, 53(3), 427-438.
- Development Services Group, Inc. (2017). *Intersection Between Mental Health and the Juvenile Justice System*. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- EPIC 'Ohana, Inc. (n.d.). E Makua Ana Youth Circle. <https://www.epicohana.org/youth-circle>
- Fostering Care Improvement (2020). Statistics for Broward County. <https://fosteringcourtimprovement.org/fl/County/Broward/>
- Fox, D. (2009). Social welfare and restorative justice. *Kriminologija & socijalna integracija: časopis za kriminologiju, penologiju i poremećaje u ponašanju*, 17(1), 55-68.
- Gibbs, G. R. (2018). *Analyzing qualitative data* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Green, A. E., Willging, C. E., Zamarin, K., Dehaiman, L. M., & Ruiloba, P. (2019). Cultivating healing by implementing restorative practices for youth: Protocol for a cluster randomized trial. *International journal of educational research*, 93, 168-176.
- Herz, D. C., Ryan, J. P., & Bilchik, S. (2010). Challenges facing crossover youth: An examination of juvenile-justice decision making and recidivism. *Family court review*, 48(2), 305-321.
- Hobbs, S. D., Goodman, G. S., Block, S. D., Oran, D., Quas, J. A., Park, A., ... & Baumrind, N. (2014). Child maltreatment victims' attitudes about appearing in dependency and criminal courts. *Children and youth services review*, 44, 407-416.

International Institute for Restorative Practices (n.d.). *What is restorative practices?*
<https://www.iirp.edu/restorative-practices/what-is-restorative-practices>

Katic, B., Alba, L. A., & Johnson, A. H. (2020). A systematic evaluation of restorative justice practices: School violence prevention and response. *Journal of school violence*, 19(4), 579-593.

Kerns, S. E., Pullmann, M. D., Putnam, B., Buher, A., Holland, S., Berliner, L., ... & Trupin, E. W. (2014). Child welfare and mental health: Facilitators of and barriers to connecting children and youths in out-of-home care with effective mental health treatment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 46, 315-324.

Kim, H., Wildeman, C., Jonson-Reid, M., & Drake, B. (2017). Lifetime prevalence of investigating child maltreatment among US children. *American journal of public health*, 107(2), 274-280.

Kim, W. C., & Mauborgne, R. (2003). Fair process: Managing in the knowledge economy. *Harvard business review*, 81(1), 127-136.

Kletzka, N. T., & Siegfried, C. (2008). Helping children in the child welfare systems heal from trauma: A systems integration approach. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 59(4), 7-20.

Kline, D. M. S. (2016). Can restorative practices help to reduce disparities in school discipline data? A review of the literature. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 18(2), 97-102.

Latimer, J., Dowden, C., & Muise, D. (2005). The effectiveness of restorative justice practices: A meta-analysis. *The prison journal*, 85(2), 127-144.

Lawler, J. M., Gehrman, R., & Karatekin, C. (2016). Maltreated children and their families in juvenile dependency court II: Maltreatment recidivism. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 10(2), 215-236.

Lehmann, P., Jordan, C., Bolton, K. W., Huynh, L., & Chigbu, K. (2012). Solution-focused brief therapy and criminal offending: A family conference tool for work in restorative justice. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 31(4), 49-62.

Loschnig-Gspandi, M. (2001). Diversion in Austria: Legal Aspects. *European Journal of Crime, Criminal Law and Criminal Justice*, 9(4), 281-290.

