Superman in the Smallest Space:

Exploring a Music Studio for Young People Experiencing Homelessness

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THESIS

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to young people experiencing homelessness and other forms of unstable housing the world over, as well as those who strive to provide them with holistic supportive services, particularly of a recreational variety. It is some of the most important work I know of. And for my grandparents, Helen and Joe Pawlowski, who would have been very proud to page through this achievement.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PYD	Positive Youth Development
TLP	Teen Living Programs

SUMMARY

Youth homelessness research is primarily focused on the risks that contribute to young people experiencing homelessness and the consequences they experience as a result of being homeless. Very little research explores young people experiencing homelessness strengths. In addition there is little research regarding the effectiveness of youth homelessness services, including transitional living programs. Some research shows that transitional living programs incorporate recreational activities in their programming, but little is known regarding their effectiveness. Research indicates that social work and related fields use recreational, art, and music-based activities to engage young people's strengths, yet little is known about how music-based activities are used with young people experiencing homelessness and whether or not these activities would engage their strengths. This study responds to these gaps in the literature by exploring whether and the extent to which involvement in a music studio in a transitional living program engages and promotes young people experiencing homelessness strengths.

Using an ethnographic approach with participant observation and semi-structured interviews as the methods of data collection, data were collected to explore the following research questions: (1) What processes are involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness – why is this happening and what are the factors contributing to its existence? (2) What are young people's and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio – are there benefits and/or consequences to working in the music studio? (3) What are the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio? In addition, I work with a team of young people to develop a co-constructed audio documentary that explores their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

Findings from this study demonstrate that the agency's organizational commitment to a strengths-based, positive youth development (PYD) informed approach to working with young people, the development of in-house holistic supportive services, specifically recreational services, the inclusion of young people's voice in recreational program development, and the role of a studio advocate within the agency play a vital role in the development of the studio and its ongoing maintenance. In addition, young people experience the music studio as space to collaboratively and independently engage in music production, education, and appreciation. Young people describe their experiences in the studio as opportunities for connection, engagement, and expression. Young people also describe experiencing challenges and frustrations in the studio, but ultimately frame their challenges and frustrations as additional opportunities for growth and development. Based on these findings, the music studio engages and promotes young people's strengths.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Brief Description

This qualitative study explores a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness as a case study of strengths-based social work practice with young people experiencing homelessness. Using an ethnographic approach as well as audio documentary methods, the study examines: (1) the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program, (2) agency youth and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio, and (3) the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences.

B. Background, Rationale, and Significance

Homeless youth research and literature focus on estimating the prevalence of youth homelessness (Congressional Research Service, 2013; The National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2008a; National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2008; National Network for Youth, 2008); identifying populations of young people that are at increased risk for experiencing homelessness (Feinstein, Greenblat, Hass, Kohn, & Rana, 2001; Levin, Bax, McKean, & Schoggen, 2005; Ray, 2006); noting homeless youths' traumatic experiences (Finkelstein, 2005) and the cumulative traumatic experience of youth homelessness (Smollar, 1999; Thompson, McManus, & Voss, 2006); and measuring the consequences of youth homelessness (Congressional Research Service, 2013; Nolan, 2006; Whitbeck, Chen, Hoyt, Tyler, & Johnson, 2004; Zerger, Strehlow, & Gundlapalli 2008). Based on this research and literature, it is clear that we know much more about the risks that lead to youth homelessness, the risks youth experience while homeless, and the consequences experienced by homeless youth than we know about young people experiencing homelessness strengths and accomplishments.

Social science, medical, and public health peer-reviewed research primarily frames youth homelessness and homeless youths' experiences from a risks and consequences perspective. Researchers construct young people experiencing homelessness as estimates and prevalence rates to be decreased through medical and public health interventions; as victims of broken down familial and community systems that perpetuate cycles of abuse to be treated by overburdened child and adolescent mental health systems; as the victims of failing local, state, and national child welfare systems that are unable to adequately prepare young people for aging out of foster care; and as disease-vulnerable delinquents engaging in survival crimes who eventually end up in uncompassionate juvenile justice systems. Young people experiencing homelessness are very rarely framed or discussed from a strengths perspective in youth homelessness research and literature. Having personally worked with young people experiencing homelessness and having witnessed their ability to cope and survive - having witnessed their *strengths* - sole reliance on a risks and consequences perspective appears one sided and lacking the complete picture. Conversations with other youth homelessness services providers indicate a similar experience with the majority of youth homelessness research and literature; specifically that it lacks a focus on young people experiencing homelessness strengths.

Despite the trend to focus on risks and consequences in youth homelessness research and literature, some youth homelessness services agencies are constructing spaces for young people experiencing homelessness to explore their talents, strengths, and interests through music composition and production and are incorporating these types of spaces into their service structure. Teen Living Programs (TLP), a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness between the ages of 18 to 21 located in the Bronzeville neighborhood on Chicago's south side, constructed a music studio for young people to engage in music related

activities. The construction of the music studio is the result of several factors, including the interest of some young people in music composition and production, the leadership of certain staff members in championing the construction of the space, and the willingness of the agency to facilitate the construction of the space.

Given the lack of empirical work exploring young people experiencing homelessness strengths, my own and others' observations of young people experiencing homelessness strengths, and the agency's development of a music studio for young people experiencing homelessness to explore their talents, strengths, and interests, it is important to empirically explore the TLP music studio as a site for strengths-based social work practice with young people experiencing homelessness. In doing so we gain an understanding of what it is about TLP that fosters the development of the music studio. How and why did TLP construct a music studio for young people experiencing homelessness and what are the processes and factors that contribute to its promotion, development, and sustainability? We gain an understanding of young people's and staff experiences as they engage with the music studio. What do young people and staff experience as they work in the music studio? Lacking a better participant-defined term, are there benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio?[1] Finally, we gain an understanding of the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio. What kind of impact does the music studio have on the lives of young people and staff who engage with it?

An exploration of the TLP music studio as a site for strengths-based social work practice with young people experiencing homelessness, the experiences of young people and staff as they

[1] While fully committed to conducting strengths-based research with TLP young people and staff, I remain open to the possibility that working in the music studio may have both positive and negative consequences for some young people and staff.

engage with the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences is particularly relevant to social work research and literature. Social work has a historical relationship with the recreation and group work movements of the 20th century, both of which incorporated the use of recreation, art, and music-based activities in their service structure (Andrews, 2001; Breton, 1990). Jane Addams, a social work pioneer, promoted the use of recreation, art, and music-based activities at Hull House, the Chicago-based settlement house (Addams, 1909a). She argued that exposure to the arts was essential for healthy individual and community development and was particularly committed to providing recreation, art, and music-based activities for young people. Breton (1990) has argued for the need to highlight these historical relationships between the recreation and group work movements, social work, and their use of recreation, art, and music-based activities and for the inclusion of "creative use of leisure-time activities and recreation" (p. 26), in current social work practice. Delgado (2000) extends Breton's (1990) argument calling for the development of more arts and music-based programs and interventions in community social work practice with urban youth. Both Breton's (1990) and Delgado's (2000) arguments are grounded in the idea that engagement with recreation, art, and music-based activities is beneficial for young people and provides them with an opportunity to explore and engage their strengths, a sentiment echoed by arts educators (Moorefield-Lang, 2010).

C. Conceptual Framework

The strengths perspective, ecological resiliency theory, and a positive youth development (PYD) model guide this study (see Figure 1). Saleebey (2009) notes that unlike a theory or a model, a perspective, at its very least, is "a standpoint, a way of viewing and understanding certain aspects of experience. It is a lens through which we choose to perceive and appreciate. It provides us with a slant on the world" (p. 15). The strengths perspective suggests that

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

individuals who endure terrible atrocities have an innate ability to rebound from those experiences. It promotes the idea that individuals inherently have a wealth of resources to draw upon to overcome traumatic events that seemingly threaten their ability to cope. While the social work profession has increasingly accepted these assertions (Delgado, 2000; Dybicz, 2011, Gleason, 2007; Malekoff, 2004; Rapp & Goscha, 2006; Saleebey, 2009), some researchers note that these assertions lack empirical evidence of effectiveness (Gray, 2011; Staudt, Howard, & Drake, 2001). This study examines these assertions in the context of a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness in order to add to the existing literature examining strengths-based social work practice in general and more specifically strengths-based social work practice with young people experiencing homelessness.

Saleebey (2009) suggests several guiding principles for the strengths perspective including: (1) Individuals, groups, families, and communities have strengths, (2) Trauma may be harmful, but it may also be an opportunity for growth, (3) Never assume the upper limits of the capacity for growth, "take individual, group, and community aspirations seriously" (p. 16), (4) Clients are best served through collaboration, and (5) "Every environment is full of resources" (p. 18). Mattaini and Meyer (2002) extend on the fourth principle noting that strengths, conceptualized from a systems perspective, "are not things that one carries" but "are realized in transactions in which a person has the skills to engage" (p. 15). This suggests that individuals are best served through collaboration and that through collaboration strengths are engaged; that strengths are actualized through active participation. This is a useful framework for this study as the music studio is a transactional, participatory space. Young people have the opportunity to interact with each other and staff as well as explore and engage their strengths as they relate to music composition, performance, and production.

Saleeby's (2009) fifth guiding principle notes the inherent ecological approach in the strengths perspective. Kingry-Westergaard and Kelly (1990) state, "The guiding force of the Ecological approach is in its commitment to *Contextualism* (emphasis in original text)" (p. 24), and that "Contextualism requires that one be deliberately aware of the multifaceted nature of the conditions and motivations for the expression of behavior across environmental conditions" (p. 25). Mattaini (2008) argues for an ecological approach in social work using an ecosystems perspective in assessment and intervention, noting that the client system cannot be understood when separated from the social context(s) that inherently define them. "The ecosystems perspective is designed to ensure that attention is paid to the case in its full transactional complexity, reducing the danger of artificially amputating the client system from their environment" (Mattaini, 2008, p. 358).

For the purposes of this study, the ecological approach is embodied in ecological resiliency theory as it informs an understanding of the strengths perspective (Fraser, Kirby, & Smokwoski, 2004). Rather than assume all young people experiencing homelessness exposed to traumatic events will develop behavioral and or physical health problems, resiliency theories suggest that some may not. Resilience is a dynamic construct (Fraser, Richman, & Galinsky, 1999). It "broadly refers to the class of phenomena involving successful adaptation in the context of significant threats to development" (Masten et al., 1999, p. 143), and other life course outcomes (Fraser et al., 1999). Resiliency theories promote a conceptual and practical shift away from pathology to a means of successful adaptation (Fraser et al., 2004).

Framing resiliency from an ecological approach, Fraser, Kirby, and Smokwoski (2004) suggest that environment plays a significant role in resiliency. They argue that social and environmental contexts facilitate poor functioning through exposure to traumatic experiences

(i.e., risks), and facilitate higher functioning through exposure to supports, such as familial support or opportunities for growth (i.e., protective and promotive factors). In their framework, the symbiotic relationship between individual attributes and environmental assets produces an ecological resilience whereby protective and promotive factors may ameliorate risks. Toro, Trickett, Wall, and Salem (1991) developed an ecological perspective on homelessness that reflects this symbiotic relationship. They argue for a contextual community psychology practice model with the homeless that considers the interdependent relationship between the homeless, their attributes, and their environment.

Dissatisfaction with pathology-focused research and practice prompted some social work professionals to align with public health professionals in identifying resiliency in youth. In social work, this work is embodied in the strengths perspective, which suggests that despite the experience of homelessness, young people experiencing homelessness are resilient and have strengths that bolster their ability to survive and overcome the intense and often traumatic experience of being homeless. Using a strengths-based perspective informed by an ecological resiliency theory, social work is "predicated, in some way, on helping to discover and embellish, explore and exploit clients' strengths and resources in the service of assisting them to achieve their goals, realize their dreams, and shed the irons of their own inhibitions and misgivings and society's domination" (Saleebey, 2009, p. 1).

PYD promotes a holistic asset-based perspective in working with young people that equally incorporates youths' physical (e.g., good health and health management skills), intellectual (e.g., knowledge of educational and vocational skills), psychological and emotional (e.g., confidence in one's mastery of a skill and sense of motivation), and social development (e.g., sense of connectedness and integration) (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services,

2007). It contrasts prevention-oriented approaches to working with young people, whereby practitioners and researchers emphasize the prevention of youth problems. Instead, it promotes "positive development and the conditions that contribute to youth health and well-being" (Small & Memmo, 2004, p. 7) overall competence, confidence, connection, character, caring, and contribution in relation to their development as well as in the context of youth programming and services (Lerner, 2005).

In a study exploring the relationship between young people's developmental assets and holistic well-being, Scales, Benson, Leffert and Blyth (2000) found that those young people with more assets reported higher levels of thriving behaviors and lower levels of risk behaviors. These findings highlight the need for a youth development model that nurtures the whole young person and their assets. PYD recognizes and promotes young people's resiliency and strengths. It encourages youth services providers to develop and implement services and activities for young people related to their strengths that promote prosocial behavior and civic engagement. By advocating for opportunities that may promote resilience or act as protective factors to buffer risk for young people, PYD is consistent with a strengths perspective and ecological resiliency theory. The strengths perspective, ecological resiliency theory, and PYD inform an understanding of the major constructs and concepts under investigation in this study. These constructs and concepts include the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program, young people and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio, and the meaning young people and staff attach to their experiences. This study employs qualitative methods to examine these constructs and concepts.

Qualitative methods are useful in attempting to explore and create understandings of a particular phenomenon, or as Creswell (1998) notes when exploration is preferred to causation;

when we want to know the *how* as opposed to the *why*. Creswell (1998) also notes that qualitative methods are especially useful when little to no data exists on the phenomenon in question. Given the paucity of data on young people experiencing homelessness strengths and accomplishments, as well as factors and opportunities that promote positive outcomes or buffer the effects of exposure to risk, I designed and have conducted an ethnographic case study of the TLP music studio. The studio provides an example of strengths-based social work practice that challenges the predominant risks and consequences theme often found in youth homelessness literature.

Ethnography lends itself to potentially deep and meaningful constructed understandings of a particular culture (Creswell, 1998). In this study I am interested in the shared culture of TLP young people and staff that seemingly facilitates the existence of the music studio, the experiences of the young people and the staff in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences. In terms of assumptions, ethnography promotes a strong focus on culture and the importance of meaning making, immersion with participants/collaborators, and the need for longitudinal work. These assumptions align well with this study as I am particularly interested in gaining an understanding of the culture of TLP and the aspects of that culture that facilitate the construction of the music studio. In addition I am interested in gaining an understanding of how young people and staff make meaning out of their experiences in the music studio. This ethnographic case study incorporates participant observation in and around the music studio and interviews with young people and staff in an effort to elicit these understandings. Rapport building with young people and staff in order to gain participant sanctioned entrée to the agency and the music studio is essential for the necessary, prolonged immersion needed to gain access to

the site, to observe agency and music studio culture, and to elicit the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio.

In addition to developing a written dissertation, I worked with some young to co-construct an audio documentary that explores their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Makagon and Neumann (2009) contend that audio documentary is a "premiere form of qualitative research" (p. ix) that responds to calls for increased representational, dialogic, and collaborative approaches to ethnographic research. In addition, they note the potential of audio documentary to present traditional ethnographic fieldwork that is normally consumed by a smaller academic audience to larger, more popular audiences through mediums such as public radio and podcasts. I engaged in the co-construction of an audio documentary with some young people to increase the representational, dialogic, and collaborative opportunities embedded within this project and in the hopes that this work will reach a larger, not solely academic audience. In addition, the music studio as an aural space lends itself exceedingly well to an aural-representation of the fieldwork and the data.

D. Theoretical Sensitivity

Strauss and Corbin (1998) refer to theoretical sensitivity as "a personal quality of the researcher. It indicates an awareness of the subtleties of meaning of data. One can come to the research situation with varying degrees of sensitivity depending upon previous reading and experience with or relevant to an area" (p. 41). They go on to state "Theoretical sensitivity refers to the attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and the capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn't" (p. 42). Theoretical sensitivity develops out of exposure to relevant literature, professional experience,

and personal experience in the field of interest or some related field. Theoretical sensitivity increases throughout the research process as the researcher engages in the analytic process.

The following section outlines the theoretical sensitivity I bring to this project. My previous professional experience with TLP, personal experiences and skills with music, and a firm belief in strengths-based work with young people experiencing homelessness and support for programs that offer young people experiencing homelessness opportunities to explore their interests in music contribute to the theoretical sensitivity I bring to this study. In addition, a desire to develop a study that incorporates full transparency of the benefits of the project to me (e.g., a dissertation, publications, and employment) and a thorough assessment of how TLP young people and staff might benefit from the project contribute to the theoretical sensitivity I bring to this study.

As a former contractual employee of TLP, I conducted harm reduction substance use groups for young people to explore their alcohol and drug use and the ways in which it may be negatively affecting their lives. During this time several TLP young people identified music as an interest. Some TLP staff members saw this as opportunity to engage young people in activities that centered on their interests. One member of the staff began to bring some of his own music equipment to the agency and a makeshift music studio was established in the basement that was later replaced by a more established music studio.

Several of the young people took to the musical instruments and recording equipment in the studio immediately. Some of these same young people were strongly encouraged by staff to attend the harm reduction substance use groups I was conducting. When group time arrived I would look for two young people in particular. Based on my limited interactions with them I knew they were smoking marijuana on a regular basis and TLP staff were concerned that their

marijuana consumption was getting in the way of their scholastic and employment motivation. My searches for the young people inevitably wound up in the music studio. Initially I would ask them to join the group session, but I soon realized that they were not interested in coming to group. They were interested in working on their music in the studio. It was clear to me and other TLP staff members that these young men were engaging their strengths and accomplishing something they yearned to do: compose and produce their own music.

From that moment I became interested in gaining an understanding of what the young people were getting out of their work in the studio and its potential as a space for music-informed, strengths-based social work practice with young people experiencing homelessness. This interest is fueled by my own investment in music composition, production, and performance as a strengths-based activity that leads to strong sense of accomplishment. As adolescents and young adults many of my friends and I turned to music to engage our talents, strengths, and interests, were supported in doing so by several adult figures in our lives, and we gained a sense of accomplishment and pride in our work. My interest in the TLP music studio emerges from a space of identification as I feel I am witnessing a similar phenomenon in the young people who engage in the TLP music studio. Young people are engaging their talents and interests, are supported in doing so by each other and TLP staff, and are gaining a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work.

Music remains an important part of my life and continually provides me with opportunities to engage my talents, strengths, and interests. I have an associate of science degree in the recording arts, which provides me with foundational and advanced knowledge in analog and digital recording techniques. In addition, I play various instruments, compose and produce original work, and periodically perform. Most importantly, I remain excited about the potential

for music to engage young people's talents, strengths and interests. Given my experience and skills as musician, producer, and social worker, I feel I am uniquely positioned to explore the TLP music studio as a strengths-based space.

I am drawn to conducting research with TLP due to their commitment to a PYD model that is supported by strengths-based practice and services. From the administration to the front line staff, TLP is strongly committed to PYD. The staff promotes a strengths-based approach to their work with young people and strengths-based services figure prominently in the agency as exemplified by the music studio. I am interested in conducting research with programs such as TLP that are invested in developing spaces for homeless youth to engage their strengths. I believe that engagement in spaces like the music studio is beneficial for young people and that it allows for a unique form of social work practice where the arts and social work meet. This research will provide an opportunity to systematically explore the TLP music studio as a case study of strengths-based social work practice with young people experiencing homelessness and contribute to the limited knowledge base on the use of arts in social work. In order to develop this project with TLP staff and young people, I have been fully transparent about the benefits of the project to me (e.g., a dissertation, publications, employment). I informed young people and staff of the benefits of the project to me during study information sessions (see Appendix A for TLP youth and staff study introduction script). In addition, I continue to work with TLP to determine how the project might be of benefit to the agency, including continued dialogue with the co-constructed audio documentary team in developing dissemination plans for our work as well as continued dialogue with agency administration in developing an executive summary of study findings.

E. Research Questions

This ethnographic case study explores three research questions: (1) What processes are involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness – why is this happening and what are the factors contributing to its existence? (2) What are young people and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio – are there benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio?[2] (3) What are the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio? In addition, I work with a team of young people to develop a co-constructed audio documentary that explores their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

[2] As previously stated above, while fully committed to conducting strengths-based research with TLP youth and staff, I remain open to the possibility that working in the music studio may have both positive and negative consequences for some young people and staff.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

A. Introduction

This review of the relevant literature critically examines youth homelessness literature, literature on homeless youth services, and literature exploring the use of recreational, art, and music-based activities and services in social work and related fields. The review includes empirical research on youth homelessness, the effectiveness of youth homelessness services, and the use of recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields. It includes theoretical and reflective writing on youth homelessness, youth homelessness services, and recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields. Finally, it includes policy and advocacy group literature on youth homelessness.

The literature review begins with a critical examination of youth homelessness literature, including: (1) varying definitions and understandings of youth homelessness and the ways in which discrepancies and inconsistencies in the literature complicate our understanding of youth homelessness, (2) the prevalence of youth homelessness and the ways in which inconsistent methodologies contribute to inaccurate estimations of the prevalence of youth homelessness, (3) the risks and consequences perspective that permeates much of the youth homelessness literature, and (4) the small but growing body of empirical qualitative literature focused on identifying young people experiencing homelessness strengths and/or accomplishments. The review continues with a critical examination of the literature on homeless youth services, including: (1) the development of homeless youth legislation and its lasting impact on homeless youth services and (2) the limited amount of empirical knowledge regarding the effectiveness of homeless youth services. The review concludes with a critical examination of literature exploring the use of recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields,

including: (1) the recreation and group work movements of the 20th century and social work's historical relationship with these movements, (2) the settlement house movement, specifically Chicago's Hull House, and (3) recent empirical research and theoretical writing examining and exploring the use and effectiveness of recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields.

B. Youth Homelessness Literature

1. Varying definitions of youth homelessness

There is no single definition of youth homelessness. Rather, there are categories within the literature that paradoxically clarify the experience of homelessness for young people and at the same time obfuscate the definition of youth homelessness. This section notes the similarities and differences in federal definitions, policy and advocacy community definitions, and research-based definitions of youth homelessness.

Policy and advocacy groups use a variety of terms to describe and/or define young people experiencing homelessness and/or unstable living situations, including homeless youth, unaccompanied youth, runaway youth, throwaway youth, and street youth. The National Network for Youth (2008), a youth policy and advocacy group, defines a homeless youth as an individual who is not more than 21 years of age, or if seeking shelter in a youth shelter, no more than 18 years of age and not less than 16 years of age; or for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative and who has no other safe alternative living arrangement. The National Network for Youth (2008) prefers to use the term unaccompanied youth as an umbrella term for all young people experiencing homelessness and/or an unstable living situation. The term includes children and youth through the age of 17 who are living apart from their parents or guardians and young adults ages 18 to 24 who are economically and/or emotionally detached

from their families and are experiencing homeless situations (National Center for Homeless Education, 2005; National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2008; National Network for Youth, 2008). It also includes those youth defined as runaway, throwaway, and street youth.