- Luna, E., & Poulson, B. (2006). Restorative Justice in Federal Sentencing: An Unexpected Benefit of Booker. *McGeorge Law Review*, 37(4), 787-818.
- Marsh, V. L. (2017). Restorative practice: History, successes, challenges & recommendations. *Research brief, Center for Urban Education Success*. Retrieved December, 3, 2019.
- McCold, P. (1999). Restorative justice practice: The state of the field 1999. Retrieved on March, 7, 2002.
- Mills, L. G., Barocas, B., & Ariel, B. (2013). The next generation of court-mandated domestic violence treatment: A comparison study of batterer intervention and restorative justice programs. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 9(1), 65-90.
- Morris, A., & Maxwell, G. (1998). Restorative Justice in New Zealand: Family Group Conferences as a Case Study. *Western Criminology Review*, 1(1).
- Morris, A., & Maxwell, G. M. (2017). Juvenile justice in New Zealand: A new paradigm. In *Restorative Justice* (pp. 53-71). Routledge.
- Nations, U. (2016). *Promoting Restorative Justice for Children*. United Nations. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18356/2fc79c90-en>
- Pavelka, S., & Thomas, D. (2019). The evolution of balanced and restorative justice. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 70(1), 37-58.
- Peachey, D. E. (1992). Restitution, reconciliation, retribution: Identifying the forms of justice people desire. In *Restorative justice on trial* (pp. 551-557). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Pennell, J., Shapiro, C., & Spigner, C. (2011). Safety, fairness, stability: Repositioning juvenile justice and child welfare to engage families and communities. *Washington, DC: Center for Juvenile Justice Reform*.
- Pranis, K. (2015). *Little book of circle processes: A new/old approach to peacemaking*. Simon and Schuster.
- Quas, J. A., Wallin, A. R., Horwitz, B., Davis, E., & Lyon, T. D. (2009). Maltreated children's understanding of and emotional reactions to dependency court involvement. *Behavioral sciences & the law*, 27(1), 97-117. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.836>