Runaway youth are those youth under 18 years of age who leave their homes or places of legal residence without the permission of their families (National Center for Homeless Education, 2005; National Network for Youth, 2008; U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2007). Throwaway youth are those youth who are told to leave their household; are abandoned or deserted; are thrown away from home and want to return home, but a parent or other adult household member refused to let them return; or youth who ran away and whose parents or guardian made no effort to recover them (National Network for Youth, 2008; U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2007). Street youth are those youth who run away, are indefinitely homeless, or are intermittently homeless and spend a significant amount of their time on the street (National Center for Homeless Education, 2005; National Network for Youth, 2008).

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force defines homeless youth as young people who are living on the streets or in shelters, runaways who have voluntarily left a dangerous or otherwise undesirable home environment, throwaways whose parents or guardians have kicked them out and adolescents who have aged out of foster care or state custody and have nowhere to go (Ray, 2006). The National Coalition for the Homeless (2008) defines homeless youth as youth under the age of 18 who lack parental, foster, or institutional care. The National Alliance to End Homelessness (2008b) lacks a distinctive definition of homeless youth, but they do suggest that the definition of youth homelessness be broad and inclusive of homeless young adults between the ages of 18 to 24. It is clear that policy and advocacy groups are using a

variety of terms to describe and/or define young people experiencing homelessness and/or unstable living situations, including homeless youth, unaccompanied youth, runaway youth, throwaway youth, street youth It is less clear why they use so many terms to describe and/or define young people experiencing homelessness and/or unstable living situations.

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (2007) defines homeless youth as youth on their own and unaccompanied by their caregivers with no place for shelter and in need of services. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act defines a homeless youth as one who is "not more than 21 years of age for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative and who has no other safe alternative living arrangement" (42 U.S.C. 5732a, as cited in National Center for Homeless Education, 2005, p. 3). Surprisingly the administrating agency of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, does not utilize the definition as spelled out in the act. This suggests the potential for inconsistencies within the federal government regarding the definition of youth homelessness. In a report developed by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty and the National Network for Youth (2012), the authors provide state-by-state classifications (i.e., definitions) of homeless and runaway youth. The report shows inconsistent definitions, suggesting potential additional inconsistencies between federal and state bureaucracies as well between state bureaucracies regarding the definition of youth homelessness.

Homeless youth researchers have defined youth homelessness diversely as knowledge around the issue has increased. Kurtz, Jarvis, and Kurtz (1991) offered a comprehensive definition of youth homelessness that includes youth of homeless families, youth who leave home to escape abuse, are thrown or pushed out of their homes by parents or guardians, are doubly homeless (i.e., youth who are removed from their homes at an early age due to neglect or

abuse, are placed in foster care, and runaway from the foster placement), or members of minority groups who have immigrated to the U. S. unaccompanied. Smollar (1999) defines homeless youth as individuals under the age of 19 who have runaway from their homes or alternative placements and remained away for a long period of time, have been pushed out of their homes or foster care placements, or have been abandoned by their parents. Kisley et al. (2008) define youth homelessness structurally by delineating between the absolutely homeless as those living on the streets or in shelters and the relatively homeless as those who live in unstable living environments, spending too much of their income on rent. In a report on the typologies of young people experiencing homelessness, Toro, Lesperance, and Braiciszewski (2011) argue for a longitudinally and "empirically-derived multivariate typology of homeless youth," (p. 5), operationally defined as low risk, transient but connected, and high risk homeless youth. While youth homelessness researchers continue to build on each others' operational definitions of youth homelessness as research advances, they, along with the government as well as the policy and advocacy community, have yet to come to a standard operationalization of youth homelessness.

There are several common themes in these varying descriptions and definitions of youth homelessness. They all describe young people without adequate shelter or provisions that are at increased risk for experiencing harm while away from the permanency of some form of stable housing. There are also several differences that complicate our understanding of young people experiencing homelessness. First, there are five different categories of young people experiencing homelessness that essentially describe a population of youth without stable housing. Second, within these five categories, which again are homeless, unaccompanied, runaway, throwaway, and street youth, there are diverging federal, policy and advocacy group, and research-based definitions. Third, within the federal and state governments, the primary

funders for homeless youth services, there are diverging definitions on what constitutes a young people experiencing homelessness and a homeless youth experience. Fourth, the policy community lacks consensus in their definitions with four separate definitions for young people experiencing homelessness (i.e., National Network for Youth, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, National Coalition for the Homeless, and National Alliance to End Homelessness). These discrepancies, overlapping definitions, and inconsistencies complicate our understanding of youth homelessness and make it difficult to measure the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness.

2. Prevalence of youth homelessness

Estimates of the number of young people experiencing homelessness are varied (Congressional Research Service, 2013; Kidd & Scrimenti, 2004; National Center for Homeless Education, 2005; National Network for Youth, 2008; Smollar, 1999). The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (2007) estimates that 575,000 to 2.8 million youth experience homelessness in a given year depending on the type of methodology utilized and which definition(s) of youth homelessness are used. Clear and concise estimates of young people experiencing homelessness are critical for increasing awareness, generating funding, planning interventions and programs, and evaluating the effectiveness of current interventions (Kidd & Scrimenti, 2004). Attempts to gauge the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness highlight how inconsistent methodologies contribute to inaccurate estimations of the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness.

A 1995 federal study estimated that 2.8 million youth experience homelessness in a given year (National Network for Youth, 2008). In 1998, the National Health Interview estimated that 1.6 million young people experience homelessness in a given year (National Center for

Homeless Education, 2005). A 1999 federal study of runaway and homeless youth estimated that 1.7 million youth under the age of 18 left home or were asked to leave home (Congressional Research Service, 2013). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U. S. Department of Justice estimates that 1,682, 900 young people experiencing homelessness or ran away from home in 2002 (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2008). In 2004, the National Runaway Switchboard estimated that 1.3 million young people lived on the streets (National Center for Homeless Education, 2005). The National Alliance to End Homelessness (2008b) states that in 2006 homeless youth service providers served 748, 246 young people experiencing homelessness (2008a) and that researchers estimate that roughly 5.5 to 7.7% of young people, about 1 to 1.6 million youth, experience homelessness in a given year. More recently the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2012) estimates that 1.7 million young people experience homelessness in a given year. While there is some consistency within these estimates, 1.6 million seems to be a rough average; the inconsistencies suggest complications in executing an accurate estimate of the prevalence, which in turn underestimates the number of youth who are homeless for some period of time during the year or during their lifetime.

Just as there are varying estimates on the number of young people experiencing homelessness, there are varying ideas regarding the obstacles to an accurate count. The majority of estimates utilize a point-in-time methodology (Sommer, 2001), whereby researchers literally count the homeless and tally up the results. Point-in-time estimates tend to count more of the literal homeless (i.e., those living on the streets or in shelters) and miss a large percentage of the marginally homeless (i.e., those living with non-parental family, friends, or in other living situations that are not the streets or shelters) (Sommer, 2001). The National Network for Youth (2008) cites an unwillingness of parents and guardians to report missing youth, unstable living

situations, general distrust of adults and social service systems, and a primary focus on urban youth as barriers to an accurate estimate of the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness. A 2007 report prepared for Congress (Congressional Research Service, 2013) cites the overlap among other youth and young adult populations, such as youth and young adults aging out of foster care, youth and young adults involved in the mental health system, and youth and young adults involved in the juvenile justice system as additional obstacles to an accurate estimate of the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness. In addition, as outlined above, inconsistent definitions of youth homelessness contribute to inaccurate estimates of the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness (Congressional Research Service, 2013; National Network for Youth, 2008).

3. Literature focused on the risks and consequences of homelessness for youth

Homeless youth research and literature is primarily framed from a risks and consequences perspective. Researchers of peer reviewed work in social science, medical, and public health journals and authors from the policy and advocacy community focus on identifying youth populations that are at increased risk for experiencing homelessness. They also focus on examining the risks and consequences young people are exposed to while homeless. The following section reviews youth homelessness literature, noting the lack of focus on young people experiencing homelessness strengths and accomplishments.

Some youth homelessness research and literature identifies populations at risk of becoming homeless. Research at the local, state, and federal levels (Feinstein, Greenblat, Hass, Kohn, & Rana, 2001; Levin, Bax, McKean, & Schoggen, 2005; Ray, 2006, Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter 2012a, Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter 2012b) and homeless youth policy and advocacy literature (National Network for Youth, 2008; National Alliance to End

Homelessness, 2009; Ray 2006) suggest that LGBTQ youth are at increased risk for experiencing homelessness. In 1985 the National Network for Youth conducted a national point-in-time estimate count of young people experiencing homelessness and found that 6% of homeless youth identified as gay or lesbian (Ray, 2006). Findings from a 2001 qualitative study with service providers suggest that 25% to 40% of the youth involved in the New York City juvenile justice system identify as LGBTQ and have experienced some form of homelessness prior to their involvement with the juvenile justice system (Feinstein, Greenblat, Hass, Kohn, & Rana, 2001). In a 2001 survey of young people experiencing homelessness in Illinois, nearly one third (n = 125, 32%) of the 391 participants identified as LGBTQ and 53 of the youth (13.5%) listed sexual orientation as one of the factors that led to homelessness (Levin, Bax, McKean, & Schoggen, 2005). It is generally believed that 3% to 5% of the general population identifies as LGBTQ. Recent research suggests that up to 20% to 40% of young people experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ (Ray, 2006; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter 2012a, Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter 2012b), which indicates that LGBTQ youth are disproportionately represented in the homeless youth population and are therefore at increased risk for experiencing homelessness.

Homeless youth policy groups and advocates note that young people experiencing family conflict are at increased risk for experiencing homelessness (Congressional Research Service, 2013; National Center for Homeless Education, 2005; National Coalition for the Homeless, 2008b). Family conflict is described as conflict over sexual activity or orientation, pregnancy, problems in school, alcohol and drug use, and physical and sexual abuse (Congressional Research Service, 2013). A three city study examining sexual risk behavior and substance use among runaway and homeless youth found that more than half (n = 457, 59%) of the 775 youth

in the study reported family conflict as the reason for leaving home (Kral, Molnar, Booth, & Watters, 1997). In a qualitative study exploring the role of family conflict, a sample of 15 young people experiencing homelessness indentified parental intolerance, neglect, and punishment as contributing factors to their becoming homeless (Alvi, Scott, & Stanyon, 2010).

A study exploring the role trauma in the lives of 102 young people experiencing homelessness found that on average young people experienced 7 stressful live events, including but not limited to bullying, a life-threatening event, and/or violence prior to experiencing homelessness (Coates & McKenzie-Mohr, 2010). Another study examined traumatic events in the life histories of young people experiencing homelessness and found that a large majority (n = 73, 86%) of the 86 youth in the study reported a traumatic event in their lives prior to experiencing homelessness (Gwadz, Nish, Leonard, & Strauss, 2007), suggesting that for these young people exposure to trauma may have increased their risk for experiencing homelessness. Homeless youth policy groups and advocates also note that young people experiencing economic and residential instability are also at increased risk for experiencing homelessness (National Center for Homeless Education, 2005; National Coalition for the Homeless, 2008b).

Some homeless youth research and literature examines the risks and consequences young people are exposed to while homeless. Empirical studies note young people experiencing homelessness increased exposure to substance use, risky sexual behaviors, health problems, and violence as a result of being homeless. A three city study examining sexual risk behavior and substance use among runaway and homeless youth found that three-quarters (n = 583, 76%) of the 775 youth reported drug use in the last three months and had engaged in sex while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol (Kral, Molnar, Booth, & Watters, 1997). Several other empirical studies continue to note young people experiencing homelessness increased risk of

exposure to substance use (Baron, 1999; Ferguson, Jun, Bender, Thompson, & Pollio, 2010; Ferguson & Xie, 2012) and engagement in risky sexual behavior, often resulting in sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV (Clatts, Davis, Sotheran, & Atillasoy, 1998; Clements, Gleghorn, Garcia, Katz, & Marx, 1997; Kennedy, Tucker, Green Jr., Golinelli, & Ewing, 2012; Ober, Martino, Ewing, & Tucker, 2012; Pfeifer & Oliver, 1997; Tucker et al., 2011; Wagner, Carlin, Cauce, & Tenner, 2001; Walls & Bell, 2011; Whitbeck, Chen, Hoyt, Tyler, & Johnson, 2004).

Findings from reviews of the relevant literature note that in addition to substance use and sexually transmitted diseases, young people experiencing homelessness are also at high risk for health problems, including respiratory and infectious diseases as well as mental illness (Beharry, 2012; Edidin, Ganim, Hunter, & Karnik, 2012). A study examining the prevalence of mental health problems and the relationship between mental health and substance use disorders in homeless youth in Los Angeles found that over half of the 432 youth in the study had alcohol (n = 234, 56%) and drug (n = 248, 60%) disorders and depressive symptoms (n = 269, 62%) (Unger, Kipke, Simon, Montgomery, & Johnson, 1997). Using the same sample, another study examined young people experiencing homelessness exposure to and involvement in violence and found that roughly three quarters (n = 311, 72%) of the 432 youth in the study were exposed to violence while living on the streets (Kipke, Simon, Montgomery, Unger, & Iverson, 1997). Additional empirical work suggests that homeless youth experience behavioral problems including suicide, homicide, and depression at a higher rate than non-homeless youth (Cochran, Stewart, Ginzler, & Cauce, 2002; Nolan, 2006; Van Leeuwen et al., 2006). Some recent ethnographic work with young people experiencing homelessness in New York City found that

many of those youth experienced violence as a catalyst for their homelessness and continue to experience violence as an everyday, common occurrence while on the streets (Finkelstein, 2005).

In addition, important theoretical writing on youth homelessness examines the risks and consequences young people experiencing homelessness are exposed to while homeless. Authors note that young people experiencing homelessness are at increased risk of exposure to traumatic situations that have a significant impact on their development (Smollar, 1999; Thompson, McManus, & Voss, 2006). They also note the dual experiences of poverty and homelessness increase the likelihood of participating in risky behaviors, and subsequently experiencing negative health outcomes (Zerger, Strehlow, & Gundlapalli, 2008).

Based on this review of homeless youth literature, we see that researchers and authors are identifying youth populations that are at increased risk for experiencing homelessness. These populations include LGBTQ youth, youth experiencing family conflict, and youth experiencing economic and residential instability. Researchers and authors are also identifying and examining the risks and consequences young people are exposed to while homeless. These risks include increased exposure to and increased substance use, risky sexual behaviors, health problems, and violence. The researchers of the reviewed literature are not identifying or exploring young people experiencing homelessness strengths and/or accomplishments. However, there is a small but growing body of qualitative research that is doing so.

4. <u>Literature focused on the strengths of homeless youth</u>

A small but growing body of qualitative research is focused on exploring and identifying young people experiencing homelessness strengths and accomplishments. In a reflective essay on successful community practice with homeless youth in Toronto, Montreal, and Guatemala City, Karabanow (2003) reviewed qualitative interviews and participant

observation logs from several studies with young people experiencing homelessness and homeless youth services providers. He found that once the youth he interviewed and observed had their basic needs met (i.e., shelter, medical needs, food, and clothing), they were eager to engage in community building processes with each other and service providers to create employment linkages with the business community. In a similar methodological approach, Rew and Horner (2003) reviewed qualitative interviews from three of Rew's previous studies that examined young people experiencing homelessness perceived sense of well being, their self-care attitudes and behaviors, and their sexual health. In re-examining the transcripts Rew and Horner found that many of the youth Rew interviewed in her initial work had identified strengths as embodied in their capacity to access resources and their continual self-improvement efforts.

In a qualitative study, Karabanow, Hughes, Ticknor, Kidd, and Patterson (2010) interviewed 34 homeless young people in Halifax, Canada and 7 Canadian youth homelessness services providers about young people experiencing homelessness employment and survival skills. Respondents highlighted the ways in which young people experiencing homelessness push back on grand narratives of delinquency and laziness and demonstrate ingenuity and resourcefulness by engaging in informal modes of legal work. In doing so, these young people appear to demonstrating employment and vocationally related strengths.

Bender, Thompson, McManus, Lantry, and Flynn (2007) conducted multiple focus groups with young people experiencing homelessness to examine "the attributes and characteristics of homeless young people as they develop street smarts" and to examine the balance between "interpersonal strengths versus reliance on external resources" (p. 27). They found that these young people experiencing homelessness use their strengths, including street smarts, personal strengths, and external resources, to continually develop new street skills and to

negotiate when it was necessary to rely on their own personal strengths and when it was safe to rely on external resources. In a pair of qualitative studies Kurtz, Lindsey, Jarvis, and Nackerud (2000) explore how twelve young people experiencing homelessness use formal and informal helpers to assist them in the successful transition to adulthood and Lindsey, Kurtz, Jarvis, Williams, and Nackerud (2000) explore the same youths' personal strengths and resources. Using the metaphoric imagery of runaway and homeless youth navigating the choppy waters of their lived experience, both these studies show that while these young people experiencing homelessness face many barriers and obstacles to successful transition to adulthood, the obstacles and barriers are often mediated by their personal strengths and resources.

In another qualitative study, Kidd and Davidson (2007) explore the stories of 208 young people experiencing homelessness strength and resilience, specifically noting patterns of self-reliance, feeling supported by other street youth, caring for their peers, and a sense of spirituality as salient examples of their strengths and coping mechanisms. Using the same sample, Kidd and Evans (2011) explore young people experiencing homelessness understanding of home and contend that it exists on a continuum, with home as a physical place on one end of the continuum and home as state on the other. While the authors do not position young people's nuanced understanding of home as an example of their resilience and/or strength, I argue that young people's ability to navigate that continuum while on the streets suggests a high level of resilience and strength. In an invited commentary, Kidd (2012) critically analyzes the state of youth homelessness research, including some of his own work. He is particularly critical of the strong focus on the individual attributes of young people experiencing homelessness and argues for increased analysis of the larger organizational structures that contribute to youth homelessness. In doing so, he argues, youth homelessness research is framed from an empowerment

perspective, whereby young people experiencing homelessness are understood as navigating and surviving within societal oppression and discrimination and demonstrating resilience and strength.

Building on this idea and while not explicitly discussed in the literature, it is important to note young people experiencing homelessness acts of resistance to oppression. Anderson, Cowger, & Snively (2009) argue that strengths-based social work is predicated on indentifying and supporting "individuals' acts of resistance in the face of violence and oppression" (p. 181), beginning with the assessment process and then filtering into subsequent work with clients, whether individuals, groups, or communities. In his reflective essay, Karabanow (2003) describes how service providers in Montreal partnered with young people experiencing homelessness to advocate for "affordable housing, meaningful employment, and emergency resources for disadvantaged children" (p. 381). He also notes how service providers in Guatemala City partnered with street youth to protest the "torture and assassination of street children" (p. 381). In addition, service providers in Toronto have partnered with young people experiencing homelessness to create performance spaces for the youth to give voice to the injustice and oppression they experience on the streets (Peace Power, 2003). While not explicitly noted as such, these acts of resistance serve as additional examples of young people experiencing homelessness strengths.

C. Homeless Youth Services

1. Development of homeless youth legislation and services

In his research on the poor and homeless in New York City during the mid 19th century, Brace (1880) documented his fieldwork with homeless youth. He describes his experiences with homeless and street youth or newsboys as they were known at the time, noting

"their sturdy independence" (p. 100).

> With a boy, "Arab of the streets," one always has the consolation that, despite his ragged clothes and bed in a box or hay-barge, he often has a rather good time of it, and enjoys many of the delicious pleasures of a child's roving life, and that a fortunate turn of events may at any time make an honest, industrious fellow of him. (p. 114)

He also notes their needs, including shelter, food, and legal, gainful employment. In comparing the fates of street boys and street girls, he states "A girl street rover is to my mind the most painful figure in all the unfortunate crowd of a large city" (p. 114). This notion of the devil-may-care street boy and the wayward street girl carried over into the 20th century.

In the early 20th century homeless boys, then known as runways, were conceptualized as young men who found their independent streak at a young age, seizing opportunities to assert their independence (Congressional Research Service, 2013; Staller, 2006). Boys who left home at an early age, boarding trains to strike out on their own were viewed in an intriguing light and celebrated in the media (Staller, 2006). Girls who left home were still considered wayward and at great risk. These conceptions and constructions continued well into the early 1960s. The emergence of the counterculture in the late 1960s brought a new wave and new kind of runaway youth to the landscape. Larger in number and viewed in a lesser light than their predecessors, these youth were identified as delinquent, regardless of their biological sex or gender, due mainly to their affiliation with the counterculture. They were not defined as boys striking out on their own in a flash of independence or girls whose lives were in great danger. Rather, these youth were defined as problems to contend with. They did not subscribe to cultural norms, they engaged in illegal activities, such as drug use, and were aggressive toward the establishment (Staller, 2006).

In light of their of their reluctance to adhere to cultural norms and their propensity to engage in illegal activities, these drop-out and runaway youth were subsequently viewed as

delinquent and an issue to be dealt with by law enforcement agents. In response to the growing numbers of these young people, an alternative youth service culture grounded in grassroots organizations established shelters and services, providing a safe haven for the youth (Staller, 2006). The alternative nature of these grassroots organizations was further highlighted by their outsider status in the traditional child welfare and juvenile justice arenas.

Over time, a necessary and at times tenuous relationship evolved between law enforcement agencies and the shelters with service providers receiving referrals from law enforcement agents and law enforcement agents receiving calls from shelters regarding missing youth. Guiding this relationship were two distinct viewpoints. Law enforcement agents viewed runaway youth as an issue of delinquency that they did not want to deal with, citing an inability to deal with the volume of cases. The shelters approached the issue from a youth-rights perspective that prioritized youth self-determination. These viewpoints were the foundation for the establishment of federally funded services for runaway youth (Staller, 2006).

Legislation for runaway youth was first introduced in the Senate in November of 1971 and was passed into public law as the Runaway Youth Act in September of 1974 (Congressional Research Service, 2013). Throughout the process, several hearings were held. Law enforcement agents and representatives from the youth shelters presented their cases for prioritizing funding for runaway youth, albeit from different sides of the table (Staller, 2006). The act was based on several key premises. All parties agreed that runaway youth were vulnerable to victimization and the shelters were deemed as the most appropriate venue to work with runaway youth as they offered the youth refuge from the streets and homelessness. The shelters successfully argued that funding not be contingent on formal arrangements with child welfare agencies and that family reunification policies be based on state not federal law (Staller,

2006). Congress called for national data collection methods to understand the runaway problem. Finally, law enforcement agents, while not formally written into the act, were recognized as an essential primary point of contact for vulnerable runaway youth and the primary referral source for the shelters.

The act was written into law as Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. Historically, youth policy has fallen under two categories, child welfare and juvenile justice. Child welfare policies are designed to support a child protection orientation and provide interventions to keep children safe (Staller, 2006). Juvenile justice policies are designed to support an orientation that blames youth and interventions that are intended to reform, retain, and or punish them (Staller, 2006). Legislating the Runaway Youth Act as a title of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act situated runaway youth as delinquents who were engaged in problematic behavior and in need of reformation.

The Runaway Youth Act was later renamed the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act in the 1977 reauthorization in recognition of the growing number of youth experiencing homelessness. In 1988 the act was reauthorized, establishing transitional living programs for runaway and homeless youth, and again in 1994, establishing street outreach programs for runaway and homeless youth. The act has been reauthorized four times since 1994. The first was in 1999, at which point it was renamed the Missing, Exploited, and Runaway Children Protection Act of 1999; the second in 2003, at which point it was renamed the Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act; and most recently it was reauthorized in 2008 as the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act through fiscal year 2013. To date, the act remains a title of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, suggesting that runaway, homeless, and missing youth

are conceptualized at the federal level as young people that are engaging in behavior problems and are in need of reformation.

2. Effectiveness of homeless youth services

The Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act funds basic center, street outreach, and transitional living programs for homeless youth (Congressional Research Service, 2013, Ray, 2006). Basic center programs provide outreach, crisis intervention, shelter, and counseling for young people experiencing homelessness on a temporary basis. They also represent the original youth shelter model, which includes community drop-in centers. Street outreach programs provide street-based outreach and education for young people experiencing homelessness who are vulnerable to or experience violence, abuse, and exploitation. Transitional living programs offer young people experiencing homelessness between the ages of 16-21 up to eighteen months of transitional housing with supportive services. They were developed in response to the growing number of youth experiencing prolonged and episodic homelessness in the late 1980s.

Milburn, Rosenthal, and Rotherram-Borus (2005) note the lack of empirical research on the effectiveness of programs and services for young people experiencing homelessness. They contend that the majority of homeless youth research and literature "has focused on the individual characteristics of homeless youth" and that "the limited research that has examined service delivery has documented the importance of providing appropriate services" (p. 1). In a recent meta-analysis of services and interventions for homeless youth, researchers found comprehensive interventions that consider the complex and interconnected needs of homeless youth may be more effective than interventions with a singular focus (i.e., recovery and abstinence from alcohol and drugs, medication and treatment compliance) (Slesnick, Dashora, Letcher, Erdem, & Serovich, 2009).

A limited amount of research focuses on the effectiveness of homeless youth shelters and drop-in centers. In a recent qualitative study, researchers explored how young people experiencing homelessness access shelters and drop-in centers and found that young people's levels of self-reliance, substance use, relationships with other youth, and youths' perceptions of homeless youth services staff influenced the ways in which they accessed services (Garrett et al., 2008). Additional studies have examined how homeless youth services impact familial contact, substance use, school attendance, employment, sexual activity and self-esteem (Pollio, Thompson, Tobias, Reid, & Spitznagel, 2006), young people experiencing homelessness satisfaction with homeless youth services (Spiro, Dekel, & Peled, 2009), and young people experiencing homelessness transition from shelter stays back to their families (Nebbit, House, Thompson, & Pollio, 2007).

There is a limited amount of research on the effectiveness of transitional living programs for young people experiencing homelessness. Giffords, Alonso, and Bell (2007) developed a case study to describe the inner workings of a transitional living program and youths' experiences of living there. They identify services offered to the youth that promote independent living, including money management and vocational and educational training. The agency measures young people's success using three markers: (1) youths' completion of a life skills curriculum, (2) graduation from the transitional living program to an appropriate independent living situation, and (3) engagement in aftercare services for at least six months post-discharge. In is unclear how the agency or the authors define an appropriate independent living situation nor is it clear how many youth have experienced success from this case study.

In another qualitative study, researchers explored factors that influenced client success in four transitional living programs in New England (Bartlett, Copeman, Golin, Miller, & Needle,

2004). They found that characteristics of the youth served, agency philosophy, and onsite or community-based services positively influenced program outcomes. The researchers also discuss the difficulties in defining successful outcomes for young people exiting transitional living programs as each youth enters services with a unique set of needs and each transitional living program varies in how it measures youths' success. The authors argue that while there are standard outcomes (i.e., stable and safe housing, education and or employment attainment, and independent living skills) it is difficult to use point-in-time data at discharge to predict youths' overall long-term success.

Nolan (2006), a director of a homeless youth program in New York City, echoes Bartlett, Copeman, Golin, Miller, and Needle's (2004) thoughts on the difficulties in defining successful outcomes for youth exiting transitional living programs.

> The rate of success is often ambiguous. Is it successful when a young person discharges before their time is up and moves out to live with a friend? Is it successful when they complete their tenure at a program and meet most of their goals? Is success measured on an individual basis and defined by a young person? (Nolan, 2006, p. 390).

Using case record data and youth and staff interviews, Nolan (2006) attempted to examine whether or not youth were successfully exiting the transitional living program she oversees. She defines success broadly, and somewhat vaguely, arguing that advancement in an area (i.e., from unsafe housing before program enrollment to safe housing upon discharge, from no educational involvement upon enrollment to educational involvement upon discharge, etc.) is a measure of youths' success. Using a point-in-time measure, at discharge three-quarters (n = 31, 76%) of the 40 youth who enrolled in the program between 2000 and 2005 achieved housing success and 43% (n = 17) achieved educational success.

Rashid (2004) also used case record data to explore employment, housing, and financial outcomes for 23 former foster care youth who exited a transitional living program in the San

Francisco Bay area. Using intake and discharge data she found that 100% of the 23 youth were employed at discharge and that on average youth were making $8.65 an hour (*SD*, $2.79). In addition, young people on average saved $2,364 (*SD*, $1,805) with 100% of the 23 youth exiting the transitional living program into stable housing. While interpreting these results, it should be noted that all youth are required to work 40 hours per week and apply 30% of their earnings to a savings account while living in this transitional living program. The author does not offer a definition of stable housing.

While some research suggests that comprehensive interventions that consider the complex and interconnected needs of homeless youth are most effective (Slesnick, Dashora, Letcher, Erdem, & Serovich, 2009), there is very little literature on whether or not transitional living programs are considering youths' strengths, which may include recreation, art, and music-based activities. In a National Association of Social Workers funded study assessing the needs of young people experiencing homelessness, Bass (1992) found that the majority of transitional programs surveyed (96%) provided a recreation program for their residents. The effectiveness of any of these recreation programs and whether or not they are engaging youths' strengths, which may include art and music-based activities, remains unknown.

D. Recreational, Art, and Music-Based Activities in Social Work and Related Fields

1. The recreation movement, group work, and social work

The following section explores the use of recreational, art, and music-based activities in the recreation and group work movements and social work's historical relationship with these movements. The first noted intersection of professional social work and the recreation movement occurred in 1892 with the establishment of a children's playground at Hull House in Chicago. As Reid (1991) explains, "it was referred to as the model playground" (p.

93); providing an environment for young and pre-adolescent children to play sports and explore new publically sanctioned spaces for children's recreation and leisure. Hull House co-founder Jane Addams was noted for her concern with children's recreation, leisure, and play with a particular focus on healthy forms of play and recreation that offered youth an opportunity to engage their minds and escape the harsh realities of late 19th and early 20th century urban living (Addams, 1909a).

As the 20th century progressed, new opportunities for recreation and leisure for youth and adults increased in the U. S. and recreation and leisure became important topics at the forefront of social thinking. Pangburn's (1924) brief descriptive quantitative analysis of the growth of sites dedicated to the recreation and leisure of youth and adults in the U. S. stresses the benefits of this growth and the subsequent positive effects of recreation and leisure on the populace. He notes "that what a quarter century ago was practically a summer playground movement for children is now a broad leisure time movement for year round recreation of both physical and cultural types for persons of all ages and of every social and economic group" (p. 112).

In discussing the proliferation of community and neighborhood sites for public recreation, Pangburn (1924) notes the "non-controversial nature of recreation" and the proliferation of parks for recreation as a sign of "the acceptance by the cities of responsibilities for preventing juvenile delinquency " (p. 109). Meyers's (1934) review of several books on recreation and leisure extends Pangburn's (1924) notion of recreation as a form of juvenile delinquency prevention, arguing, "A full expression of creative activity will diminish crime and other negative social forces" (p. 598). Meyer (1934) goes on to describe creative activities as skill, craft, and art-based activities, such as music and drama. Pangburn (1924) also supported the use of creative activities, such as art and music, in city play programs, citing these activities

as a means to engage youths' minds and curb youth delinquency. Based on Pangburn's (1924) analysis and Meyer's (1934) review it is clear that they supported the use of art and music-based activities in the recreational movement and shared Addams's (1909a) concerns for non-vice forming, healthy modes of play for youth.

By mid-century the recreation movement had grown and recreation and leisure activities were integrated into individual, family, and community life. Specialized recreation workers were employed in various settings including religiously affiliated institutions such as the YMCA and the YWCA, neighborhood and community centers, and local park districts. In discussing the growth of recreation and leisure activities over the previous century, social worker and group worker Grace Coyle noted the "increasing acceptance by the public of the essential character of constructive leisure-time activities" (Coyle, 1948, p. 5). Her statement along with the writings of other social work scholars and practitioners at the time (see Dimock & Trecker, 1949; Kindelsperger, 1955) indicate that some members of the social work profession were fully supportive of the inclusion of recreation and leisure activities in their practice.

Group work partially developed out of this expanded national interest in recreation and leisure activities and aligned with more community-oriented forms of social work practice. Andrews (2001) notes, "Group work emerged out of several organizations including both those which focused on self-help as well as those that focused on recreation and informal education: settlement houses, neighborhood centers, Y's, Jewish centers, camps, scouts, and labor union organizing" (p. 47). Already invested in the benefits of recreation and leisure activities through engagement with the recreation movement and recreation workers, some mid-century social workers adopted the additional benefits group work offered into their social work practice. As

Andrews' (2001) analysis indicates though the acceptance of group work within the social work profession was not without its consequences.

The often non-traditional settings of group work, the non-professionalized status of the group workers, and the recreational and leisure-based activities often used in group work, including art and music-based activities, created challenges for some social workers, particularly those trained in case work (Konopka, 1963). Over time, talking and other forms of therapeutic group work or, as it is more commonly known, group therapy, slowly replaced the recreational and leisure components of group work. Discussing the integration of group work into social work in her interview with Andrews (2001), Gisela Konopka notes, "Group work was not just about talking, but also painting and playing . . . It wasn't just a method to be taught, but a philosophy that opened doors" (p. 50). Many social workers oriented to casework were unwilling to accept this philosophy and chose to rely on the more structured forms of group work, such as group therapy. Konopka (1963) noted how very few social workers defined group work as a form of recreation at the time and that this understanding of group work had essentially ceased to exist in social work practice. While the activity-based natures of the recreation movement and group work may have fallen out of favor in the increasingly more popular casework-oriented forms of social work in the 1960s, a review of the use of recreational and art and music-based activities at Chicago's Hull House indicates a strong commitment to recreational, art, and music-based activities within the settlement house movement and more community oriented forms of social work well into the late 1960s.

2. <u>Recreational, art, and music based activities at Hull House</u>

As one of the leading voices of the settlement house movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jane Addams championed the use recreational activities at Hull House

(Addams, 1909a). Hull House published a recreation guide in 1896 in order to foster recreational engagement (Hooker, 1896). The guide offers an itinerary of trips for people living in the vicinity of Hull House and the trips are listed by method of travel, location, and pricing. Many of the getaways include art and music-based activities, such as garden and nature walks, art museum tours, and band concerts. In fact, many of the trips appear to be built around art and music-based activities. The guide stresses the importance of recreation, noting that "One should plan for his recreations as regularly and studiously as for his hearthstone or his chosen trade" (Hooker, 1896, p. 11).

Addams, along with Hull House co-founder Ellen Gates Starr, promoted the use of art and music-based activities in settlement house work at Hull House (Addams, 1909a, Glowacki, 2004). Addams and Gates Starr were concerned about urban dwellers' over exposure to vice and argued for the development of healthy, non-vice forming recreational activities, including engagement with the arts and music. Addams stated that the role of art is "to preserve in permanent and beautiful form those emotions and solaces which cheer life and make it kindlier" and that exposure to the arts can "lift the mind of the worker from the harshness and loneliness of his task" and "free him from a sense of isolation and hardship" that she found to be so prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th century lives of urban residents (Addams, 1909a, p. 101). A review of Hull House yearbooks and annual reports from this time period suggests strong support for art and music-based activities at Hull House.[3]

The 1907 Hull House yearbook (Hull House Publishers, 1907) describes a plethora of art and music-based activities. These activities include educational and discussion-based clubs

[3] Woods and Kennedy's (1922) study on settlement house activity suggests similar support for the use of art and music-based activities in settlement house work in New York City, Boston, and other urban areas across the nation during this time period.

exploring topics related to the arts (e.g., Shakespeare), arts and crafts classes (e.g., pottery, metal work, enamel work, word carving, drawing, modeling, painting, and lithography), a fully functioning theatre with a full schedule of performances, weekly musical performances, and a coffee house, a space most likely used by club members and art and music-based activity participants to meet and discuss their experiences. A report from 1909 (Addams, 1909b) and yearbooks from 1910 (Hull House Publishers, 1910) and 1921 (Hull House Publishers, 1921) show a similar dedication to art and music-based activities. Throughout this time Hull House also hosted open house exhibitions for the community (Hull House Publishers, 1933, Hull House Publishers, 1934). Studio and shop-based artists exhibited paintings, etchings, woodblocks, and weavings while actors performed theatrical pieces and musicians and dancers gave recitals. Addams, Gates Starr, and Hull House continued this dedication to art and music-based activities well into the 20th century, focusing strongly on youth engagement in recreational and art and music-based activities.

Addams felt particularly strong about youth exposure to recreation, the arts, and music. "To fail to provide for the recreation of youth, is to not only deprive all of them of their natural form of expression, but is certain to subject some of them to the overwhelming temptation of illicit and soul-destroying pleasures" (Addams, 1909a, p. 101). Addams was particularly concerned about the potential for urban youths' engagement in vice (e.g., gambling, drinking, and crime) and felt that exposure to healthy forms of recreation, such as the arts and music, offered a healthy alternative. Hull house yearbooks from 1907 (Hull House Publishers, 1907), 1910 (Hull House Publishers, 1910), and 1921 (Hull House Publishers, 1921) describe recreational activities for area youth. The 1907 yearbook describes a 1000 member strong boys club run out of its own building on the Hull House campus (Hull House Publishers, 1907). The

building was equipped with bowling alleys, billiard tables, athletic facilities, and shops for work in iron, wood and printing. It also housed a library, a study room, a game room, and classrooms for academic and non-academic interests. The yearbooks also highlight Hull House staff's dedication to art and music-based activities for youth, specifically through the establishment of the Hull House Theatre, the Hull House Music School, the Hull House Art School, and the Hull House Arts and Music Camp.

Established around the turn of the century, the Hull House Theatre offered area youth an opportunity to engage with plays, dance, and film. The theatre staged plays in a variety of languages including Bohemian, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Russian, and Yiddish and allowed youth an opportunity to experiment with acting and scene design (Hull House Publishers, 1910). Hull House offered dance classes for youth in a variety of forms and the theatre offered dance class participants an opportunity to perform (Hull House Publishers, 1907). The Hull House Theatre also briefly housed a five-cent nickelodeon for area youth (Hull House Publishers, 1907), which although short-lived due to intense heat, was a huge success, attracting full houses of area youth each day. While Addams was openly critical of public nickelodeons for their detriment to youths' moral development, she also noted the potential benefits of nickelodeons as a healthy escape for youth (Addams, 1909a). Hull House staff chose moving pictures that allowed for healthy fantastical escape from the dregs of urban living and that projected safe forms of adventure that promoted health, well-being, and sound, moral living (Hull House Publishers, 1907, Lindstrom, 1999).

Established prior to the turn of the century, The Hull House Music School was designed to "give a thorough musical instruction to a limited number of children" (Hull House Publishers, 1907, p. 32). By the 1930s the school had grown, incorporating classes and instruction for all

those who cared to participate. A Hull House Music School brochure from circa 1936 notes "The school is designed to give thorough musical instruction to those children showing the greatest aptitude, and to foster in a much larger group the cultural aspects of a musical education" (Hull House Publishers, ca. 1936, no page). The brochure describes individual instruction in singing, violin, and violoncello, ensemble classes and recitals, and orchestra concerts. The Hull House Art School was established around the same time as the Hull House Music School. It offered youth both individual and group instruction in studio classes in studio arts ceramics, and shop-based skills (e.g., weaving, woodwork, metal work, etc.) (Hull House Publishers, 1907). Both schools and Hull House Theatre became longstanding and essential components of the program of services offered by Hull House.

An annual report from 1949 (Hull House Publishers, 1949) describes Hull House's ongoing commitment to provide youth with opportunities to engage in arts and music-based activities well into the 20th century. The report describes ongoing youth engagement in the theatre where youth have the opportunity to engage in the "the closest kind of cooperation" that can later translate into "effective family and community service" (p. 13). The report describes ongoing youth engagement in the music school where youth have an opportunity to engage in individual and group instruction and by doing so gain "new social understandings" that "contribute new harmonies to living" (p. 12). The report also describes ongoing youth engagement in the art school where youth have an opportunity to engage in activities that foster a "kind of camaraderie" that "seems to develop as they work out personal interpretations from a basic common study" (p. 11). This ongoing commitment to art and music-based activities eventually led to the establishment of Hull House Art and Music Camp, a rural camp for youth to further explore their artistic curiosities and talents.

A brochure from circa 1969 describes Hull House Art and Music Camp as "America's most unique experiment involving ALL [*sic*] the arts on one campus" and as "An interdisciplinary program stressing creativity at all levels with heavy emphasis on performance" (Hull House Publishers, ca. 1969, no page). Situated in southeastern Wisconsin, the camp offered group and individual instruction in dance, drama, studio arts, creative writing, filmmaking, and music. This camp appears to be the full realization of Addams's intention in promoting art and music-based activities for urban youth: an opportunity for urban youth to engage in, as the brochure describes it, "An in-depth cross pollenization of the arts where . . . at the end of six weeks the youngsters emerge with a sense of unity and an understanding of the arts as the finest record of man's existence" (Hull House Publishers, ca. 1969, no page). Unfortunately the camp's last season was in 1969. The camp was closed for financial reasons and the director's assessment that the camp was not meeting the needs of enough inner-city youth (Bishop, 1969). Based on this analysis, it is clear that Addams, Hull House co-founder Gates Starr, and Hull House staff were strongly committed to recreational and art and music-based activities and were particularly invested in creating and facilitating spaces for youth to engage in art and music-based activities.

3. <u>Current uses of recreational, art, and music-based activities</u>

Art and music-based activities continue to be used in social work and related fields today. Social workers, group workers, as well as art, music, and drama therapists incorporate art-based activities including visual art, such as drawing and painting, theatre and drama, film and photography, poetry and music-based activities into their practice with adults and youth. The following section critically reviews theoretical literature and empirical research on current uses of art and music-based activities in social work and related fields. It does not

attempt to explore the large literature on art therapy or music therapy as separate fields, but rather focuses on social work and closely related practices.

A limited amount of recent research has examined the use of community-based arts programs with adults and young people. In a recent ethnographic study, Lowe (2000) qualitatively explored the relationship between a community-based art program and community development. Findings culled from site visits, focus groups, and participant evaluations suggest that the program helped create a sense of community, feelings of solidarity and support through relationship building, and a collective identity expressed through participants' cultural heritage. Based on these findings, Lowe (2000) argues that the community-based arts program did in fact help build and develop community. In another study exploring a community-based arts program for individuals living with a disability, Lynch and Chosa (1996) found the majority of 34 study participants reported an increase in self-esteem (n = 31, 91%), operationally defined as pride in personal accomplishments, as a result of engaging in the community-based arts program. In addition, 27 respondents (82%) enjoyed sharing their work and what they learned with others.

Within the Chicago land area, there are several programs that focus on community-based arts. The Chicago Public Art Group focuses on producing murals, mosaics, and sculptures with community members, providing art education through collaboration, community development through the visual arts, and providing mentorship and leadership training in the arts (Pounds, 2012). A review of the organizations website did not produce any evaluative and/or outcome data, but their work can be seen throughout the city. The Put Down Your Guns project in the Englewood neighborhood on Chicago's south side is a collaborative, grant funded program that explores opportunities for empowerment for adolescent males between the ages of 13-16 through the utilization of expressive visual arts. The three-year project ended in 2011 with several

showings of the young people's work. A review of the sponsoring organizations websites did not produce any evaluative and/or outcome data. Marwen, a youth services organization located in Chicago's River North neighborhood, provides, "high-quality visual arts instruction, college planning, and career development to young people (grades 6–12) free of charge," (Yenawine, 2004, p. 5). In descriptively evaluating the program, Yenawine (2004) notes several successful components, including reciprocal respect between artist-in-residence instructors/mentors and students, a value for teaching, individualized and growth enhancing instruction, as well as teamwork and shared responsibility.

Additional qualitative research has explored the use of art-based methods with youth identified as either experiencing trauma or living with post-traumatic stress disorder. Coholic, Lougheed, and Cadell (2009) conducted a grounded theory study examining arts-based methods in group therapy sessions with children living in foster care. The researchers operationally defined living in foster care as a form of traumatic experience. Findings from group session notes, post group interviews, and interviews with foster parents and childcare workers suggest that the children enjoyed the group, sought to extend its tenure, and that the children, foster parents, and childcare workers witnessed improved levels of self-esteem and self-awareness during and after engagement in the arts-based group therapy sessions. In a pair of related studies using the same sample, Coholic, Lougheed, and Lebreton (2009) found that the arts-based group therapy sessions offered the children a more holistic approach to group therapy, one that considered mindfulness-based and spiritually-based approaches, while Coholic, Fraser, Robinson, and Lougheed (2012) found that the sessions promoted children's resilience. Kozlowska and Hanney (2001) explored the use of an art therapy group for 5 children experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of violence and parental separation and

found art therapy to be useful in helping the youth discuss their parents' separation and in decreasing the harmful effects of the youths' anxiety.