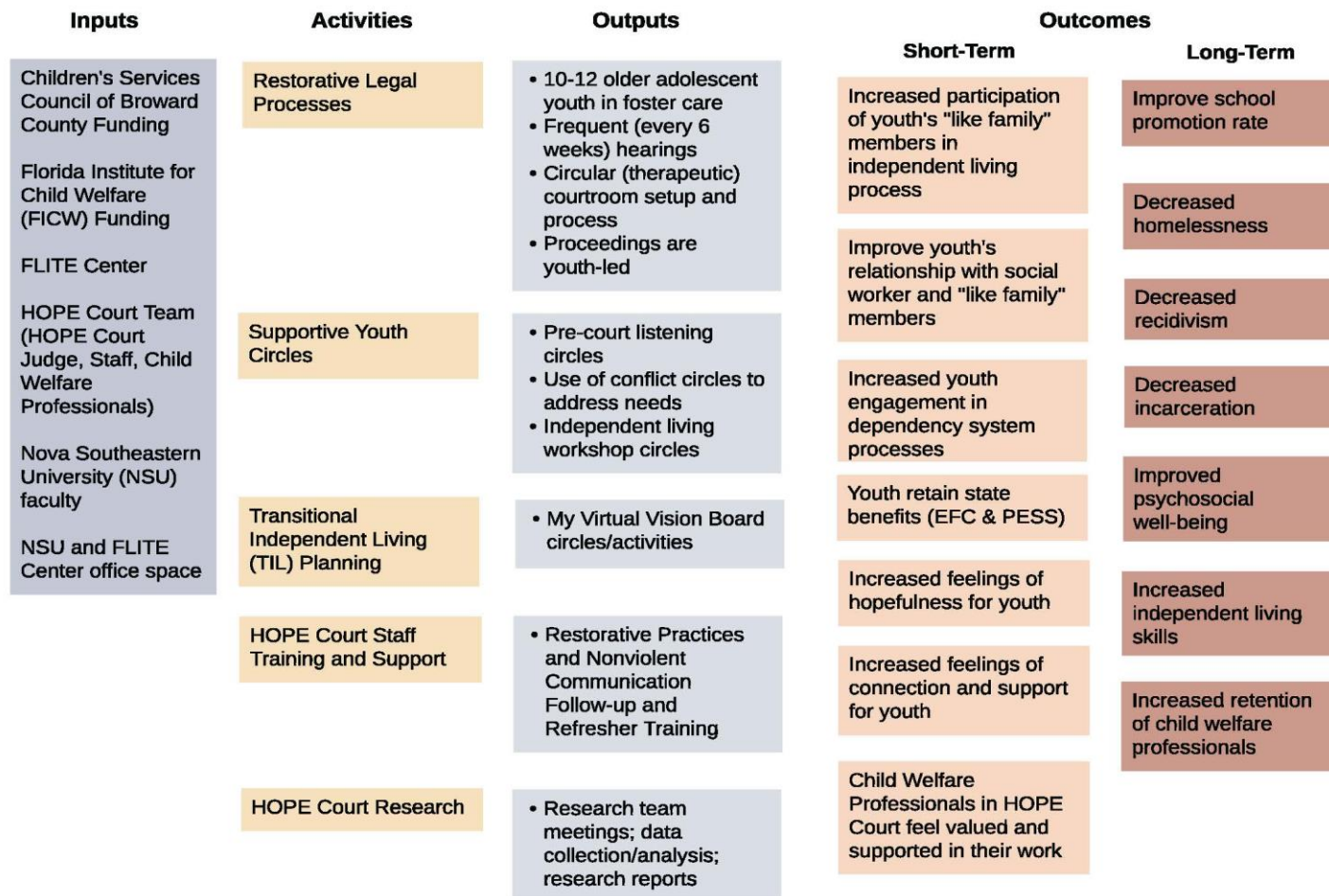
- Rodriguez, N. (2007). Restorative justice at work: Examining the impact of restorative justice resolutions on juvenile recidivism. *Crime & Delinquency*, 53(3), 355-379.
- Roeger, D. (2003, November). Money Can't Buy Me Love? *Relational Justice Bulletin*.
- Rosenberg, H. J., Vance, J. E., Rosenberg, S. D., Wolford, G. L., Ashley, S. W., & Howard, M. L. (2014). Trauma exposure, psychiatric disorders, and resiliency in juvenile-justice-involved youth. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 6(4), 430.
- Ryan, J. P., Williams, A. B., & Courtney, M. E. (2013). Adolescent neglect, juvenile delinquency and the risk of recidivism. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 42(3), 454-465.
- Sharma, Sonali. (n.d.). *Crime and poor communities: A case study of civil society governance in South Africa*. London: Mosaikon Development Communities.
- Snyder, H. N., & Sickmund, M. (2006). Juvenile offenders and victims: 2006 national report. *Office of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention*.
- Umbreit, M. S. (2000). *Family group conferencing: Implications for crime victims*. US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime.
- Umbreit, M. S. (2000). *Guidelines for victim-sensitive victim-offender mediation: Restorative justice through dialogue*. US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime.
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2023). *Child Maltreatment 2021*. Available from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/data-research/child-maltreatment>.
- Van Ness, D. W. (2005). *An overview of restorative justice around the world*. Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.
http://www.icclr.law.ubc.ca/Publications/Reports/11_un/Dan%20van%20Ness%20final%20paper.pdf
- Wachtel, T. (2016). *Defining restorative*. International Institute for Restorative Practices.
<https://www.iirp.edu/restorative-practices/defining-restorative/>
- Walker, L. (2012). *Restorative justice today: Practical applications*. Sage Publications.

- Weitekamp, E. G. M., & Parmentier, S. (2014). Restorative Justice and State Crime. In G. Bruinsma & D. Weisburd (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice* (pp. 4430-4446). Springer New York. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5690-2_120
- Wilson, D. B., Olaghere, A., & Kimbrell, C. S. (2018). *Effectiveness of restorative justice principles in juvenile justice: A meta-analysis*. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th edition). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Yoder, J. R., Bender, K., Thompson, S. J., Ferguson, K. M., & Haffeejee, B. (2014). Explaining homeless youths' criminal justice interactions: Childhood trauma or surviving life on the streets?. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 50(2), 135-144.
- Zeanah, C. H., & Humphreys, K. L. (2018). Child abuse and neglect. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 57(9), 637-644.