Some researchers have examined the use of art-based methods with youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Ezeel and Levy (2001) conducted a three-year multiple method evaluation of an arts program for incarcerated adolescents and found that over half of the 184 youth in their sample (n = 112, 61%) acquired concrete vocational skills and that close to three quarters of the youth (n = 129, 70%) experienced a sense of goal satisfaction as a result of engagement with the arts program. Findings also suggest that engagement in the arts workshops may have had long term effects on the youth as evidenced by relatively low recidivism rates for arts workshops participants. In a grounded theory study exploring understandings of mental illness and juvenile justice system involvement, Watson, Kelly, and Vidalon (2009) interviewed nine youth-parent dyads and found that some youth were engaged in recreational and arts-based activities as a result of their involvement with the juvenile justice system. These youth and their parents reported engagement in recreational and arts-based services as a beneficial and important part of the youths' community-based treatment plan.

Other researchers and practitioners have reported the successful use of a variety of other arts-based methods with young people including photography and video, theatre and drama, and poetry. Researchers and practitioners have reported the successful use of photography in group work with female youth (Darrow, & Lynch, 1983), photovoice in community engagement efforts with older youths (Estrella, 2012; Gant et al., 2009), and video production in promoting health literacy campaigns with indigenous youth (Stewart, Riecken, Scott, Tanaka, & Riecken, 2008) as well as video production in developing collaborative projects that explore African American adolescents interests in academics and positive peer relationships (Baker, Staiano, & Calvert,

2011). Researchers and practitioners have also reported on the successful use of theatre and drama techniques in pre-teen youth development group work (Dutton, 2001), in assisting refugee and recently arrived immigrant youths with social adjustment (Rousseau et al., 2007), and in assisting children in an acute inpatient psychiatric treatment setting with expression of challenging topics (Reynolds, 2011). Mitra's (2009) research highlights the use of poetry and video production groups in school-based youth-adult partnerships. These partnerships seek to give young people authentic and meaningful voices in school-based teacher/administrator-student relationships. In a reflective piece, Malekoff (2006) reported on the successful use of poetry groups with young children as way to engage their strengths and facilitate young people's ownership of the group. In his text on group work with adolescents, Malekoff (2004) supports the use of art-based activities in all youth group work as a means to engage youths' strengths and as a way to invite the whole youth into the group work process.

A limited body of theoretical literature and empirical research has explored the use of music-based activities in social work and related fields. Nicholson, Berthelsen, Abad, Williams, and Bradley (2008) evaluated a music therapy program for parents and their young children. The program used music-based activities as a means to create a non-threatening context in which parent and child could have quality interactions. The researchers found that engagement in the music therapy program yielded significant improvements in parenting behaviors and child outcomes including enhanced communication, play skills, and social participation. In another study, Rykov (2008) phenomenologically explored a music therapy support group for individuals living with cancer, seeking to understand the "meaning of music and the music therapy group for the participants" (p. 198). Findings that emerged from transcripts from the audio-recorded sessions, participant journal entries, session evaluation forms, music written and performed

during the sessions, and images created in response to the sessions included the participants' experience of the group as a connection to something larger than themselves, an opportunity to explore their creativity, and sense of empowerment from participation in the music making process.

In a recent exploratory study, MacMilan, Maschi, and Tseng (2012) examined the relationship between recreational drumming and well-being. A sample of 73 social work graduate students participated in a two-hour recreational drumming session followed by the administration of a measure of intrapersonal and interpersonal well-being. Results suggest that respondents experienced the recreational drumming as a way to improve their well-being and gain an increased sense of connectedness and empowerment. Additional research has explored the use of music-based activities in substance use treatment. Dingle, Gleadhill, and Baker (2008) explored the use of music-based activities in conjunction with cognitive behavioral group therapy to increase engagement in inpatient substance use treatment. Using a convenience sample of 24 adult patients in an open enrollment group setting, the researchers administered post-group surveys over the course of seven weeks and found that respondents experienced the sessions positively and that the music component of the session may have contributed to increased engagement. Buino and Simon (2011) provide anecdotal support for similar findings in a reflective piece on the utilization of music-based activities in substance use groups.

In a reflective essay on the use of music-based activities in social work practice with children, Lefevre (2004) outlines how she has used music-based activities to explore therapeutic relationships with children and children's communication methods. She argues that music-based activities allow for more experiential forms of communication in social work practice with children. In another reflective essay, Trevo (2001) uses several case studies from his music

therapy practice with adolescents in mental health settings to construct an argument that exposure to music, including listening, writing, and performing, helps youth connect to therapeutic processes while in treatment and assists youth in their development. Through the case studies, Trevo (2001) is also able to describe the youths' affinity for and intense engagement with the music in the music therapy groups.

Coulter (2000) tested the effect of a song-writing group as a means to reduce posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms for children who have experienced abuse and found no significant differences between the experimental condition (i.e., song writing) and the control condition (i.e., recreation music). The author does report though that "participants of the song-writing condition sense of personal safety improved more than the recreational music condition" and that the "combination of talking group sessions, recreational therapy sessions, and music therapy sessions (within the overall program) may be particularly effective in helping victims combat self blame and acquire feelings of safety" (p. 202). In a reflective piece on the utilization of various music-based activities in group work with young people, McFerran-Skewes (2005) contends that song writing, although a complex task, offers young people an opportunity for "honest and authentic sharing within a group," (p. 156).

Some research has noted the potential for music-based activities as a way to explore young people's strengths. Tyson and Baffour (2004) explored "self-defined arts-based strengths identified by adolescents at an acute-care psychiatric hospital" (p. 217). The researchers found that of the 108 youth in the sample, 30 youth (30%) identified listening to music and 10 youth (9%) identified singing or playing an instrument as their primary method of coping with their struggles. They assert "Many youth have a tendency to use arts-based methods of coping with the struggles in their daily lives. Arts-based methods described by youth in this study were self-

indentified and thus were interpreted as youth strengths" (p. 223). In another recent study examining the use of a music program that focused on rapping and music composition in a juvenile detention center, Baker and Homan (2007) found that young people's self-esteem was reinforced by "engaging in musical composition and the playing of instruments" (p. 469), and that the program provided the youth with "a sense of agency and achievement" (p. 471).

A recent report commissioned by the Weill Music Institute, Carnegie Hall, explores the potential for music in the juvenile justice system to engage young people's strengths (Wolf & Wolf, 2012). The authors note the potential of music-based activities in the changing and expanding landscape of the juvenile justice system, particularly in light of calls for more humane solutions framed from a positive youth development model. In his theoretical writing on incorporating the arts in social work practice, Delgado (2000) argues that music-based activities offer an opportunity to approach social work with young people from a strengths perspective. He contends that "the use of music as an activity holds much promise for engaging and teaching urban youths a variety of skills from production, composition, and actual performance" (Delgado, 2000, pp. 119-120), highlighting the importance of rap and hip hop music in the lives of urban youth of color as a vehicle to voice their resistance to oppression.

Additional research and theoretical literature has explored the use of hip-hop and rap music with young people. Olson-McBride and Page (2012) evaluated the use of hip-hop and rap music in poetry groups with young people as a means of promoting a therapeutic dialogue. Group facilitators selected songs for group sessions. Young people were then invited to listen to the songs and work together as a group to write a reflective poem followed by time for group sharing about the process and feedback. Content analysis of transcribed videotapes of the group sessions revealed that participants demonstrated increased levels of self-disclosure and

vulnerability during group sharing. In another study, DeCarlo and Hockman (2004) explored the use of culturally relevant hip-hop and rap music to promote prosocial skills in group work with African American male adolescents. Findings suggest that young people favored music-based activities over standard psychoeducational group therapy and that the groups that utilized hip-hop and rap music showed increased demonstrations of prosocial skills, including anger management and impulse control. In their theoretical work, Travis Jr. and Deepak (2011) and Travis Jr. (2013) position hip-hop culture, including hip-hop and rap music, as means to engage young people in reflexive, culturally relevant discourse on their own lifespan development as well as opportunities to engage in positive youth development.

A limited number of researchers have explored the use of recreational and art-based activities with homeless women as a means to explore their strengths (e.g., what is working in their lives). In a qualitative study exploring the use of a board game in a homeless women's shelter, Racine and Sevigny (2001) found that the recreational activity provided the women with an opportunity to develop survival narratives that highlighted their strengths and an opportunity to share their strengths with other homeless women. In another study, Washington and Moxley (2008) describe 8 formerly and currently homeless women's trajectories of developing narratives of their experiences of homelessness and the construction of those narratives into large collages that were put on exhibition in the lobby of an urban office building. The women served as docents at the exhibit, leading visitors through their experiences and stories. The authors focus primarily on the project development, but it is clear that the collage process and the docent role were opportunities for the women to explore their strengths, which included how they survived homelessness, how some of the women exited homelessness, and the opportunity to construct their own narrative. In another study, Sakamoto et al. (2008) used arts-based methods, including

photovoice, painting, and sound, in 8 different community-based research projects with people experiencing homelessness in Toronto. The team found that these methods were particularly useful in helping participants articulate their stories and experiences of homelessness and did so from a strengths perspective.

Very few researchers have explored the use of art-based activities with young people experiencing homelessness. Finley and Finely (1999) and Finley (2000) have used art-based methods in their research with young people experiencing homelessness. They worked with 15 homeless youth to develop research stories, a qualitative method that incorporates observational and interview data with aspects of fictive story telling. In their stories, they weave homeless youths' journal entries, poetry, and stories with their own observational and interview data, creating a rich narrative that highlights the young people experiencing homelessness strengths (i.e., young people experiencing homelessness survival and their creation of street families) and the consequences of their life on the streets (i.e., early drug and alcohol use and criminal activities). While the authors do not explicitly engage the youth in art-based activities they do note the youths' love of making art, including writing poetry and short stories, keeping diaries and journals, and the visual arts. My review of art and music-based activities in social work and related fields produced no literature or research exploring the use of music-based activities with young people experiencing homelessness.

E. Literature Review Summary and Conclusions

In summary, there is no singular definition of youth homelessness. The policy and advocacy community, the federal government, and researchers use varying terms to describe and define young people experiencing homelessness and/or unstable living situations. Discrepancies, and inconsistencies in these definitions complicate our understanding of youth homelessness and

make it difficult to measure its prevalence. Attempts to gauge the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness are compromised by inconsistent methodologies that lead to inaccurate estimations of the prevalence of young people experiencing homelessness. Given these definitional and methodological complications, many researchers still persist in conducting youth homelessness research. The majority of this research focuses on the risks and consequences of youth homelessness. The risks and consequences perspective in youth homelessness literature focuses on identifying youth populations that are at increased risk for experiencing homelessness and the risks and consequences young people experience and are exposed to while they are homeless. Despite this focus there is a small but growing body of empirical qualitative literature identifying and describing young people experiencing homelessness strengths and accomplishments.

Society's perceptions of youth homelessness evolved throughout the 20th century. In the early 20th century homeless youth were defined as runaways looking to strike out on their own. In the 1960s runaway youth were often perceived as delinquents due to their affiliation with the counterculture and their subsequent refusal to subscribe to cultural norms. Law enforcement agents viewed runaway youth as an issue of delinquency and the grass-roots shelter movement approached services for runaways from a youth-rights perspective. Legislation for runaway youth was passed into public law as the Runaway Youth Act in September of 1974, Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act. In light of the growing number of young people experiencing homelessness, the act was renamed in 1977 to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. Since that time the Act has been reauthorized several times and is currently named the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act. The act funds services for homeless youth, which include basic center, street outreach, and transitional living programs. There is a limited amount of

empirical knowledge regarding the effectiveness of homeless youth services, including transitional living programs for young people experiencing homelessness. In addition it is unclear whether or not transitional living programs are providing recreational, art, and music-based activities in their programming. Further, if they are including recreational, art, and music-based activities in their programming the effectiveness of these activities remains unclear.

Recreational, art, and music-based activities have been used in social work and related fields throughout the history of the profession. Recreation workers and social workers of the early 20th century shared a common interest in using recreational, art, and music-based activities to engage youth in healthy forms of play. Group workers also supported the use recreational, art, and music-based activities with youth in community oriented forms of social work. In addition, social workers involved in settlement house movement throughout the 20th century, including Jane Addams, Ellen Gates Starr, and the Hull House staff, were heavily invested in promoting art and music-based activities for youth. Recent theoretical literature and empirical research shows that recreational, art, and music-based activities continue to be used in social work and related fields. Research has shown the effectiveness of music-based activities in engaging youths' strengths and the effectiveness of art-based activities in exploring homeless women's and homeless youths' strengths. A review of recreational, art, and music-based activities and their use in social work and related fields produced no theoretical or empirical work on the use of music-based activities with young people experiencing homelessness.

Based on this literature review, several things are clear. First, youth homelessness literature is primarily focused on the risks and consequences of youth homelessness and lacks a strengths-based focus. While helpful in gaining an understanding of the risks and consequences of youth homelessness, the majority of homeless youth literature fails to acknowledge that young

people experiencing homelessness are more than an accumulation of risks and consequences, that they have strengths, and that they are capable of amazing accomplishments. Second, the risks and consequences perspective in homeless youth research is supported by the history of the development of homeless youth services and the framing of youth homelessness as a form of delinquency. The structuring of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act within the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act and the continued structuring of the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act within the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act suggests that young people experiencing homelessness are still conceptualized at the federal level as young people that are engaging in behavior problems and are in need of reformation. This conceptualization may serve to influence homeless youth research and its primary focus on the risks and consequences of youth homelessness.

Third, there is little empirical knowledge regarding the effectiveness of homeless youth services and interventions, including transitional living programs and the use of recreational, art, and music-based activities. Finally, social work and related fields are effectively using recreational, art, and music-based activities to engage young people's strengths, yet we know very little about how art and music-based activities are used with young people experiencing homelessness and whether or not these activities would engage young people experiencing homelessness strengths. This study addresses these gaps in the literature by: (1) challenging the focus on risks, consequences, and delinquency in the youth homelessness literature; (2) adding to the growing empirical literature on young people experiencing homelessness strengths and accomplishments; (3) contributing to the growing empirical literature on homeless youth services and transitional living programs for young people experiencing homelessness; and (4)

establishing a body of literature that explores the use of music-based activities with young people experiencing homelessness as a way to engage their strengths.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design and Method of Investigation

This qualitative study employs a naturalistic design to develop an ethnographic case study of the TLP music studio. Fortune and Reid (1999) note that naturalistic designs are useful in studying phenomena as they exist in their natural environment and in exploring and describing the phenomena as opposed to attempting to explain the phenomena or hypothesize as to their causation. In this study I explore and describe the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio, young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences. A naturalistic, exploratory, descriptive qualitative research design offers the best fit to explore these constructs. In addition, I work with a team of young people to develop a co-constructed audio documentary that explores their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

1. Case study

Miles and Huberman (1994) define a case as "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context" (p. 25). Once defined the case becomes the unit of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Creswell (1998) and Yin (2009) offer insight into case study research. Creswell (1998) states, "a case study is an exploration of a bounded system or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context" (p. 61). Yin (2009) supports Creswell's (1998) conceptualization of the case study method, expanding it: "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2009, p. 18).

The case under examination in this study is the TLP music studio and the young people and staff who engage with it. They represent what Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to as the heart or focus of the study. Within the case, I am particularly interested in the following constructs: (1) the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio, (2) young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and (3) the meaning young people and staff attach to their experiences. These constructs exist in a bounded context. The processes, experiences, and meanings I seek to gain an understanding of are bound within the agency and the music studio, making the case study an effective methodological choice for the proposed study (see Figure 2).

2. Ethnography

Ethnography is defined as a "description and interpretation of a cultural or social group or system" (Creswell, 1998, p. 58). Ethnography is "conducted through immersing one's self into a culture" (Fortune & Reid, 1999, p. 343), through prolonged participant observation with the group and interviews with group members (Creswell, 1998). Ethnography lends itself to potentially deep and meaningful constructed understandings of a particular culture (Creswell, 1998) and is most useful in gaining an understanding of how individuals and groups make meaning out of their lived (i.e., non-theoretical) experience. In addition, the nature of ethnography – immersion and prolonged participant observation – is best suited to longitudinal, naturalistic, exploratory, descriptive research designs.

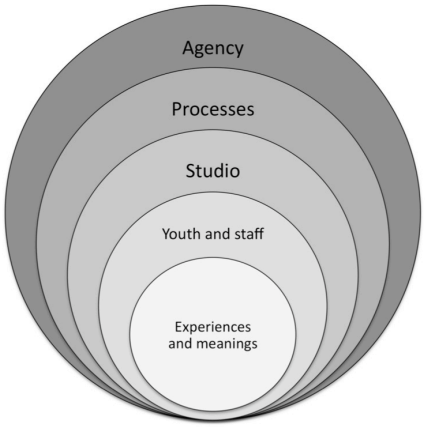

Figure 2. Bounded Context of Case Under Examination

For the purposes of this study, I am interested in gaining an understanding of the culture of TLP and the aspects of that culture that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the music studio. I am also interested in exploring the lived experiences of TLP young people and staff in the music studio and gaining an understanding of the meaning they make out of and attach to their experiences. Ethnography is well suited to meet these study aims through immersion and participant observation in the music studio and through interviews with young people and staff.

3. Ethnographic case study

Using the concept of the case as defined by Miles and Huberman (1994), the case study methodology outlined by Creswell (1998) and Yin (2009), and ethnographic methods including immersion, participant observation, and interviewing, I conducted an ethnographic case study of the TLP music studio to: (1) examine the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness, (2) explore young people and staff's experiences while engaging in the music studio, and (3) examine the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio. An ethnographic case study of the TLP music studio offers an opportunity to explore these constructs.

The case under examination in this study is the TLP music studio and the young people and staff who engage in the music studio. I employ ethnographic methods including immersion in the studio, participant observation in the music studio, and interviews with the young people and staff who engage in the music studio to explore the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the music studio, young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences. Data collected from

fieldnotes through participant observation and interviews with staff and young people were reviewed with young people and staff in an effort to ensure trustworthiness and proper representation. Data for this ethnographic case study were collected over a 12-month period. I entered the field July 20, 2011 and exited the field July 19, 2012, following the acquisition of the necessary fieldnotes and interviews for rich data analysis and the development of a co-constructed audio documentary.

4. Audio documentary

In discussing documentary studies, Coles (1997) states, "Documentary evidence substantiates what is otherwise an assertion or a hypothesis or a claim" (p. 5). He goes on to state that documentaries "attempt to portray a particular kind of life realistically" and offer "authentication of what is otherwise speculation" (p. 5). He notes that through the tape recorder and other documentary mediums (e.g., film and archival data), "a growing accuracy with respect to a situation, a place, a person, or a group of people begins to be assembled" (p. 5). Makagon and Neumann (2009) define audio documentary as "a representational form that materializes a dialogic approach to the construction of an account" (p. x), and go on to state, "It is a method that can underscore the constructed and reflexive dimensions of ethnographic research" (p. x). They contend that audio documentary and other forms of "audio-based qualitative work" (p. 26), present researchers with a unique opportunity to highlight the sonic world of the research experience for the listener. In doing so the researcher adds "sensorial depth to qualitative studies that has been missing from written accounts" (Makagon & Neumann, 2009, p. 26). Audio documentaries offer an opportunity to combine traditional ethnographic fieldwork data collected though participant observation and interviewing with sonic qualities of the research environment to create a succinct and compelling re-telling of the written ethnographic account.

Audio documentary and other forms of sonic composition have been presented and used in online peer reviewed journals, national public radio journalism, and national public radio non-news programming. *Liminalities*, an online open source peer reviewed journal exploring performance studies, has published various forms of aural performance including radio plays (Eshelman, 2010; Faust Radio, 2008), talk opera (Cotner & Fitch, 2009), and sound experiments (Deragon, 2010; Gingrich-Philbrook & Juno, 2007). The journal published a special issue on the use of sound in performance studies in 2007. In terms of journalism, National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* makes extensive use of audio documentary and audio essays in their news stories and in providing editorial commentary. In terms public radio non-news programming, Chicago Public Radio's *This American Life* uses audio documentary and audio essays in their weekly program to explore themes developed around the lived experience of the producers and authors who submit their work (Abel & Glass, 1999).

For the purposes of this study I was interested in developing a co-constructed audio documentary with a team of TLP young people. I provided young people with their own digital audio recording devices and asked them to record their experiences in the TLP music studio. In other words, young people conducted their own fieldwork in the music studio. These recordings were combined with recordings of young people's original music productions and spoken word work to develop an audio documentary exploring their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

Audio documentary is an exceptional supplementary method for this study for several reasons. First, the music studio is an aural space and therefore lends itself exceedingly well to an aural presentation of young people's fieldwork and sound recordings exploring their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Second, it allows for the

incorporation of young people's original music productions into the dissertation project that would be otherwise impossible. While lyrics and descriptions of the music are noted in the written dissertation, there remain significant barriers in representing the aural qualities of music within a written format. An audio documentary provides one solution to overcoming these barriers. In other words, the reader can actually hear the music the young people created instead of just reading a description about it. Third, it offers a unique opportunity to combine traditional ethnographic data, such as recordings of fieldwork from participant observation in the music studio, with young people's original music productions. Doing so creates an aural representation of young people's experiences in the music studio and the meanings they attach to their experiences that is inclusive of the work they produce in that space, which seems highly logical given the sonic nature of their work.

A co-constructed audio documentary offers additional benefits to this study. It is a powerful method for engaging young people in the research process. A co-constructed audio documentary supports a participant as expert model, allowing the young people to shape and edit their own aural story of their experiences in the music studio and the meanings they attach to their experiences while engaging their strengths (e.g., recording and editing skills developed in the music studio) and interests (i.e., working on audio-based projects in the music studio). It also brings an activist dimension to the dissertation project by creating opportunities for young people to expand their relationship with media production. In doing so, young people may be more compelled to use audio documentary and related methods and technologies to tell other stories of their experiences and the meaning they attach to their experiences, including additional stories of strength and resilience.

B. Sampling Plan

1. Teen Living Programs

Research for the study occurred at Teen Living Programs (TLP) Belfort House, a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness. Funded by the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act, transitional living programs offer young people between the ages of 16 to 21 who are at risk of experiencing homelessness and young people who are experiencing homelessness up to eighteen months of transitional housing with supportive services. TLP's transitional living program provides transitional housing and services for young people between the ages of 18 to 21 for up to two years, extending their services beyond the suggested eighteen month period. The majority of young people enter the agency after an experience of homelessness, although some young people do enter TLP prior to experiencing homelessness (e.g., young people aging out of foster care without placement and young people experiencing problems with their family and kin). The agency provides young people with their own furnished bedroom and offers young people a variety of services including medical, behavioral, employment, educational, and recreational services.