Appendix A

HOPE Court Implementation Logic Model

Restorative Practices in Dependency Court - HOPE Court Program Logic Model



Appendix B

HOPE Court Participant Survey Results

Directions: Please answer “yes” or “no” in response to each of the following statements related to your experiences with HOPE Court. If you are not sure how to answer, say “I don’t know.”

HOPE Court Participant Survey Results (n = 12)

Question	Yes	No	I don't know
1) I attend my HOPE Court hearings.	100%	0%	0%
2) I'm ok asking questions when I am in the courtroom.	100%	0%	0%
3) I'm ok with sharing my thoughts when I am in the courtroom.	100%	0%	0%
4) My concerns are heard and addressed in the courtroom.	100%	0%	0%
5) I can talk to someone from my HOPE Court team if I feel stressed, sad, or angry.	100%	0%	0%
6) Someone from my HOPE Court team will help me if I'm sick or hurt.	92%	0%	8%
7) Someone from my HOPE Court team will help me if I have problems with my foster care placement.	100%	0%	0%
8) HOPE Court has helped me achieve my school or work goals.	83%	0%	17%
9) I helped create my HOPE Court Virtual Vision Board.	91%	0%	9%
10) My HOPE Court Virtual Vision Board reflects the life plan that I chose.	91%	0%	9%
11) My Virtual Vision Board workshop helped me to identify my life goals and who can help me accomplish them.	91%	0%	9%
12) HOPE pre-Court listening circles allowed me to participate in the planning of my case.	100%	0%	0%
13) During my time in HOPE Court, I felt seen, heard, and valued by my Judge and support team.	100%	0%	0%
14) I plan to remain in Extended Foster Care or enter PESS when I turn 18.	91%	0%	9%
15) Once I am living independently, I feel confident I will be able to go to school or find a job.	100%	0%	0%
16) Once I am living independently, I feel confident I can continue to have positive relationships with others.	100%	0%	0%
17) Once I am living independently, if I need help to make decisions and stay on track, I will contact someone from my HOPE Court team.	100%	0%	0%
18) HOPE Court workshops have helped me learn some independent living skills (for example, how to pay my bills and how to take care of myself).	NA	NA	NA
19) HOPE Court helped me to feel supported in the process of learning about my transition to independent living.	100%	0%	0%
20) HOPE Court helped me to feel hopeful about my future.	100%	0%	0%

Appendix C

HOPE Court Youth Participant Interview Protocol

- 1) What has HOPE Court been like for you?
 - a. How has HOPE Court been different from your previous court experiences?
 - b. How did participation in HOPE Court make you feel (for example, happy, hopeful, sad, angry) and why did it make you feel that way?
 - c. What has it been like with the judge?
 - d. What was it like attending your court hearings on Zoom?
- 2) Tell me about your Virtual Vision Board. Have you created a Vision Board? If so, what was it like for you to participate in that workshop?
- 3) Tell me about the relationship you have with your Child Advocate (or DCF case manager). Has that relationship changed at all over time? If so, in what ways has the relationship changed?
 - a. Tell me about the relationship you have developed with other adults in HOPE Court (attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, life coach).
- 4) As you know, HOPE Court uses circles for many activities. Have you participated in circles? If so, what has it been like for you?
- 5) What was your favorite part of HOPE Court? Is there anything you would like to change, or ways we could make HOPE Court better?
- 6) Is there anything else you would like to tell me about HOPE Court?

Appendix D

HOPE Court Stakeholder Interview Protocol

- 1) What is your role in HOPE Court?
- 2) What has HOPE Court been like for you?
 - a. How has HOPE Court been different from your previous experiences in the dependency court system?
 - b. How did participation in HOPE Court make you feel (for example, happy, hopeful, sad, angry) and why did it make you feel that way?
- 3) What was it like participating in HOPE Court on Zoom, rather than through in-person hearings?
- 4) Have you participated in (pre-Court listening circles, court hearings, IL workshops, Vision Board workshop?) If so, tell me about that experience.
- 5) Did you participate in the restorative practices circles training and/or nonviolent communication trainings? If so, have these influenced or changed your practice? If yes, in what way(s)?
 - a. Did the trainings meet your needs for connection and support?
- 6) What has been going well with HOPE Court?
- 7) Has anything been challenging about HOPE Court? If so, what?
- 8) Has HOPE Court impacted your feelings about the value of your work? If so, in what way(s)?
- 9) What suggestions do you have for improvement of HOPE Court?
- 10) Is there anything else you would like to tell me about HOPE Court?