2. Teen Living Program music studio

The TLP music studio is embedded within the agency's transitional living program and physical building, Belfort House. All young people are eligible and able to sign up to use the studio between the hours of 4 and 9 pm on weekdays and 12 and 11pm on weekends, although hours of studio operation varied throughout the study period. Staff with a background in music and audio production software train young people on how to use the studio equipment and provide young people with additional technical support as needed. Some young people train other young people on how to use the studio equipment, creating a peer-based learning

environment. Staff spend some time in the studio with young people when their schedules permit, but they do not supervise them, preferring to allow young people to function independently in the music studio.

3. Selection and sampling

All English speaking young people and staff who engaged in the TLP music studio were asked for their permission to be included in the sample, thereby employing nonprobability purposive and homogenous sampling. Fortune and Reid (1999) note that in nonprobability purposive sampling the researcher intentionally includes individuals or groups thought to exhibit the phenomenon under study and that this type of sampling is particularly useful "when the function of a study is primarily exploratory" (p. 213). Homogenous sampling is a focused form of sampling that seeks to reduce variation thereby simplifying analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1995; Patton, 2001). A nonprobability purposive and homogenous sampling and selection strategy was useful for this study as I am primarily interested in observing TLP young people and staff who engaged with the music studio. Engagement is defined as young people and staff working on music production and supporting the music production process or just hanging out in the studio. For the purposes of this study I was not interested in observing staff and young people who did not engage in the studio (i.e., TLP young people and staff who did not spend time in the music studio).

Continuing to employ a nonprobability purposive and homogenous sampling and selection strategy, all English speaking young people and staff who granted me permission to observe them in the TLP music studio were invited to participate in in-depth semi-structured interviews further exploring their experiences in the studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Selection for the co-constructed audio documentary continued the use of a

nonprobability purposive and homogenous sampling strategy, albeit with an intensified focus. Intensity sampling purposefully selects "information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely, but not extremely" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). I employed an intensity sampling and selection strategy for the co-constructed audio documentary as I was most interested in working with young people who were most engaged with the music studio (i.e., those TLP young people and staff who spend the most time in the studio working on music production and supporting the music production process). In addition, I worked with TLP's clinical director and director of supportive services to identify candidates from TLP staff for key informant interviews. Selection was based on those staff members who would provide rich and strong contextual, background, and historical information on the agency in order to provide insight into the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio.

4. Participation incentives

Interview participants received a $15 gift certificate for Itunes as compensation for their time. The stipend was given to participants following the consent process and prior to the beginning of the interview. Co-constructed audio documentary participants received $10 cash for each weekly meeting they attended as compensation for their time. The stipend was given to participants at the beginning of each meeting, prior to engaging in work. Participants had the opportunity to attend up to eight weekly meetings, for a potential total cash payment of $80. In addition, co-constructed audio documentary participants were invited to keep digital field recorders used for audio-based fieldwork. There was no incentive/stipend for participant observation.

C. Data Collection Plan

This study utilized immersion and participant observation in the TLP music studio and in-depth semi-structured interviews with TLP young people and staff to explore the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio, young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences. In addition, I worked with a team of young people to develop a co-constructed audio documentary, combining sound recordings from young people lead field recordings in the TLP music studio and recordings of their original music and spoken word productions. The co-constructed audio documentary aurally explores young people's experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

1. Participant observation

Upon entering the field, ethnographers immerse themselves in the site under investigation. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) describe immersion in ethnographic research as the process of engaging with others in order to witness how they experience events while "experiencing for oneself these events and the circumstances that give rise to them" (p. 2). While immersing in the site ethnographers begin the process of conducting participant observation and writing fieldnotes. Emerson et al. (1995) note that participant observation is the "First-hand participation in some initially unfamiliar world" (p. 1), and that fieldnotes are the "production of written accounts of that world" (p. 1), that draw upon the experiences of participant observation. Agar (1996) extends this conceptualization noting that participant observation suggests the need for direct involvement with the site with fieldnotes serving as "a discussion of participant observation" (p. 161). These three interconnected processes - immersion, participant observation, and fieldnotes – along with intensive interviewing compose

the essential components of ethnographic research. In addition, participant observation helps researchers develop relevant questions in the language of participants, contributes to an intuitive understanding of what's going on in the field, and allows the researcher to speak about the meaning of data with confidence (Bernard, 1995).

Immersion in the TLP music studio provided an opportunity for participant observation in the TLP music studio. Participant observation in the TLP music studio provided an opportunity for rich insight into the culture of the music studio, young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and initial understandings of the meaning young people and staff attach to their experiences. These initial understandings were further explored in in-depth semi-structured interviews.

Prior to initiating immersion, I worked with TLP's clinical director and director of supportive services to schedule study information sessions for young people and staff. These sessions outlined the purpose of the study, the scope of my presence in the music studio and the building, and what I hoped to accomplish by asking young people and staff for their permission to observe them in the music studio (see Appendix A for TLP young people and staff study introduction script). Information sessions occurred in two stages. The study was first introduced to TLP staff at an all staff meeting. I began with the staff in order to prepare them for my presence in the music studio and the building and to answer any questions and/or concerns they had about my presence and its potential impact on the program and/or the young people. Once the staff was informed about the study, I attended a TLP community meeting to introduce the study to young people and explain the nature of my presence in the music studio and the building. Information sessions served as opportunities to ask young people and staff for their permission to observe them in the music studio (see Appendix B for TLP young people and staff

permission to observe script and see Appendix C for TLP young people and staff participant observation consent form). Additional opportunities for participation observation recruitment emerged as I immersed myself in agency, milieu, and studio. In total, 10 young people (*n* = 10, 6 young men, 4 young women) and 1 male staff member granted me permission to observe them in the TLP music studio.

Young people and staff who consented to participant observation were included in the participant observation process and subsequent fieldnotes from participant observation in the music studio. Those who did not consent to participant observation were not included in fieldnotes from participant observation in the music studio, except incidentally as they at times interacted with young people and staff who did consent. For example, when Youth A (consented) and Youth B (not consented) were working together on a song and dialoging about the process, fieldnotes from the interaction focus on the experience of Youth A and do not include any information about Youth B other than Youth A was interacting with another unidentified young people in the music studio.

I also worked with TLP's clinical director and director of supportive services to specify my role in the music studio. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) argue "the ethnographer's presence in the setting inevitably has implications and consequences for what is taking place, since the fieldworker must necessarily interact with and hence have some impact on those studied" (p. 3). They summarily refer to this phenomenon as consequential presence and state that it is "often linked to reactive effects" or "the effects of the ethnographer's participation on how members may talk and behave" (p. 3). But rather than viewing these effects as contaminants in the field setting, Emerson et al. (1995) argue that they "are the very source of that learning and observation" (p. 3).

While my presence and its subsequent effects did not contaminate or bias data collected from participant observation in the music studio, I was concerned about my presence and its impact on young people's experiences. Specifically, I was concerned about my presence becoming a major component of the young people's experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. In an attempt to avoid this, whenever possible I abstained from collaborative processes with the young people that could have potentially left a lasting impact on their experiences and the meaning they attach to their experiences, such as writing, recording, mixing, or producing music, while engaged in participant observation. This did not preclude me from offering technical assistance to young people, such as assisting them with and answering questions about how to operate studio equipment as well providing solicited feedback, such as commenting and/or complimenting them on their work and/or progress if it felt natural and appropriate.

Most young people were aware of my musical background (see Theoretical Sensitivity section chapter I). As a result some young people explicitly invited me into their process and at these times it was difficult not to play a more engaged role in the studio. For example, some young people lacked technical proficiency with the studio equipment and requested I assist them with aspects composition and production. An additional example includes times when young people shared some of their favorite artists' work with me and I reciprocated in an effort to foster an egalitarian mood in the observation. In these moments I clearly shaped young people's experiences in the studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. But, Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) point out, fieldwork is not a highly detached process and to claim an unobtrusive stance whereby I engage in no interaction with young people negates the participant component of participant observation. In an effort to establish authenticity and trustworthiness

within the data, all interactions with young people were documented and included in my analysis.

In order to minimize any potential intrusiveness in the music studio (i.e., young people experiencing a sense of invasion of privacy and/or a possible disruption due to my presence), I continually informally checked in with young people regarding my presence in the studio, asking if they were comfortable with me being there. If and when they expressed anxiety and/or concern about my presence, I exited the studio and waited in the milieu to be invited back in. I was asked to leave the studio twice during the studio period, both of which were times when young women were working on recording vocals, which is often an anxiety provoking and vulnerable experience (see Music production: Working in collaboration section in chapter V).

Between July 22, 2011 and February 24, 2012, out of an attempted 45 observations, I engaged in 30 successful observations for a total 80 observational hours in the studio. I utilized a "jotting" method (i.e., taking small, minimally descriptive notes while in the field) (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) while conducting participant observation in the studio as to not lose any pertinent information. Jottings were written using pen and paper on a small, discrete notebook and then later translated into fieldnotes that primarily focused on descriptions of what was observed. Fieldnotes from participant observation were written as soon as possible after leaving the music studio using a participant observation log (see Appendix D for TLP young people and staff participant observation log) that documents the date, start and end time, setting, type of activity and description, participants involved, and descriptions of observations. All participant observation logs were stored in a secure electronic participant observation master log folder.

Throughout participant observation I had brief, informal interviews, akin to a dialogue, with young people and staff regarding their activities in the music studio as questions arose.

Bernard (1995) notes that informal interviewing is a useful method during participant observation, "when you're just settling in and getting to know the lay of the land" (p. 209). He goes to state that it is also useful "throughout fieldwork to build greater rapport and to uncover new topics of interest that might have been overlooked" (p. 209). These brief informal interviews, while not audio recorded like the in-depth semi-structured study interviews, were transcribed into fieldnotes from jottings and provided important insight in the development of in-depth semi-structured study interview guides.

2. Interviews

Weiss (1994) describes an interview as an opportunity for a research partnership between the respondent and the interviewer, listing several key components of a successful partnership including working together to produce useful information as related to the research project, clear definitions of the areas for exploration, respect for the respondent's integrity, and the interviewer's intention to do no harm (Weiss, 1994). Charmaz's (2006) idea of intensive interviewing extends Weiss' (1994) conceptualization of the interview. Intensive interviewing "permits an in-depth exploration of a particular topic with a person who has had the relevant experience" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 25). Its "in-depth nature" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 25) allows respondents the opportunity to express their own interpretation of their experience of a particular phenomenon.

In-depth semi-structured interviews with young people and staff who engaged with the TLP music studio provided an opportunity to explore their experiences in the studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. In terms of recruitment for interviews, I approached young people and staff during participant observation sessions, explained the purpose and the nature of the interview, determined their interest, and scheduled a time to conduct the interview

onsite (see Appendix E for TLP young people and staff interview recruitment script and Appendix F for TLP young people and staff interview consent form). TLP provided me with a private office on the third of Belfort House to conduct the interviews. Given the lower than anticipated number of staff members engaged in the TLP music studio, one additional staff member was invited to participate in an in-depth semi-structured interview based on anecdotally observing her and her interactions with young people in the milieu and the studio.

In total, 7 young people (*n* = 7, 5 young men, 2 young women) and 2 staff members (*n* = 2, 1 man, 1 woman) consented to participate in in-depth semi-structured interviews exploring their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. These interviews were conducted in December of 2011. I note that data collection for this study was a recursive process. Therefore, participant observation and informal interviewing in the music studio continued during and after in-depth semi-structured interviews. In doing so I was able to continue exploring young people and staff's experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Open-ended questions for interviews were built off of fieldnotes from participant observation sessions and informal interviews in the TLP music studio. They further explored respondents' experiences in the studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences (see Appendix G for young people interview guide draft and Appendix H for staff interview guide draft).[4]

In addition to conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with young people and staff engaged in the music studio, I worked with the agency's clinical director and director of supportive services to identify candidates from TLP staff for key informant interviews (see

[4] Participant observation and informal interviewing offered an opportunity to identify additional and refined interview questions grounded in the language of participants. Therefore interview guides were drafted for initial IRB submission and later amended and resubmitted after several participant observation sessions with young people and staff.

Appendix I for TLP staff key informant interview recruitment script and Appendix J for TLP staff key informant interview consent form). These interviews provided important contextual, background, and historical information on the agency and provided an opportunity to explore the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio (see Appendix K for TLP staff key informant interview guide draft).[5] In total, 6 staff members (*n* = 6, 2 men, 4 women) consented to participate in in-depth semi-structured interviews exploring the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio. These interviews were conducted in December of 2011.

Participants were asked for their permission to audio record the interview during the interview consent process. All participants consented to allow me to audio record the interviews. Immediately following the interview, I asked participants for their permission to potentially use pieces of their recorded interview in audio documentary work in a subsequent study.[6] All participants consented to allow me to potentially use pieces of their recorded interview in audio documentary work in a subsequent study. This work will use portions of participants' recorded interviews to aurally explore agency background and historical information and provide an opportunity to explore the processes that facilitate the construction of the TLP music studio. In addition it will aurally explore young people and staff experiences in the music studio and the

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[5] Participant observation and informal interviewing offered an opportunity to identify additional and refined interview questions grounded in the language of participants. Therefore interview guides were drafted for initial IRB submission and later amended and resubmitted after several participant observation sessions with young people and staff.

[6] While the co-constructed audio documentary offered the young people and me the opportunity to collaboratively explore the music studio, their experiences in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences, I would also like the opportunity to develop a documentary that aurally explores and presents sections of interviews. In addition, although I trained young people in field recording, I am concerned that our product does not meet professional standards and I would like to produce a professional quality audio documentary. These productions are not a part of this thesis. Rather, I will use interview recordings to develop this audio documentary work at a later date.

meaning they attach to their experiences. Any recorded data used will not reveal participants' identity. Electronic audio files of the interviews were uploaded and stored in a secure electronic interview master folder.

3. Co-constructed audio documentary

Makagan and Neumann (2009) note that sound recordings, including recordings from participant observation and interviews, have the potential to "cultivate a different, sometimes deeper, sense of an environment" and note that through these recordings "listeners hear not only people speaking (and acting) for themselves but also the culture their voices (and actions) carry" (p. 25). Audio documentary provides a framework for organizing recordings from participant observation and interviews into an aurally-based narrative that allows the listener "to enter the proverbial theatre of the mind" (Makagan & Neumann, 2009, p. 26), thereby creating an enhanced aural experience for contemplating and understanding the research environment. Sound recordings made by young people from their own fieldwork in the music studio were combined with recordings of their original music and spoken work productions to co-construct an audio documentary exploring their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

While conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with young people, I invited those most engaged in the studio to collaboratively develop an audio documentary exploring their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences (see Appendix L for co-constructed audio documentary recruitment script). I explained the purpose and nature of the audio documentary and assessed their interest and willingness to engage in the process (see Appendix M for co-constructed audio documentary consent form). In total, 4 young people (n = 4, 3 young men, 1 young woman) agreed and consented to participate in the development of

a co-constructed audio documentary. The documentary was conceived and produced between March 5, 2012 and May 28, 2011. Once consented, I met with the young people as a group to outline a plan of action for co-constructing an audio documentary that explores their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Together, we developed a plan of action for the audio documentary work. It outlines the purpose of the co-constructed audio documentary, methods we used to meet our purpose, and descriptions of what occurred during work sessions.

Based on discussion during our initial planning meeting, the agreed upon purpose of the audio documentary work was to develop a co-constructed audio documentary that aurally explores young people's experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. In order to do so I provided each young person with a digital audio recording device that they used to create field recordings. Field recording scenarios included their work in music studio and other environments or situations that young people felt were relative to their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Young people also discussed including their original music productions as field recordings and we agreed that this was an excellent resource for the audio documentary work, providing additional context to their narrative.

Young people decided that they would not interview each other or other young people for audio documentary work. I supported this decision, noting that anyone who was not part of the co-constructed audio documentary was not able to be part of any field recordings based on University of Illinois Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) Human Subjects Protections guidelines. The young people were clear on this point and agreed, choosing to focus their field recordings on their own experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to

their experiences. Based on this collaborative decision, it seemed unnecessary for the young people to complete the University of Illinois Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) Human Subjects Protections Program, Initial Education training as originally proposed in the initial IRB applications and research protocol. The IRB did not require young people to take this training.

In addition, during our initial planning meeting the young people and I developed a plan of action for conceiving and producing the co-constructed audio documentary. We planned to meet weekly for a total of 8 sessions. Our work plan follows:

Session 1:

- I provided an equipment overview and training, including working with the digital audio recorder and interfacing it with studio hardware and software; we listened to and engaged with examples of audio documentary work to expose the young people to the method; I provided young people with links to additional audio documentary work for further exploration; and I encouraged young people to begin field recording and to bring recordings to session 2

Session 2:

- I assisted young people with troubleshooting any equipment problems, including digital audio recorder and interfacing issues; we listened to young people's initial field recordings made between sessions 1 and 2 and provided feedback for each other; and I offered technical feedback, specifically ways to improve field recording sound quality and encouraged young people to continue field recording between sessions 2 and 3

Sessions 3 to 5

- We continued to listen to young people's field recordings and engaged in the process of collaboratively selecting those recordings that best fit our purpose; I continued to troubleshoot any technical problems and offer technical feedback; and young people continued field recording between these sessions

Sessions 6 to 8

- We collaboratively determined which field recordings best represented the young people's experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences; having selected those field recordings that best fit our purpose, we began the process of developing the co-constructed audio documentary, which included editing the piece and producing the final product

After completion of the co-constructed audio documentary, I invited young people to keep the digital audio recording devices. In doing so, it was my hope that the young people may be more compelled to use audio documentary and related methods and technologies to tell other stories of their experiences and the meaning they attach to their experiences, including additional stories of strength and resilience. Finally, young people premiered the co-constructed audio documentary at the July 2012 Belfort community meeting to a full and responsive milieu.

4. <u>Data collection and training</u>

For the purposes of data collection for participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews, I conducted all participant observation sessions, wrote all fieldnotes and jottings, and conducted all in-depth semi-structured interviews. I have been trained in participant observation, writing fieldnotes and jottings, and qualitative interviewing through coursework and have had additional fieldwork experience with qualitative interviewing through research

assistantships (Watson, Kelly, & Vidalon, 2009). For the purposes of data collection for the co-constructed audio documentary, young people collected their own data (i.e., field recordings) and created their own music productions. I trained young people on how to use digital audio recording devices for field recordings. TLP staff and/or peers trained young people on how use the music studio equipment including Logic Pro, the audio software program young people use to work on music.

D. Data Analysis Plan

1. Fieldnotes and interviews

Fieldnotes from participant observation in the music studio exploring young people and staff's experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences and transcripts from interviews with TLP staff and young people exploring the processes that facilitate the construction of the TLP music studio, young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences were analyzed using Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw's (1995) model of coding and memoing ethnographic fieldnotes. Drawing on methods established in the grounded theory tradition of qualitative research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), Emerson et al. (1995) extend the grounded theory practices of coding and memoing to the analysis of ethnographic fieldnotes. Given the strong focus on participant observation and the accumulation of several months of fieldnotes in this study, this model offers an appropriate fit for data analysis. Emerson et al. (1995) do not explicitly apply their model to analyzing interview data, but their reliance on grounded theory methods often applied to the analysis of qualitative interviews suggests their model is appropriate for analyzing data from in-depth semi-structured interviews as well.

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) support a concurrent process of data collection and analysis. They outline an iterative, recursive two-phase model of data interpretation, where both phases fold back into one another and are repeated as data collection progresses. The initial phase of data analysis involves: (1) closely reading fieldnotes and interview transcripts and treating them as a data set, (2) asking questions of the data set, (3) open coding, and (4) writing initial memos. The second phase, a more "specific, fine-grained analysis" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 162) involves: (1) selecting themes, (2) focused coding, (3) integrative memos, and (4) developing a thematic narrative.

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) do not incorporate consideration and integration of a conceptual framework in their model of data analysis, preferring to remain fully open to the data and not allowing conceptual frameworks to guide the analysis. However, this study is guided by a conceptual framework: the strengths perspective, ecological resiliency theory, and PYD. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) do incorporate consideration and integration of a conceptual framework in their model of qualitative data analysis, suggesting that researchers explicitly state their research concerns and theoretical framework at the outset of data analysis. In doing so researchers are able to focus on what they want to know and why they want to know it and they are forced to acknowledge biases and their lack of objectivity in the data analysis process (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Given that a conceptual framework guides this study, I have combined this element of Auerbach and Silverstein's (2003) model of data interpretation with Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw's (1995). At the outset of each data analysis activity I reviewed my research concerns (i.e., the processes that facilitate the construction of the TLP music studio, young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences) and conceptual framework (i.e., the strengths perspective, ecological resiliency

theory, and PYD) in order to ground data analysis in the research concerns and conceptual framework that guide this study, while remaining open to unexpected findings.

Data interpretation began following the first participant observation session in the music studio and continued through in-depth semi-structured interviews with young people and staff engaged in the music studio as well as key informant interviews exploring the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio. Data analysis preparation occurred in two stages. First, I conducted a weekly review of participant observation logs to assure that they were up to date and saved in a secure electronic participant observation master log folder. Second, I hired a transcription service to transcribe young people, staff, and key informant interviews into word documents as interviews were completed. Once transcribed, I reviewed the interview transcripts while listening to the digital recordings to assure transcription accuracy. As fieldnotes and interview transcripts were prepared for analysis, I loaded them into NVivo 8, a qualitative data analysis software program used for data organization and interpretation.[7] As data was entered, I began the first phase of analysis.

As fieldnotes and interview transcripts accumulated, I closely read that data and began to conceptualize it as an entire data set. This process allowed me to consider the longitudinal scope of what I had observed and recorded and how the data are interrelated (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). After this initial read through, I began the open coding process. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) define a code as "a specific event, incident, or feature" (p. 149), within the data that the researcher draws out in an effort to "relate it to other events, incidents, or features, implicitly distinguishing this one from others" (p. 149). Open coding began with a line-by line read through of the data. Emerson et al. (1995) note the importance of remaining open to all

[7] I received training on NVivo from QSR International, the developers of NVivo.

possibilities within the data during the open coding process where the researcher "attempts to capture as many ideas and themes as time allows but always stays close to what has been written down in the fieldnotes" (p. 151), and for the purposes of this study in the interview transcripts.