Appendix E

Restorative Practices Fidelity Observation Form

HOPE Court Restorative Practices Fidelity Assessment

Observer Instructions: Observe the HOPE Court activity (pre-court circles, court hearing) and place a check next to each element below, indicating whether the restorative practices element was “Observed,” “Not Observed,” or “Not Applicable (N/A).”

HOPE Court Restorative Practices Element	Observed	Not Observed	N/A
Communication			
Empathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy utilized (empathic communication) – presence (active listening), reflection, needs guesses (I’m guessing that you...) • Empathic Assertion: (uses “I” statements, validation of others’ thoughts/feelings, non-judgmental and curious, use “and” instead of “but” when creating discrepancies) • Empathy Statements: e.g., “I would be hurt by that to,” “I get it, that is a really hard thing to go through,” “It sounds like you are feeling angry” • Using language to create connection 			
<i>Notes:</i>			
Affective language utilized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming feelings and needs. Starts with observation “I see...” “I notice...” then a feeling statement “I feel frustrated...” “I am happy...,” then a statement of need “I need your help...” “I value fairness...,” then a plan or request “In the future...” “Would you be willing to...?” • Affective statements – “We’re so happy for you that you passed your driving test.” “I am thrilled that you attended all of your tutoring sessions.” “We’re really feeling concerned that you did not show for your dentist appointment, because we want you to have good health,” “I was worried when I did not hear from you for 2 weeks.” • <i>If conflict circle</i>, expressing feelings and/or sharing impact of behavior. Examples of 			

affective questions – (conflict circle questions - what happened? What were you thinking of at the time? What have you thought about since? Who has been affected by what you've done? What do you think you need to do to make things right? How were you feeling at the time? How were you feeling since then?)			
<i>Notes:</i>			
Engagement & Process			
Respectful <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One person speaks at a time (e.g., use of talking piece or other method to ensure each person can speak without interruption) Tone is respectful among youth and adult team members (no shouting, cursing, etc.) 			
<i>Notes:</i>			
Collaborative approach to problem solving and decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem solving and decision making which occurs in the meeting/hearing involves input of youth and adult support team members 			
<i>Notes:</i>			
Youth voice is centered in process/Youth driven process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth is given a central role in the meeting/hearing. Youth given the opportunity to speak on multiple occasions and their input and preferences are prioritized. 			
<i>Notes:</i>			
Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting/hearing facilitators ensure all participant voices are given the opportunity to be heard Adult support team members and youth are all given an opportunity to share their ideas in the meeting/hearing 			
<i>Notes:</i>			
High expectations/high standards are established for the youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High expectations and standards for behavior and progress toward goals are established and collectively supported. 			
<i>Notes:</i>			

Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence the adult support team members are holding youth accountable in an active way (doing things “with” them, rather than “to” or “for” them) 			
<i>Notes:</i>			
High level of support provided to youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult support team members provide support for youth needs (e.g., plan for completing tasks together with youth) and respond to and address youth concerns 			
<i>Notes:</i>			
Fair process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People are treated in a respectful and “fair” way through engagement, explanation, and expectation clarity: “Engagement” – everyone affected by a decision has the opportunity to provide input and discuss possible courses of action “Explanation” – once a decision has been made by a leader, the process and reasoning behind the decision are made clear to all stakeholders “Expectation clarity” – everyone involved understands the implications of the decision, the specific expectations, and the consequences for failing to meet those expectations. 			
<i>Notes:</i>			

Appendix F

Vision Board Workshop Youth Post-Assessment Survey – Non-HOPE Court Youth

How much did you learn about your strengths today?