As I proceeded with the line-by-line read through, I asked questions of the data, revisiting older fieldnotes and interview transcripts as needed. Questions prioritized processes over causes, focused on the practical concerns and conditions of young people and staff, and sought to clarify their points of view (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Sample questions included: What are TLP young people and staff doing in the music studio? How are they doing this? How do they talk about and understand what they are doing? And, what do I see happening in the music studio? Information drawn out of the data that responded to these questions was used to establish initial codes that I created in NVivo using node structuring tools. Following Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw's (1995) recommendation to approach the data with an open mind during the open coding process, I dismissed any preconceived data categories and loosened the initial focus of the study in an effort to "generate as many codes as possible" (p. 152), in this initial, exploratory, analytic process. In addition I dismissed any fears of coding the data the right way, instead subscribing to an analytic process where the main task was remaining open to the data and letting it guide the analytic process. Throughout the open coding process I wrote initial memos, using NVivo memoing tools to document my thoughts about what I saw going on in the data (e.g., examining a particular incident and its theoretical implications, examining patterns, examining contrasts to patterns, etc.). I also kept initial memos about why particular sections of text seemed important, noting thoughts provoked by particular sections.

As an example of the first phase of analysis, in reading the data set I began to pick up on young people's use of YouTube in the music studio and became curious as to what was going on

for them in those moments. I questioned why they were using YouTube in the studio and also wanted to a get a sense how they were using it. As I began openly coding the data, close to 30 different utilizations emerged as initial codes around young people's use of YouTube in the music studio, including young people using YouTube to find beats, young people pulling up gospel and other videos to cover, young people playing artists' videos they are into, and young people playing tutorial videos to assist with composition and/or production. As I sifted through the data, I began to write memos about similarities and differences in the initial codes, paying particular attention to the range of young people's utilization of YouTube.

The second phase of data analysis began with selecting and exploring themes developed from open coding and initial memoing. In selecting themes, I paid particular attention to what seemed significant to young people and staff (i.e., what they report as key, what looks to be especially important for them, and what appears to be significant based on the time and energy they allocated toward it) (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Once themes were identified, I collected all codes and data relevant to a particular theme and used NVivo node structuring tools to help organize the codes and data into themes. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) suggest conceptualizing data analysis as still in its preliminary stage at this point. Following this suggestion, codes and data were not discretely assigned to themes. Rather, where appropriate, codes and data were assigned to multiple themes in an effort to support the exploratory nature of the data interpretation process.

Once themes were developed, I engaged in focused coding of the themes, codes, and data embedded within them. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) note that focused coding allows for "connecting data that initially may not have appeared to go together" and " delineating subthemes and subtopics that distinguish differences and variations within the broader topic" (p.

160). I conducted a line-by-line review of the data coded to each theme and indentified "examples that are comparable on one dimension or that differ on some dimension and hence constitute contrasting cases or variations" (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995, p. 161). The creation of these subthemes within the themes that draw together comparable data and highlight discrepancies lead to deeper and more complex understandings of the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio, young people and staff's experiences in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

While engaged in the focused coding process I wrote integrative memos using NVivo memoing tools. Integrative memoing allowed me to tie codes and embedded data together and explore the relationships between them, engage in an examination of themes and the relationships between the discrete observations and interviews embedded within them, and begin to develop theoretical connections between fieldnotes, interviews, and fieldnotes and interviews (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995). Integrative memos included ideas and reactions to particular sections of data, reactions to how certain pieces of data seemed to fit together and how some did not, and documented the process of narrowing in on the themes that appeared to be most relevant to the study.

As an example of the second phase of analysis, in reviewing the close to 30 different young people's utilizations of YouTube in the music studio several utilizations emerged as important themes due to their frequency and prevalence in the fieldnotes as well as their relevance to young people as stated in informal interviews during participant observations and later in in-depth semi-structured interviews. Examples of these themes include young people using YouTube to engage in recreation in the studio and young people using Youtube as an educational tool. Focused coding of these themes revealed additional depth to the themes,

specifically young people used YouTube to watch videos of their original work and other artists' work to engage in a reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and recreation. In addition, young people use YouTube in the music studio to learn specific recording techniques as well as to watch the inspiring work of their mentors (see YouTube section in chapter V for additional findings on young people's utilization of YouTube). Integrative memoing played an important role in the development of these focused codes, particularly in saturating the code (i.e., developing the full range of the code).

Once identified, I shared these themes with some young people and staff who participated in in-depth participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews during a member check group. Two young people and one staff member met with me to review the themes. Few discrepancies arose between their perceptions of the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio, their experiences in the music studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences, and the identified themes. When discrepancies arose, we entered a dialogical process and reached a consensual understanding of the theme. Instances of these dialogical processes can be found in the Synthesis of Findings chapter. These themes were then used to develop the thematic narrative presented in the Findings, Synthesis of Findings, and Discussion chapters of this thesis.

2. <u>Sound recordings</u>

TLP young people and I analyzed their field recordings and original music and spoken word productions during our weekly meetings. We listened to, discussed, and eventually determined which field recordings, either whole recordings or pieces of recordings, best embodied and represented their experiences in the music studio and the meanings they attach to their experiences. As field recordings were identified, we loaded them into Soundtrack Pro, a

soundtrack composition and mixing software program, and created a session file where we saved them. Once loaded and saved, we began to explore ways to co-construct the audio documentary, remaining open to the collaborative process and allowing the data that best represented their experiences in the studio and the meaning they attached to their experiences guide the process. When dissension arose, we entered a dialogical process exploring the conflict in an effort to reach consensus.

3. Procedures for ensuring trustworthiness and authenticity

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that in order to establish the trustworthiness and authenticity of qualitative data we must assess the data in terms of its credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility refers to the truth of the findings as seen through the eyes of those being observed and interviewed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In an effort to ensure credibility I conducted member checks with some TLP young people and staff who participated in in-depth participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Using a focus group format, member checks explored whether initial research findings were reflective of their perceptions of the processes that facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio, their experiences in the studio, and the meanings they attach to their experiences. When discrepancies arose, we entered a dialogical process and reached a consensual understanding of the theme. Instances of these dialogical processes can be found in the Synthesis of Findings chapter. In addition, I attempted to clarify and restate what I saw and heard during participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews in order to determine accuracy with young people and staff.

In addition to member checks, I hired a research assistant to act as a second coder for some fieldnotes, journal entries, and interview transcripts as an additional means to

ensure credibility. Padgett (2008) notes that "Having multiple coders could be considered a form of *analytic triangulation* (emphasis in original text)" and that "independent coding and comparison are valuable safeguards against bias in data analysis" (p. 188). During the data analysis I selected some fieldnotes and interview transcripts to be independently coded by a hired research assistant, a doctoral candidate versed in qualitative methods (see Appendix O for second coder guide). The research assistant was trained in human subjects protections. She openly coded selected fieldnotes and interview transcripts and wrote some initial memos. We then met and compared our initial codes and memos with the goal of "corroboration or confirmation" (Padgett, 2008). When discrepancies arose, we entered a dialogical process in an effort to reach a consensual understanding.

Transferability refers to the extent to which findings can be transferred to other settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In an effort to ensure transferability I have identified key aspects of the context in which the study took place (e.g., detailed description of the study context, my role in the context, the role of young people and staff in the context, and how context affected the ability to answer the research questions) and discussed them in the following chapters as they relate to the study findings. Dependability refers to whether or not the research would produce similar or consistent findings if carried out as described by another researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In an effort to ensure dependability I have created an audit trail that includes notes on the completeness and representativeness of participant observations and interviews. Confirmability refers to the need to produce evidence that supports the research findings and such evidence should come directly from the subjects and the research context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and an audit trail of the data analysis. In an effort to ensure confirmability I kept a reflective journal, specifically documenting how my personal characteristics, feelings, and biases may have

influenced the research process, including but not limited to participant observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews, data interpretation, and how I have managed them.

E. Protection of Human Subjects

This study underwent a thorough review by The Institutional Review Board at the University of Illinois at Chicago (see Appendix P for approval from Institutional Review Board). Young people and staff involvement in the research project was completely voluntary. Informed consent procedures were used for participant observation, interviews with young people and staff, and the co-constructed audio documentary (see Appendices for informed consent documents). Informed consent procedures included an explanation to young people and staff of what they were being asked to do, why the research was being done, the purpose of the research, procedures involved, potential risks, benefits to participating, the option to choose not to participate, privacy and confidentiality of identity and data, costs to participants, procedures to withdraw from the study, as well as their rights as participants. Involvement or non-involvement in the study had no impact on ongoing services provided by TLP, employment with TLP, or the participants' relationship with the University of Illinois at Chicago.

While young people experiencing homelessness are often perceived as a high-risk population, this strengths-based study involved minimal risks. Participant observation in the music studio, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and the co-constructed audio documentary caused no reported harm or discomfort. TLP young people and staff were able to skip any participant observation or audio documentary sessions they chose. They were also able to skip any interview questions or topics they chose. Loss of confidentiality was a potential risk to young people and staff. Procedures to protect young people and staff's confidentiality were strictly followed. All hard copies of the data were kept in a locked file cabinet. Master lists of

participants' names and pseudonyms were developed in order to ensure confidentiality, kept in the locked file cabinet, and destroyed following data analysis. Interview transcripts and NVivo files were stripped of any identifying information and kept in password-protected files, accessible only to me.

IV. FINDINGS: PROCESSES INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING THE MUSIC STUDIO

In the remaining four chapters of the thesis I present study findings (chapters IV and V), a synthesis of the findings (chapter VI), and a discussion of the study findings (chapter VII). Throughout the findings chapters, I present raw data from fieldnotes, memos, journal entries, interview transcripts, and audio documentary sessions. Data from fieldnotes, memos, and journal entries appear in *italicized* text while data from interviews and audio documentary session appear in non-italicized text. These data cumulatively represent the major findings of the study and respond to the research questions: (1) What processes are involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness – why is this happening and what are the factors contributing to its existence? (2) What are young people and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio – are there benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio? (3) What are the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio? The data is further analyzed and synthesized in chapter VI. Major findings are brought into a synthesized focus and analyzed with particular attention to developing conceptual models that respond to the research questions. In addition, I explore tensions within the data that raise addition questions and highlight areas for future research. Finally, chapter VII explores how the study responds to and challenges youth homelessness research as well as research exploring the utilization of recreational, art, and music-based services in social work and related fields. The chapter closes with an examination of the implications and limitations of this work.

This first chapter of findings explores the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness. Throughout this chapter I seek to gain an understanding of why the studio was

developed and identify factors that contribute to its ongoing existence. In light of continually restrictive and tightening public and private funding for non-profit services, this latter point seems particularly important to explore and understand. In other words, given the perceived vulnerability of young people experiencing homelessness and the need for basic services (e.g., food, shelter, etc.), services often rightfully deemed and defined as more important by funders and service-providers, why is TLP providing funding and structure for a music studio for its young people?

Using data gathered from key informant interviews with staff and participant observation sessions with staff and young people, I develop a contextual and historical understanding of how and why the studio developed. Through this process several important factors emerge that key informants suggest played an important role in the development of the studio. These factors include an organizational commitment to Positive Youth Development (PYD) that explicitly promotes the inclusion of in-house holistic supportive services in TLP's service structure. These services include educational, recreational, and vocational programming. The studio evolved out of this organizational commitment to PYD and in-house holistic supportive services, specifically recreational programming. Key to this evolution as well though were the inclusion of young people's voices in recreational program development and the intrinsic role of a staff member who served as a kind of studio advocate, who offered additional strength and support to young people's voices. While key to the initial development of the studio, these factors – an organizational commitment to PYD, in-house holistic supportive services, specifically recreational services, the inclusion of young people's voice in program development, and the role of the studio advocate – continue to play a vital role in its ongoing existence.

In order to ground findings in participants' voices, the chapter begins with an introduction of the young people and staff and their study relevant, self-reported demographic characteristics. This is followed by contextual, historical, and environmental information on Bronzeville, the neighborhood on Chicago's south side where TLP's transitional living program, Belfort House, is located. I then provide a description of the exterior and interior of Belfort House for additional contextual information. This is followed by an examination of the agency's organizational commitment to PYD, including its initial adaptation of a PYD approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness, the development of in-house holistic supportive services, the agency's deepening commitment to a PYD approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness, and some of the challenges the agency encounters in such an approach. This is followed by an in-depth examination of the TLP music studio, including how the studio developed and the factors that contribute to its ongoing existence. Throughout this narrative, key informants position the TLP music studio as a demonstration of the agency's commitment to a PYD approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness. The chapter ends with an exploration of some the challenges the agency encounters in operating the music studio. As a reminder: *italicized* excerpts represent data from fieldnotes, memos, and journal entries. Non-italicized passages represent data from interviews.

A. <u>Participants</u>

A total of 17 TLP young people and staff participated in the study (n = 17, 10 young people and 7 staff). All eligible young people and staff approached for permission to observe them in the studio consented (n = 11, 10 young people and 1 staff). Seven of the 10 eligible young people and all 7 eligible staff members approached for in-depth semi-structured interviews consented. All eligible 4 young people approached to participate in the development

of the co-constructed audio documentary consented. No eligible young people or staff were excluded due to not speaking English. Tables 1 and 2 present participants' pseudonyms as well as their self-reported race and/or ethnicity, gender, age, housing status upon entry and time spent as resident at TLP (young people), and role and time employed at TLP (staff).

Table I

Young Peoples' Self-Reported Race and/or Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Housing Status Upon Entry to TLP, and Time Spent as Resident at TLP

Young Person	Identity
Bobbie*	African American female
Effen*	African American male
Hope*	African American female
Jay	African American male, 21 years old Formerly homeless, TLP resident for 6 months
Marcus	African American male, 19 years old Formerly homeless, TLP resident for 6 months
Outlaw	African American male, 20 years old Formerly homeless, TLP resident for 1 month (Prior residency with TLP of 2 and ½ months)
Smiley	African American female, 20 years old Formerly living with multiple family members, TLP resident for 6 months
Smurf	African American female, 20 years old Formerly homeless, TLP resident for 1 year and 6 months
Theo	African American male, 18 years old Formerly unstable housed, TLP resident for 4 months
Young Louie	African American male, 22 years old Released from jail prior to entering TLP, former TLP resident

* These young people were only observed, not interviewed. Therefore age, housing status prior to entering TLP, and tenure at TLP, are unknown. Race and gender are reported as observed.

Table II

Staffs' Self-Reported Race and/or Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Role at TLP, and Time Employed at TLP

Staff Member	Identity
Anne	Caucasian female of Irish descent, 60 years old Executive Director, been with TLP for 2 years
Herman	Caucasian male, 31 years old Director of Supportive Services, been with TLP for 7 years
Leigh	Caucasian female of German descent, 33 years old Milieu Director, been with TLP for 7 and ½ years
Pepper	African American female, 41 years old Clinical Director, been with TLP for 4 years
Ray	African American male, 52 years old CASSA Case Manager, been with TLP for 12 and ½ years
Rochelle	Caucasian female, 51 years old Director of Operations, been with TLP for 10 and ½ years
Zee	African American female, 24 years old Youth Development Specialist 1, been with TLP for 1 year

B. Bronzeville

Located along the northeastern corridor of Chicago's south side, the Douglas and Grand Boulevard communities that are now commonly known as Bronzeville began as residential neighborhoods for wealthy Caucasians looking to escape the chaos and congestion of Chicago's developing downtown during the mid to late 19th century. Promises of freedom from Jim Crow laws and better employment opportunities (e.g., work in Chicago's growing service industry) brought thousands of African Americans north to Chicago during the Great Migration, many of whom landed and established homes in these racially shifting communities, where as more African Americans moved into the Douglas and Grand Boulevard communities, more Caucasians moved to other areas of the city. Bound by 22nd street on the north, Cottage Grove on the east, 51st street on the south, and the Rock Island Railroad on the west, these combined neighborhoods in transition became the hub of a thriving African American community by the 1920s. Often referred to at the time as the Black Metropolis, or more pejoratively as the Black Belt, the by then predominantly African American communities defined for many the African American urban experience at the time, rivaled only by New York City's Harlem and its renaissance. In reaction to the pejorative naming of the combined communities as the Black Belt and other names, such as the Black Ghetto, James J. Gentry led a successful campaign to rechristen the combined communities as Bronzeville, arguing that the name more accurately described the skin tone of the areas residents (Travis, 2004).

As a cultural center, Bronzeville has been home to many great literary artists and activists throughout the 20th century, including former Poet Laureate of Illinois Gwendolyn Brooks, author Richard Wright, and journalist, editor, and suffragist Ida B. Wells. In addition, Bronzeville has been home to many great musicians, including founders and pioneers of the

Figure 3. Jazz Mural, 4500 S Cottage Grove, Chicago, IL
Artist: Little Black Pearl

Figure 4. The Great Migration, 3947 S Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL
Artist: Marcus Akinlana

Figure 5. Bronzeville, 35th-Bronzeville-IIT CTA station, Chicago, IL
Artists: Amanda Hoohey, Bathsheba Wyatt-Draper, Bryan Jones, Caroline Finley, Dionn C. Moffett, Jason Bennett, Jose Vasquez, TC, and Tony Shaw.

Figure 6. Chicago Blues District Saxophone Statue
47th and Martin Luther King Dr., Chicago, IL
Artist: Ed Dwight

Chicago blues sound Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon, and Buddy Guy, and jazz legends Louis Armstrong and his mentor Joe "King" Oliver and Creole Jazz Band. This rich musical legacy lives on in the neighborhood as evidenced by the murals and statues that decorate the boulevards (see Figures 3-6).

Some TLP staff members are aware of Bronzeville's rich musical history and see the music studio as drawing on and potentially contributing to that legacy. Herman notes, "Here, obviously, in Bronzeville, is a very historic music place. When I first started working here, I was amazed at – I was in a spot where all this really great interesting music happened." When asked why TLP has a music studio for young people he responds:

> I think it's probably inevitable. Considering where TLP is located in Bronzeville, considering the musicians who have come from this area, considering that there are literally signs on the street corners that say "The Blues and Jazz District," I mean I think it's kind of inevitable. I mean even across the street – I haven't been in there yet – but the church has a recording studio in there. I know some of the high schools around there have recording studios. I think it's part of the culture of the city and the community. I think that these things pop up in places like TLP because that's one of the values of the community. I don't think we're different than any other place, but I do think that when I first started working here and I drove through Bronzeville and I looked around, I was like, "This is amazing…I've read about all these places. This is great. All these people are from here and this is a really interesting place in my mind to come to." So it's interesting for me to come to because of the musical background, to be honest with you. You know in that aspect. It seems very natural that you would let people – in a community that's been so involved and famous and world-renowned for music – to maybe pick down a microphone and say, "Hey, what do you have to say?" and see what comes out.

Although it was and remains a cultural center, Bronzeville has faced significant developmental challenges throughout the 20th century. As African Americans from the south continued to settle in the area, populations swelled. In response, affluent and middle class African Americans moved away from the community, often times taking their businesses and employment opportunities for recent migrants with them. With shrinking employment opportunities and rising housing costs, many African American residents attempted to move out

of Bronzeville to neighboring communities in search of cheaper housing and/or employment opportunities. These attempts were often met with redlining and other racist forms of coercion and control from neighboring predominantly white communities and intra-racial and class oriented conflict from neighboring upper and middle class African American communities. These racist and classist practices resulted in high levels of concentrated poverty and its resultant effects of increased crime and violence, which only served to isolate the community more as massive public housing projects were built to provide shelter and sequester the neighborhood from the surrounding area.

Today, neighborhood gentrification and revitalization efforts are underway, but not without strong critiques. Boyd (2008) notes that these gentrification and revitalization efforts tend to idealize the Black Metropolis era of Bronzeville and call on current and would be residents to take pride in and be a part of restoring the neighborhood to its former beauty and prominence. Boyd (2008) argues that in this idealized version of Bronzeville, the historical precedents of intra-racial classism and segregation are glossed over for a more intra-racially inclusive model of existence. Boyd (2008) contends that while neighboring Caucasians practiced redlining and other forms of racist control and coercion throughout the 20th century, upper and middle class African Americans also engaged in coercive and oppressive class-based segregation efforts against lower class African Americans. Boyd (2008) highlights these disruptions and uses them to challenge the current gentrification and revitalization narrative that presents Bronzeville as a once and forever united African American community, fully supportive of each other and void of any intra-racial class-based conflict and/or strife. Teen Living Program's transitional living program Belfort House is located within this complex and evolving environment.

C. Belfort House

Teen Living Program's transitional living program Belfort House, better know simply as Belfort to young people and staff, is located in the heart of Bronzeville. While even a cursory analysis of Chicago's socio-economic, racial, and ethnic divide is beyond the scope of this study, I do want to note my awareness and consciousness of living in one environment – a predominantly upper-middle class Caucasian neighborhood on Chicago's north side – and travelling to another environment multiple times a week during the study period – a predominantly poor, African American neighborhood on Chicago's south side. This awareness was highlighted when exiting Lake Shore Drive and heading west to Belfort, observing and noting my perceptions of Bronzeville and the surrounding environment. From journal entry 09/03/2011:

> *The drive down Pershing/39th is less shocking than it was initially, many years ago as a former contractual employee for TLP, but it can still be eye opening in terms of the level of poverty in the area as indicated by vacant, litter strewn lots and an overall run down look to the area. That being said, there is also a significant amount of development along Pershing/39th, especially east, toward Lake Shore Drive. The signs of poverty start further west, leading up to King Drive and then extending through to Indiana Avenue. I've noted lately the remnants of what I believe to be a housing project at King and Pershing/39th. There are several big open lots on the northeastern corner, and as you look north there are several large apartment buildings, which look like remnants of public housing.*

In addition, this awareness was highlighted when I encountered the areas surrounding Belfort throughout the study. From journal entry 08/21/2011:

> *I was sitting in the studio and there were very few young people in the house, so there wasn't much of a reason to be in the milieu. The east wall of the studio space, which is mostly windows, looks out on the alley. On the other side of the alley there's a playground to the south, which was full of young people playing basketball. To the north, there's an open lot, perhaps belonging to an area church, and there was a block party going on. I went out on the patio to get a closer look. There were several grills going. I could smell the BBQ as the west blowing winds picked up the smoke and pushed it into TLPs courtyard. People were eating and moving to the sounds of older party jams, Sunday afternoon type stuff, not too hype but not too mellow. Observing the scene I felt*

> *very out of place – a white northsider in Bronzeville, on the border of south side African American/Black culture embodied in Sunday afternoon jams and a block party.*

As I note in the above journal entry Belfort is surrounded by a combination of abandoned lots, churches, homes, parks and schools. I choose to withhold its exact location in order to preserve some anonymity for the agency, residents, and staff. Young people often play hoops in the park behind Belfort, particularly in warmer weather. In my downtime in the studio I would observe them play. From journal entry 10/11/2011

> *Over the next couple of hours there were no takers and I alternated between working in the studio – catching up on journal entries and fieldnotes – and hanging out in the milieu. As I worked in the studio, I observed Jay and Smurf through the east facing studio windows playing basketball in the park courts across the alley. They looked like they were having fun, playing a nice, easy game of ball. I couldn't blame them for not being in the studio and being outside. It was a gorgeous day, beautiful fall weather, mid-60s and sunny. I had the studio windows open and could hear the breeze gently moving through the golden colored trees that line northern part of the alleyway.*

In some ways Belfort reflects the gentrification and revitalization of Bronzeville efforts surrounding it. In discussing the history of the agency, Rochelle describes Belfort going through its own rehabilitation process:

> In 1993, a group called Project Rush bought the building that was the original Belfort House for taxes, and they rehabbed it, and conveyed it to us for about – I think for $1.00 in May of 1994… during the process of these years going by, it was clear that the rehab job that had been done on Belfort House had been sort of a low-grade residential rehab, and our usage of the building was just too strenuous for it to hold up. So there were major, major repairs that needed to be done. Like we had to have a staircase re-anchored to the wall, and we were – you know, the back porch was dangerous, and the roof blew off. We could just sink more and more money into that, or we decided instead to build a new building next door in the vacant lot that we had available.

In discussing the history of the agency as well, Anne describes the process of deciding to build a new Belfort:

> And Belfort as you know, until 2009, was in this old gray stone, which was structurally very dangerous. So the decision to build the new Belfort was one that was not taken

> lightly. There was a lot of exploration about how that would happen. Was it better to rehab? Was it better to build from scratch? The decision, ultimately, was to build from scratch. And so that process started and was finishing in just April of 2009. No interruption of service. Moved the young people into the new building, and then demolished the old building.

The new Belfort scarcely resembles its gray stone predecessor. Its efficient and modern design adds a unique profile to the inner city spaces and structures surrounding it (see Figures 7-8). Its design includes a large amount of beautified green space. As seen in Figure 8, architects and developers used close to half the existing land for an expansive lawn and patio that make up the northern half of the plot. Bushes, flowers, and additional vegetation line the western perimeter, providing additional privacy from the adjacent sidewalk and street, while floral and vegetable gardens line the northern and western perimeters of the plot. Young people are invited and encouraged to tend to the gardens that produce an assortment of root vegetables, greens, and sweet peas (see Figures 9-12).

Based on my prior work experience with TLP, it is clear that the addition of green space has positively changed the way young people engage with their environment. From journal entry 08/12/2011:

> *At the old house, there was a stoop with no green space to speak of. Young people were discouraged from "hangin' on the stoop" as it usually led to some kind of trouble with other area youth (e.g., gang issues, turf wars, relationship issues) or law enforcement (e.g., drug use, loitering, etc.). With this new green space, including the patio, TLP has created a space for the young people to be outside. There are also several spaces to sit around the green space, which also wraps around the back (east) wall of the building.*

The green space also offers the agency new avenues and opportunities to celebrate and engage young people in the Belfort community. From fieldnote 09/15/2011:

Figure 7. Belfort House A

Figure 8. Belfort House B

Figure 9. Belfort Garden A

Figure 10. Belfort Garden B

Figure 11. Belfort Garden C

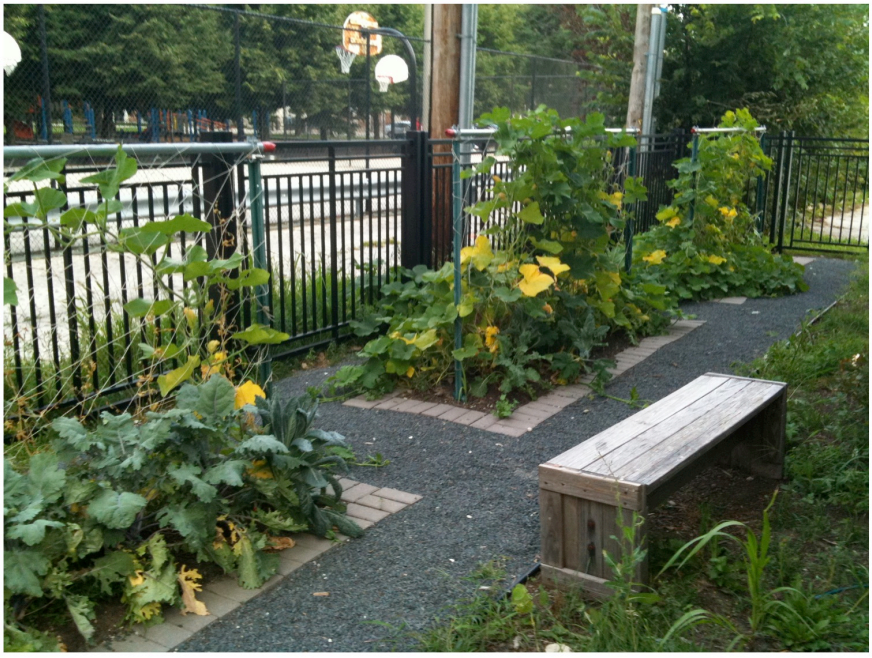

Figure 12. Belfort Garden D

> *Walking up to the house, I noted there were people everywhere: young people and staff out on the patio, in the milieu, up by the front door, etc. There were grills fired up on the patio and a series of what looked to be games, outdoor party games, laid out on the patio and front lawn. I ran into Herman who quickly understood the puzzled look on my face and explained that they were getting ready for the September community meeting, which included a BBQ. I did some quick recall and realized that it was the third Thursday of the month – whoops! I apologized for being forgetful, which Herman shrugged off, stating, "Don't worry about it man! You're welcome to stick around."*

Unexpectedly, the green space also offered me opportunities to engage with young people, explain the study, and generally promote the studio. From journal entry 09/03/2011:

> *I made my way out of the building. There were two non-consented young women sitting outside on the Belfort stone bench, talking and smoking. As I walked by I said goodnight and one of the women said, "Hey, what do you do?" "Do you mean, like, in general? Or do you mean here?" I responded. "Here!" she said. I recognized the young woman but did not know her name. I explained what I do. I'm a PhD student conducting my dissertation research in the music studio, observing young people who allow me to do so, eventually interviewing them and then working with some of them to make an audio documentary. She took in my response, looked back at the studio, and said, "Wow that's really big. I mean these people don't know how much you can help them." I smiled and thanked her and let her know that I hope my study can help people. I asked her if she might like to participate in the study and she informed that she doesn't know about the studio or how to use the equipment. She indicated that she liked to rap, but that she wasn't serious about it. The other young woman offered that she used to take piano lessons and sing for her church. She said she never knew if she had a good voice, but that she liked to sing. I suggested they both go through the studio orientation and attend studio classes. They indicated that they would think about. I asked them to let me know if they did and to consider participating in the study. I said goodnight and walked to my car feeling good about our conversation.*

The Belfort stone bench referenced above is the remaining structural artifact from the old Belfort. As the name suggests, it is a stone bench with the word Belfort chiseled into it (see Figure 13). Young people often use the bench to hang out, socialize, and smoke.

Figure 13. Belfort Stone Bench

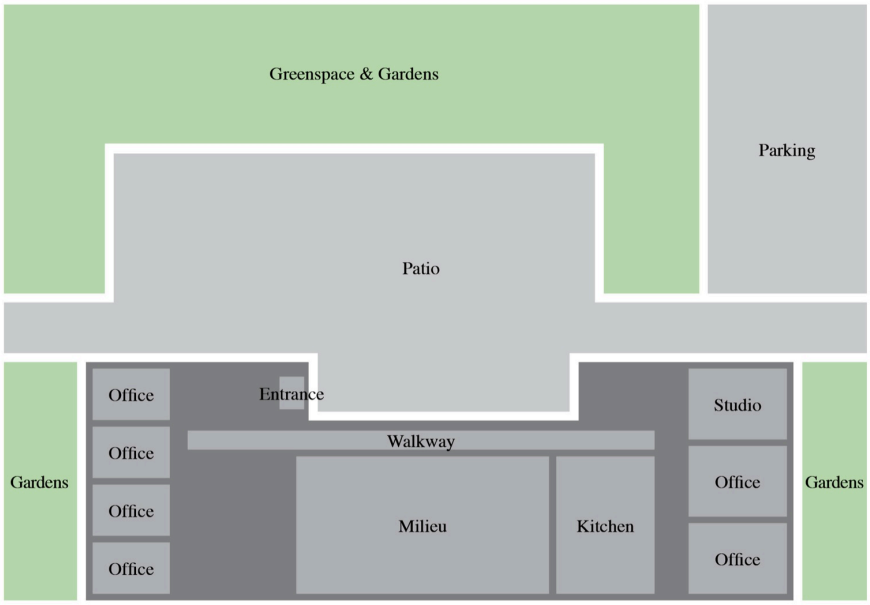

Figure 14. Belfort Interior Floor Plan

Figure 15. Belfort Milieu

Belfort is comprised of three above ground floors and a basement. The second and third floors house young people's individual, dormitory style rooms and staff offices. Young women reside on the third floor and young men reside on the second floor. The basement houses the agency's minors unit, a temporary shelter for young people under the age of 18, and additional staff offices. As Figure 14 shows, the first floor is comprised of more offices for staff, a large conference room, which also houses the studio (an in-depth description of which follows in Chapter V), a large kitchen, and the milieu area. As Figure 15 shows, the milieu is a large open area comprised of large tables for congregating and eating, the kitchen and its adjacent island, and a family room style television and entertainment space aligned with chairs and couches.

In many ways the milieu serves as the heart of Belfort, a central gathering space for young people and staff. The agency uses the space to hold its monthly all house community meetings and periodic celebrations, such as graduations (see Developing supportive services in this chapter), holiday parties, and summer barbeques. As the following fieldnote excerpt demonstrates, these celebrations create a space for a fun and familial connection for residents and staff. From fieldnote 09/15/2009:

> *The community meeting was underway, tonight being more of a celebration/party/BBQ, than a regular community meeting. The milieu was full of young people and staff eating burgers, hot dogs, barbeque, and an assortment of sides. Young people and staff were eating, some were playing the Michael Jackson Experience game on Wii, and overall everyone looked like they were having a really good time. There was a lot of positive, fun energy in Belfort. After some time, Pepper announced that she wanted to get the formal part of the meeting underway, which consisted of announcements about upcoming Belfort house events, the distribution of awards to young people from their YDS2s, and shout outs. The distribution of awards was a cool process. Each young person received an award from their YDS2 that was specific to one of their strengths, an award only they could receive. The shout outs were cool as well. Shout outs are an opportunity for young people and staff to praise each other for work done, efforts made, or for a staff member or young person for just being her or himself. It's a great part of the community meeting and an excellent way to end it – on high note with a lot of positive energy. After a long round of shout outs, Pepper announced that the formal portion of the community meeting*

> *was over. She invited everyone to stick around, have some more food, have some desert, play some games, and just generally hang*

Anne speaks to the agency's intentionality around developing a program where young people feel sense of family and home.

> I think the design of the program is such that whether you've been with us a year or a day, there's a way for you to stay connected to us and have those touch points that a lot of young people have with extended family. You might not get on with your mother or your father, but maybe there's a favorite aunt or grandma or even when you graduate from college, you're still coming back to your family home to check in and to get that touch point that is necessary. And I think that's what TLP, in the end, does for a lot of our young people. It's that extended family concept with someone they can relate to, and having the capacity to have touch points with us.

Ray connects this intentionality to the agency's commitment to a PYD approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness, which is discussed in greater detail in the following sections, and the importance of Belfort being the residents' home.

> One of the other things that came in with positive youth development was we wanted these clients to feel like this was their home. Not our place for them, but it was their home, and we were in their home. They weren't in our home. So we wanted it to be more of a family atmosphere, and that's what we started working for.

The following fieldnote describes my growing awareness of young people demonstrating that they feel "at home" at Belfort. From fieldnote 08/01/2011:

> *The milieu was cozy tonight, one of the first times I've really felt TLP as a home. I note the difference between seeing it as a home, which I have for some time, and feeling it as a home. It is clear that many of the young people see this as their home in the way they talk about it and treat it – levels of comfort around the house in dress, ways of relating to each other in close knit groups, sometimes even as a family. But, it always has an institutional feel, even in the new building. But tonight, with staff at the dining table on the north wall adorned with glass that looks out over the patio and gardens and the young people laid out on the couches watching TV, taking breaks to engage with staff and the staff responding in a non-bothered, non-hurried fashion, actually wanting to engage with the young people, it felt like a family room.*

In addition to serving as a central gathering space for young people and staff, for the purposes of this study the milieu offered me ample opportunities to engage with young people.

As the following fieldnote excerpts describe, engagement with young people ranged from making connections with them to actively recruiting them to participate in the study. From fieldnote 09/12/2011:

> *As I approached the front door Jay let me in. He greeted me with sly smile, not too big, but big enough to indicate he was pleased to see me, a feeling that was reinforced by his extended hand inviting me into a handshake…*

Later as I am engaging with young people in the milieu, I have an opportunity to recruit a young woman for the study:

> *I heard a young woman, Bobbie, I have seen around the house but do not know talk about how she was in the studio space the night before. I quickly jumped into the conversation. I asked her, "Did I just hear you say you were in the studio last night?" She replied, "Yeah." I went on to ask her what she was working on. She explained that she was in the studio working on an R & B track with Theo. She was laying down some vocals and Theo was providing some music. I asked her if I could talk with her a bit more about the study and see if she was interested in participating. She was amenable, so we headed outside from some privacy…*

Afterward I head back into the milieu and have additional opportunities to engage with young people.

> *Marcus rolled in after a while. We talked for a bit. He's doing all right. He mentioned that he hasn't been in the studio lately. I asked him if he was participating in the Belfort House Mixtape. He said he was, that he had given Jay a couple of beats. I mentioned that I would like to hear them. He kind of nodded his head, said okay, and moved onto the kitchen to get his dinner. Then he took a spot in the milieu, hanging with other young people and watching TV… Smurf rolled into the milieu. She's working on the Mixtape as well. She hasn't really been in the studio yet, but she's thinking up ideas and working out tracks in her head. Jay keeps trying to get her in the studio to get the ideas and tracks out of her head. She plans to get in there soon.*

As the above passages highlight, the milieu served as a central hub of activity for young people and an excellent point of engagement for making connections with young people and recruiting them for the study.

D. Organizational Commitment to Positive Youth Development

1. Initial adaptation to positive youth development

When asked to describe the history of the agency going as far back as they remember, Anne and Rochelle described an initial community-based, micro-grassroots-oriented movement led by three male social workers on Chicago's north side during the mid 1970s. Rochelle states:

> The agency was founded in 1976 by three men who worked on the north side of Chicago… My understanding is that these three guys sort of drove around on motorcycles and sort of scooped young people up off the streets and took them to a storefront where they were trying to hook them up with some kinds of services.

Anne offers similar insight, adding that many of the young people these men encountered were wards of the state.

> They literally stopped these young people and spoke to them. It started out as their need to do some kind of an intervention, especially around foster care. A lot of these young people probably were runaways. And so from that, it developed – very grassroots.

Rochelle offers additional insight into the agency's initial work with wards of the state and its eventual expansion to providing services for young people experiencing homelessness on Chicago's south side.

> At some point, the agency got directly into residential services and was primarily working with wards of the state, and we had a house up on the north side of Chicago… In 1993, a group called Project Rush bought the building that was the original Belfort House for taxes, and they rehabbed it, and conveyed it to us for about – I think for $1.00 in May of 1994, which is when we started our south side operations. So we had this north side residential facility that had house parents. Like it had, you know, like people that actually lived there, employees that lived there. And then we had the south side operation, which was normally just homeless youth, and did not have in-house residential staff.

Rochelle goes on to describe a series of rapid turnovers in staffing, resulting in the appointment of a new executive director in 1999. With this appointment came the paradigmatic and programmatic decision to shift the agency's focus away from working with wards and young

people experiencing homelessness to working solely with homeless youth on Chicago's south side.

> (The executive director) along with the board and whatever staff were present felt like there was a programming conflict between serving youth who were homeless and wards of the state, that those program models conflicted, and that the decision was made to walk away from our DCFS contract that we had at the time and sell that building on the north side. At that time, we focused at that point solely on homeless youth on the south side of Chicago.

Wanting to understand more about this shift, I asked Rochelle, "I wasn't fully aware about the history of TLP working with wards and the termination of that contract. Can you say a little more about what that means?" Rochelle responds:

> If you're a ward of the state, you cannot be homeless. You're by definition not homeless. They will find you a place to stay. So the young people that we work with on the south side are homeless. They're not wards of the state by definition. DCFS has specific rules. So if you are a ward of the state and I'm a homeless young person and we go out drinking together, and the rules are that I can't come home drunk, you're going to go to bed, and I'm not going to get to go to bed because there's just – everything is proscribed by DCFS about what you can do… program rules can differ based on what status you are.

In this section Rochelle highlights the agency's previous programmatic conflict in providing services for wards and young people experiencing homelessness. Under the agency's prior abstinence-based model, if a young person came home under the influence, the ensuing outcome would depend on the young person's status. If she or he was a ward, TLP was mandated by the state to provide the young person shelter for the evening regardless their behavior, whereas if the young person were not a ward TLP had the option to enforce stricter consequences for the young person's behavior. Rochelle alludes to that disconnection, highlighting the tensions in working with different youth populations.

Wondering whether this shift played a significant role in TLP's development as an agency, I asked her, "Kind of looking back, what are your thoughts about the shift of focusing

just on homeless youth – not renewing that contract and thereby changing the focus of the agency?" Rochelle responds:

> I think, philosophically, it was a move that helped us to set ourselves apart from a lot of agencies in Chicago. I think there's a lot of services on the north side for youth who are homeless. Not enough, but far more than there on the south side, and I think that enabled us to hone our focus in on serving youth who are homeless. I feel like it's a specialized population, and that moving our services and identifying as a south side agency was a good thing… I feel like it's made us the agency we are today, a very different agency probably than we were ten years ago.

When asked to describe how the agency has developed over the years and how TLP came to adopt a PYD model, Pepper and Rochelle discuss the shift in the agency's focus to solely working with young people experiencing homelessness as an important factor. Pepper starts:

> We used to work with wards and youth classified as homeless or out of state runaways. So those are very different bureaucracies and systems and they govern very differently. So wards dictate what models you use and how you work with them. Homeless youth systems were on that positive youth development train and gave a lot of voice to the agencies to develop what worked, based on the population they served.

Rochelle concurs. "I think that positive youth development was less a part of the DCFS philosophy than it was for us working with homeless youth, which is probably another reason that the sort of paths diverted up there."

Some young people experienced success as a result of this shift and the agency's initial adaptation of PYD. Having worked at Belfort at the time, Ray describes how it worked best for focused and self-reliant young people.

> I would say back in 2000, the clients that really made it were the clients that really came in, and they already knew what they wanted to do… If they wanted to get the kid back, get a job, that's what they did. They came in, they saw their kid on the weekends, they did what they had to do here, get a better job. They secured a better job, and we got their kids back. You know? Or they came in here, did what they had to do until they could pass a test to get into the armed services or until they could get into the army. So we had some success stories.

Acclimation to the new model was not without its problems though, particularly when it came to staff interactions and relations with young people. Ray goes on to describe how some staff members struggled to adapt to the new model and engaged in power struggles with young people, resulting in tension and conflict that took the focus off the TLP's purpose, which at the time was primarily focused on providing housing services for young people experiencing homelessness. Ray states:

> We used to have staff meetings about not power struggling with clients… and so we are not the power struggle with them, but we want to make Teen Living something that is attractive to them, something that they feel like they can achieve, that they can do. It wasn't always like that. Like I said, we had the three strikes and you're out rule. Three checks, you're suspended, and you don't have enough time to work with a client like that. Now you have – really, you just have a law that's working against the client, and you have a person that's not able to work with a client. So the client is not really benefitting as much as they could.

The agency continued to work through adapting and implementing PYD through the early 2000s with additional staff turnover. Pepper joined the agency as clinical director in 2004. She describes the agency's culture at the time.

> Utilization was way, way down. Morale was pretty much in the toilet. They had come from just really restructuring the agency they had, come from a place where they fired – I guess laid off – everybody, then made everybody reapply for the positions they thought they would fit. Some folks didn't get jobs and some folks did. Some were in the same position, some were in different positions. So when I came on board, it was starting from scratch. My number one charge was to get utilization up.

She goes on to talk about how the agency subscribed to PYD in theory and how it was not being implemented.

> I think the agency was in a place where they understood positive youth development, but it wasn't being implemented. It actually was the first time I had encountered that philosophy… So really thought it married well with the milieu model I wanted to use that was trauma sensitive, really youth focused, and meeting them where they were. We started from there – positive youth development.

She then describes slowly building a staff that was responsive to and programming that was reflective of PYD.

> It was about the competence of the staff. There was no way to build the model or have people buy into it if you weren't sure we were all on the same page. So I had to start with cleaning house and hiring a lot of people. So those first two years were about getting the right people on board, looking at and assessing our programs and meeting with young people, hearing their voices. How do they experience this place? What was that about?

The agency's initial adaptation and eventual implementation of a PYD, intentionality around hiring staff with a demonstrated and/or stated understanding of PYD, and the explicit inclusion of young people's voice in program development led the agency to consider the lack of and need for holistic supportive services.

2. <u>Developing supportive services</u>

In describing the service structure that existed at the time of her hire, Pepper notes, "There was no real manual or philosophy or overarching guiding anything. They just had housing." Herman, who was hired in 2004, agrees, talks about what supportive services looked like prior to his arrival, and reflects upon and articulates the agency's progress since that time.

> I think the work in TLP at the time was much more about, "Here's a place to stay, and we're going to give you all the help we can give you. We're going to connect you with outside agencies to help you with different things." So I think it was more of a place to stay and recover and deal with trauma and all these important things, not as resource-focused as we are right now. All the services that supportive services does now at the time were done by one person. I think he was just the education coordinator. He happened to do these other things as well. They would have educational services as far as enrolling people in school and things like that. We didn't have GED classes. We didn't have any music classes. We didn't offer a lot of in house services. We mostly were the connector to get people into the community and other places. I think we've come a long way as far as looking at providing housing for people to, in 2004, really making that switch to provide recreational services and educational services as well, and vocational services. So I think the changes we've gone over recently are more about – rather than just giving a place to sleep for a couple nights or months – to give them access to all the services they need to have long-term, sustainable housing.

I ask Herman to tell me more about the agency's shift, from being a "place to stay and recover and deal with trauma" and "a place to sleep for a couple nights or months," to the new supportive services focused model.

> I believe that hiring of our new clinical director (Pepper) at the time, teamed with one of our clinical case managers – that it was their idea. They looked at TLP and said, "This is what we need. We need to have full-time people for education, vocation, and recreation. That's important and we have to do that." They went out and got the money for it. When that money came in, they were able to hire people, and then we just started writing programs.