Very much
Quite a bit
Very little
Nothing at all

How helpful was today's vision board process in learning about benefits that are available to you?

Very helpful
Helpful
Unhelpful
Very unhelpful

Do you think you had an important role in creating your Vision Board/Transitional Independent Living Plan today?

Yes
No

How hopeful are you about your future?

Very hopeful
Hopeful
Unhopeful
Very unhopeful

What was your favorite part of the vision board?

What are other thoughts or comments you have?

Appendix G
Vision Board Workshop Youth Post-Assessment Survey

How much did you learn about your strengths today?

Very much
Quite a bit
Very little
Nothing at all

How helpful was today's vision board process in learning about benefits that are available to you?

Very helpful
Helpful
Unhelpful
Very unhelpful

How confident are you that your team will help support you to meet the goals you created?

Very confident
Confident
Unconfident
Very unconfident

How hopeful are you about your future?

Very hopeful
Hopeful
Unhopeful
Very unhelpful

What was your favorite part of the vision board?

What are other thoughts or comments you have?

Appendix H

Vision Board Workshop Stakeholder (Adult) Post-Assessment Survey

How much did you enjoy participating in the vision board circle?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How well did the circle provide the youth with understanding and information regarding transitional independent living resources and benefits?

- Very well
- Well
- Somewhat
- Not at all

How well did the circle provide opportunity for strong youth voice?

- Very well
- Well
- Somewhat
- Not at all

How well does the process support youth to achieve their goals?

- Very well
- Well
- Somewhat
- Not at all

How well did the circle provide emotional support and connection for the youth?

- Very well
- Well
- Somewhat
- Not at all

Overall, how important was this circle to an effective transition for the youth?

- Very important
- Important
- Unimportant
- Very unimportant

Compared to the typical TIL planning process (IL staffing), how much more or less does the vision board process provide opportunity for:

(a) youth engagement

- Much more
- More
- Neither more nor less
- Less

Much less

(b) adult support of youth

Much more

More

Neither more nor less

Less

Much less

(c) youth understanding of resources

Much more

More

Neither more nor less

Less

Much less

(d) connection and encouragement

Much more

More

Neither more nor less

Less

Much less

What was YOUR favorite part of the circle?

Is there anything you would change about this circle?

Appendix I

Empathic Assertion Training Assessment

How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?

- Very helpful
- Helpful
- Unhelpful
- Very unhelpful

How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the training?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How well did the training provide you with helpful information regarding communicating with teens who have experienced trauma?

- Very well
- Well
- Somewhat
- Not at all

How well did the training provide practical ways to communicate/address conflict?

- Very well
- Well
- Somewhat
- Not at all

Appendix J
Introduction to Restorative Practices Training Assessment

How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?

- Very helpful
- Helpful
- Unhelpful
- Very unhelpful

How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the training?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How well do you understand restorative practice and its theories as a result of the training?

- Very well
- Well
- A little
- Not at all

How much did the training help you to understand how to be a restorative practitioner?

- A great deal
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

How well did the training provide you the experience of connection in a circle?

- Very well
- Well
- Somewhat
- Not at all

Overall, how worthwhile was the training for you?

- Very worthwhile

Worthwhile
Somewhat worthwhile
Not at all worthwhile

Appendix K
Nonviolent Communication (NVC) Training Survey

How helpful was the training in meeting your needs for learning and growth?

Very helpful
Helpful
Unhelpful
Very unhelpful

How much did you feel inspired and encouraged in your work as a result of the training?

A great deal
Somewhat
A little
Not at all

How much do you think that the information provided will support/help/assist you in your specific work/career?

A great deal
Somewhat
A little
Not at all

How much do you think that the information provided will benefit you in your personal life?

A great deal
Somewhat
A little
Not at all

How well did the training provide you with new ways to communicate your thoughts, feelings, and needs?

Very well
Well
Somewhat
Not at all

How well did the training provide you with new ways to listen to your youth clients?

Very well
Well
Somewhat
Not at all

How much do you think the training will help improve your connection with others?

A great deal
Somewhat
A little
Not at all