Pepper concurs, "We built those programs together," referring to herself, the above-mentioned clinical case manager, and other staff, including Herman. "We put a handbook together," she adds. Herman describes several of the programs they developed, which have become core supportive services programs at TLP. He also provides additional background and rationale on the development of supportive services at TLP.

> (We developed our) I-Skills program, which is a 9-month curriculum for basic living skills – anywhere from how to do your taxes to personal hygiene to how to apply for a job, all these different things. That ended up – that curriculum, we still teach it, we still update it. That's a requirement for all TLP youth to be involved in. Our education program has expanded since then. The original thought was at some point we should be offering classes at TLP. We do that now. We offer GED classes for folks. Same thing with vocational activities, although, right now, we don't have a recreational coordinator, we have people from the community and help supplement that programming. So we keep that alive here as much as we possibly can. I think that was the instigator – people looking around and saying, "Wow, we don't have enough resources here for the youth. We don't have enough people with specialized knowledge to help them get those resources in the most effective way." The change was – let's make those positions… That's what they saw we were lacking, and they implemented it.

As educational, recreational, and vocational programming was developed, the agency continued to adapt to and refine its approach to PYD. In reflecting on this time, Pepper talks about attending PYD trainings where youth opportunity, competency, connection, supports, and contribution were common themes. She provides a definition from the literature that captures

these themes and the agency's developing PYD approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness.

> A process of human growth through which adolescents move from being taken care of to taking care of themselves and others (opportunities and contributions); an approach where policy, funding, and programming are directed at providing support to young people as they build their capacities and strengths to meet their personal and societal needs (competencies); and a set of practices that adults use to provide youth with the types of relationships and experiences needed to fuel healthy development (connections and supports) (Ansell et al., 2008, p. 6)

In operationalizing this approach, key informants describe TLP's focus on incorporating a strengths perspective and creating opportunities for young people to define and set their own goals. In doing so, key informants argue that young people's voice is brought into the process and that young people are given the opportunity to define success in a way that's meaningful to them. Staff and young people work together to expand their definitions of success, work to remove young people's excuses for failure, and celebrate young people's successes. Key informants suggest that through this process young people are offered an opportunity to take responsibility for their lives and accountability for their actions and decisions.

3. <u>Full adaptation to positive youth development</u>

In describing TLP's PYD approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness, Leigh and Pepper discuss incorporating a strengths perspective in assessing and working with young people. Leigh begins:

> I think oftentimes as a society, we look at youth as volatile and negative and just trying to bear with it until they get to this adulthood where they can manage and contribute. And I think positive youth development for us is about the process and about the positivity that can happen throughout that process and the change that happens. And looking at the change is just something exciting. So building on a strength base, so looking at youth where their strengths are, where their growth is, how we can learn from them, how they can learn from us. So it's more of a community model than it is you're the client and we know everything and were here to kind of be the experts, because they're the experts in their lives, and they help us understand where they're coming from and how we can help them… and so I think positive youth development is about identifying what those

> strengths are, building on those strengths, identifying where they need some growth, and working with them in those areas, and not being the experts, 'cause that's where I think we get into trouble working with youth in this hierarchy where you're coming to me for help 'cause I know what's best for you.

Pepper continues, noting the importance of meeting young people where they are:

> You have to start with where your young person is and what their strengths are. It's a strength-based model. You could easily look at somebody and do a needs assessment and say what their "deficits" are. We want to start with, "Where are their strengths? What have they accomplished? What are they doing well?" Because when you can build from a strength, then people want to pursue success, as opposed to starting with what I can't do or what I don't have.

While Leigh and Pepper agree that incorporating a strengths perspective in assessing and working with young people is vital to the agency's work, Pepper also highlights the importance addressing young people's crisis and meeting their basic needs (e.g, food and safety). In addition, she notes the importance providing young people with opportunities for empowerment and making sure that they have a voice in service planning.

> But that all comes after, of course, meeting the young person where they are in that place of crisis, meeting those very basic needs. If I'm hungry, I ain't listening. So making sure you know that you're safe. That food isn't contingent on, you know, how you answer or what you do… Those are things you're going to have regardless. Making sure young people are empowered to know their voice matters. It's not just an opinion at the table, but it's the opinion that matters. We need to know what they need so that we can then build our resources around that, so they can then get what they came here for.

Grounded in a strengths-based approach to working with young people, Herman describes how staff members create opportunities for young people to define and set their own goals.

> When anybody comes in to TLP, we don't have a set of guidelines and "Here's how we define success and we're going to fit you in here and this is how it's going to work." We sit down and all the youth make their own goals through IAP, which is Individual Action Plan. So people come in and they set their own goals for what they want to do.

Pepper concurs and stresses the importance of bringing young people's voice into goal planning.

> The voice – understanding their voice and that it has power. Understanding the abuses of power is important in that model, because I hold a lot of power whether I own it or not. As clinical director of the program, doing intakes, having this space in the lives of young people, I could abuse that power. I could say, because of my role, you gotta do it this way. It has to, you know – those are all things that come with abuse of power. Really just meeting young people where they are and encouraging them to reach and push, cause a lot of them haven't had that. That's a unique place to be in with young people, too, because to set goals is kind of scary, when you think about not meeting the goal. What happens if you feel you're going to disappoint me or your case manager? It's also about having as many corrective experiences to what wasn't correct as possible. We don't define that, necessarily, although we know what violence is. We know what, I mean – those are some clear markers. Again, we're not seeking to define it for young people, but we're working to give voice to what it is and to help them find what success means to them on that journey.

Wanting to get a better sense of how Pepper perceives the concept of voice, I ask, "Can you define 'voice' for me? You've used it several times." She responds:

> Yeah. Voice meaning the person. Sitting in a room and having everybody decide where you're going to go to school, what you're going to wear today, what's going to be for breakfast, ignores completely your input, your statement, what you have to say about it. But asking the question of, "Well, what do you think what this should be like?" gives ear to the voice of the person. So 'voice' I use, interchangeably. It represents the person being present and having a say.

Rochelle supports Herman and Pepper's assertions and describes some of the challenges that arise in creating opportunities for some young people to define and set their own goals.

> You don't come to us, and we give you a test and tell you, "Now you're going to be an electrical engineer." What we want to do is work with you to assess what you think your strengths are and what matters to you as a young person. Work with you, and this gets sort of played out quantitatively in your IAP, and how those decisions are based on what you want to do. This is one of the challenges that we run into with people who have been wards of the state who have just sort of been sort of given the decisions from on high about what they need to do.

Unfortunately I failed to follow-up on this question of how TLP works with young people requiring a less empowerment-based youth centered approach to goal setting and IAP development and other key informants did not address it.

Anne also talks about the importance of young people having a voice in defining and setting their goals. She notes how in doing so TLP provides young people with opportunities to define success in a way that's meaningful to them.

> Well, again, I think it's – if you're gonna set up your services and you're looking to be very comprehensive, number one, but also care about is the service having an impact. Is there an outcome? Is there a positive outcome for this young person? Do the services help them learn to be successful? That is important information. And so I think when you come from that positive youth development, how that gets integrated into the service. It's sort of like always finding a way not to set the young person up to fail. So if the service can constantly be tweaked or realigned to meet that individual young person, then they're gonna have success at something, and I think that that's the important thing. For us as a service provider, how can we help that young person be successful in a way that's meaningful for them? Not just because the government says that they have to do those or they have be reading at this level of – and the methodology of getting that.

Anne goes on to describe how TLP provides young people with opportunities to define success in a way that's meaningful to them. She describes what she perceives to be many young people's scholastic experience and how TLP seeks to challenge existing approaches to education that have not worked for young people. She explains how she sees it as TLP's responsibility to meet young people where they are in their educational development and provide education in a way that sets young people up to succeed.

> The educational services are a great example of that, right? The average, you know, school environment for a lot of our young people are not good spaces for them to be. A lot of our young people are really, really bright, really creative, and the standard rote learning style of an average classroom is really boring as hell for them. And then they act out, and then they get in trouble. It's the classic. And then, of course, add the dimension of the trauma that's in their lives and where their education's been interrupted. So I think when we can approach the service in a way that says, "How's this young person gonna learn? How are they gonna be successful in their learning? What are we gonna tap into that allows them to learn in different way?" Just think about in terms of yourself. Are you someone who's very visual? Are you somebody's who's very aural? Depending on how you learn, well, add the dimension of trauma and neglect and abandonment and everything. We have to find ways to help that young person learn… we have to be the folks that try and figure that out to help them get there.

Leigh expands on this notion of meeting young people where they are at and providing services and defining successes in way that's meaningful for them. At the same time she talks about challenging her pre-conceived notions of what young people are capable of and pushing young people out of their own pre-conceived notions of what they believe they are capable of. Through this collaborative process she describes how TLP staff and young people work together to expand their definitions of success.

> I think we try to create opportunities for youth to be successful instead of creating ways in which we look for their deficits. And so in that, we're allowing youth to see that they are capable and they can be proud of themselves, and we're, hopefully, developing a framework and a base for them to start building a stronger sense of self and of self-esteem, because without those small successes, they're not gonna continue to move forward. They're just gonna say – when I first came here, I was surprised at the youth that we serve. I thought we're gonna see a lot drug addicts because that's the youth where I come from, right? There's a lot of drugs, and those kinds of things. But really, we see more so just a lot of chronic trauma that they've experienced. And so for them, a youth oftentimes looks at their parents, or whoever raised them, or friends, and they're like, "Well, I'm doing better than them." And so they don't continue to grow because, "I'm doing better." So they've never been given the framework of, "You can do more. You don't have to settle." And so I see it as settling. They see it as a success. But our definitions of success are so different. And so I think part of positive youth development is giving them a different definition of success, and not what their parents or family or friends are saying is successful, but saying the world is an opportunity for you, and you might not be ready for college right now, but let's get you ready for the next step, and the next step might get you ready for college, or you don't have a lot of work experience, so how can we build your resume, and showing just base skills, how that can build an amazing resume. And I think a lot of it is building that stronger sense of self that has been torn down by whoever was around them in their lives at the time, or in previously.

Pepper adds that as staff and young people work together in establishing goals that have meaningful outcomes for young people that expand their definitions of success, they also remove excuses for failure.

> I like to say we take away the excuses for failure. Failure's not an option. Whatever you need to be successful, based on your action plan, is here. If we don't have it, we'll partner, collaborate, link with somebody who does to make sure these young people get what they need to be successful. Success is defined by them.

As young people overcome obstacles and meet their goals, TLP provides opportunities for young people to celebrate successes. In doing so, TLP inspires other young people to accomplish their goals and fosters community. In the following section, Herman describes TLP's high school graduation celebration.

> If somebody graduates from high school, we have a high school graduation here. We have gowns and caps and people walk down and we play the music – the whole nine yards. We try to celebrate those things, and other people, when they see that, sitting there, you might be surprised to think this but people really want to walk down that hall in TLP with that music playing. That's a really proud moment for folks. It creates more community, creates a ladder for people to look at. So if somebody comes in and they don't have their high school diploma and they see that, "Hey, this person gets this nice graduation gift." We have all these pictures being taken. Everyone at TLP comes to watch the graduation. We give these words from the community. It really empowers people and shows them, "Hey, maybe I only have a 10th grade education and I'm 19, but hey, I just saw this guy graduate who's 20 and now he's going to college. I can do it."

In another example of TLP celebrating young people's successes, I had the opportunity to attend Effen's graduation from Belfort house to TLP's permanent supportive housing program, CASSA. The following journal entry excerpt describes the ceremony and how the TLP community came together to celebrate Effen's success. From journal entry 11/03/2011:

> *Pepper opened the ceremony and welcomed Effen's family and friends. She noted that she was happy they were there to celebrate this milestone in his life. She talked about the purpose of the evening, noting that this was a time to congratulate and celebrate Effen's hard work and to offer him words of encouragement and support as he transitioned to independent living. It was at this point that Pepper invited members of Effen's community to come up and share words of encouragement and support with him as he embarked on his journey. Several family, friends, residents, and staff got up to share. The running theme was his transition – how he had come to TLP lost and wayward and in the last six months how he had stepped up his game. He was showing up for and living as opposed to avoiding his life. Several people noted his involvement in Year Up (an intensive internship) as an example of how he had really matured and was moving forward with is life. After all who wanted to spoke, Pepper invited Effen to respond to the community. In his response he thanked everyone for coming out supporting him, shouting out to family members, friends, and staff. The program continued with a presentation of graduation gifts from Belfort House staff and welcoming gifts from CASSA staff. It was really neat to watch Effen light up when he opened his gifts. I got the sense that he was truly grateful. The program closed with a send off and blessing*

> *from Pepper. It modeled the closing of one door, not permanently, and the opening of another. I noted that the entire community participated, which was touching.*

Key informants note that by incorporating a strengths perspective, creating opportunities for young people to define and set their own goals, incorporating young people's voice, giving young people an opportunity to define success in a way that's meaningful to them, working with young people to expand their definitions of success, removing their excuses for failure, and celebrating young people's successes, young people are offered an opportunity to take responsibility for their lives and accountability for their actions and decisions. Leigh begins:

> One of the biggest things I tell staff when I interview is that accountability and consistency are two of the most important things. And so if you don't hold a youth accountable for what you say you're gonna hold them accountable for, it just shows them you're like everyone else, and they never know what to expect and so they're always gonna be pushing, pushing, pushing. So if a youth knows that "This is the expectation, I'm gonna hold you accountable, this has nothing to do with how I feel about you or how amazing I think you are. This is about holding the expectation for you," then I think it's starts to create that safety that we look to create for them, and to show them that if they know what to expect every time they walk in this building, regardless of what staff is here, it creates a safe place for them to be able to step outside of that and be creative or challenge something and know that we still care about them. They can challenge us, and it's still the same relationship. But if we don't have accountability, it creates that unsafe, in a broader scope, not that we're – anyways, it creates an unsafe, unstable, unpredictable environment for them. So they don't know that on Tuesday, if (staff member's) working, or Thursday, when (staff member's) working, I can do different things. And it's always this guessing game for them, and second-guessing their own judgment versus just knowing this is the way it looks. So I think absolutely accountability is important.

In an effort to order to decrease staff and youth power struggles and increase opportunities for young people to take responsibility for their lives and accountability for their actions and decisions, the agency developed a model they refer to as the 50-yard line. Ray describes the model in place prior to the 50-yard line and how it just wasn't working for many of the young people TLP serves:

> When I first came in, if you got three checks within a week, you could be suspended. So a lot of people were coming in, even after a wait period of maybe three months, and they weren't – they just weren't capable of going the whole week without three checks.

> Young people come in with a lot of problems. They come in with a lot of stress from life on the streets. You know, family matters, family conflict that might have got them on the street, and it's not always conflict with family. It might be a family member that's no longer able to support them, and so they have to come in. So it's all sorts of things, and it's all sorts of stress. When they come in, they don't know how to act right away.

Dissatisfied with the model in place, specifically with staff and youth power struggles resulting in young people being discharged, many of whom were the very young people the agency was designed to serve, TLP developed the 50-yard line. Herman explains how the 50-yard line was developed:

> Our associate director of programming at the time came up with it – I remember the process that she went through to figure that out. I know it started before the 50 yard line – "Wow, we're having lots of power struggles with youth and that's not what we want. That's not what this place is supposed to be." So she just thought about it and thought about, "How can we do this?" This is coming from someone who I know is someone who doesn't like a lot of structure, that believes in that, "Listen this stuff can flow organically." She was looking at it. We were doing positive youth development at the time. I think she just looked at, "How can we focus? How can we get rid of all these power struggles? How can we focus on the positives, not stress the negatives? Let's give them a system of accountability for themselves."

Herman describes the model and its usefulness in working with young people, noting how the 50-yard line has been highly useful in decreasing staff and youth power struggles, empowering young people to take responsibility for their choices and actions, and how it serves as an excellent proxy for the world outside of Belfort.

> What happens when you move into TLP is everybody has a 50 yard line. We have certain rules in the house. You have a chore every week, whether cleaning a bathroom or washing the dishes or sweeping the floor, or whatever you have in a normal situation – your chores. If somebody doesn't do one of those chores, instead of there being a huge power struggle between the staff and that person and be like, "You did your chore. You didn't do your chore. This is a problem. We're not going to be able to do anything else tonight until we take care of that." Now, it's their choice. We say, "You understand what the rules are when you came in. This is your chore and if you decide not to do that, that's your choice, but you'll get a check on the 50 yard line." That relieves that and they understand, "Hey, it's the youth's choice to do this or not do it. This isn't going to be any more or less work for me to do this." They get a check on the yard line and that's how it goes. As this accumulates, it shows the youth. They can see. They can check their 50 yard line whenever they want and see, "I have 50 checks left," or "I have 10 checks left,"

> and it gives them a natural check and balance system where if somebody gets up to, say, 30 checks, we can say, "Hey, listen, you only have 20 checks left, so some of the decisions that you're making, whether it's coming home after curfew or not going to school, are affecting your housing right now." That's a mirror of reality. For them to see that and experience that, in our micro world at TLP, is going to prepare them for the larger world out there. These natural repercussions do happen. You can catch yourself, if you're getting a little bit behind, and that's what the 50 yard line's all about – giving people more than one chance, giving people 50 chances.

Herman offers an example of how the 50- yard line is implemented in relation to education expectations for young people at Belfort and describes how it has enhanced communication between young people and staff. He describes how in the old model, inspiring young people to work on their education goals resulted in power struggles and overall dissatisfaction for staff and young people. With revised expectations around education goals for young people and the implementation of the 50-yard line, young people are now accountable and responsible for working toward educational goals. He notes how this has enhanced communication between young people and staff.

> When I first started here, we didn't – education was not a requirement. It was much more where the education person, myself at the time, was kind of on our backs to miraculously inspire the youth about the great value of education, which is really difficult to do. That's a difficult thing to do. We used to have a lot of arguments about that as far as my job, at the time, was to enroll people in school and make sure they graduate. My focus of my job is making sure people graduate – that's the most important thing. When you don't have a requirement for that, that's really difficult to do. When their housing's tied to that directly – Say somebody's going to a GED class and they stop going for two weeks. Then I get a call about it. Okay, this person's not going to school for two weeks. At this moment, right now, I'm supposed to keep this person enrolled at school. What do I do? I can go have another conversation with them. I can sit there and give the best speech on the value of education in the last 50 years, and somebody could just not be into that at all and just say, "Listen, I'm not into it. I'm not going to do that. I'm just going to stay here." That creates a problem, because our goals are not the same. My goal is to get him or her a high school education. Their goal is something other than that at the moment.
>
> Positive youth development, we started incorporating that more structurally, like with the 50 yard line – Allows that conversation where I can say, "Okay, I understand it's your choice not to go to school. I don't need to argue with you about it. I don't need to lecture you on it. I can just say that's okay and you understand that by living here, when people come in, we go over the 50 yard line requirements. When you don't go to school,

> you get a mark on your 50 yard line, and if you choose to do that, that's your choice. I'm here to work with you, whenever you want, on your education. But understand that's part of the requirements we have here, a value that we have here, and a value that you should share." I can say, across the board, it's been significant help. When people come in here, they understand right away that here are your expectations and here's how we're going to deal with them. It takes all the trivial arguments and back and forth out of it. It gives you an even playing field where the youth aren't set up then to see the staff as bad people or people who are always bothering them about something. They understand the staff are there to help them through their process, which is to achieve these goals that they've done. If somebody's goal is to enroll in college, then we're going to make sure that happens for them. I think how it's really changed the most, since we did it – It makes it easier. It makes the relationships better here. It makes the communication flow easier. It lets the youth be more honest. It lets the staff be more honest. It's a great communication tool.

In comparing the old model with the 50-yard line, Ray talks about how the 50-yard line provides staff with a better model for working with young people.

> With the 50-yard line, you get a six-month period to acquire 50 checks instead of three checks in a week, which is a much better ratio way of looking at peoples' behavior so that when the person's counselor or case manager having gone over the weekend, when they come back in Monday, they don't see that their client has been suspended or is going to be suspended where you can't even work with your client because they're never here, you know, from suspensions. So that pretty much is one of the best changes, I think, that was made.

In Ray's last sentence, "So that pretty much is one of the best changes, I think, that was made," it is important to note that he is not only referring to the convenience of knowing where his clients are. He is also talking about the importance of putting young people's housing first, ahead of staff and youth power struggles. He defines putting young people's housing first as one of the best changes, and choices, the agency has made.

Given the additional structure, responsibility, and accountability, some young people are unable to succeed at Belfort. Herman notes, "If that person accumulates 50 checks, then they are discharged from the program." Rochelle describes the discharge process.

> We're very intentional and not punitive with young people when they approach that 50-yard line of finding other – it's not like, "Aha, you get a check and now you're gone. Yay." We're trying to be really safe to make sure they have a place to transition to, but

> they understand that these are the choices that they're making, and so if they choose to make these choices, they've actually chosen not to participate in the program anymore on their own.

Impressed with her choice of wording, I ask, "So it's almost – it's not – I mean it is a discharge, but it's also more – I like the way you phrased that. It's a decision to not participate in the program that the young person has actually made." "That's right," she says. Herman and Rochelle both note how discharge from the program (i.e., Belfort) is not equivalent to discharge from TLP. Young people discharged from Belfort are eligible for aftercare services and may eventually reapply for residency at Belfort.

Rochelle notes how the 50-yard line remains a work in progress. Harkening back to Pepper's insistence that young people and their voice be at the table, Rochelle talks about including young people in the ongoing process of developing the 50-yard line. In doing so, TLP creates another opportunity for young people to define success in a way that's meaningful to them, where staff and young people work together to expand their definitions of success and work to remove young people's excuses for failure thereby offering young people an additional opportunity to take responsibility for their lives and accountability for their actions and decisions. Rochelle states:

> We've recently been working on implementing on earning checks back for good behavior, which seems to have been a real motivator for young people. Because if you can only lose, you know, what are you going to do? Then you just have to wait it out. So actually, that was a young – that was a suggestion that was generated by young people that they be able to earn a check back for attending four floor meetings in a row or something.

4. <u>Challenges in implementing positive youth development</u>

Key informants described several challenges in implementing a PYD approach to working with young people at Belfort, including young people's preparedness to take on accountability for their lives and responsibility for the their actions and decisions, finding and

hiring qualified staff, and allowing young people to make mistakes and manage the subsequent consequences. As Rochelle alludes to above, some young people are ill equipped to take responsibility for their actions, decisions, and lives. Anne expands on this idea, discussing how some young people struggle with being treated as adults, an often new and challenging experience for them:

> It can be challenging for them to be treated as adults because maybe they've never been in that position, or they haven't been treated with respect, and they're used to being the loudest, being the most violent, being whatever got – hey, if it works. That's what you use. That's what you default to, right? So I think it's challenging for the young people, too, to be in that environment as well sometimes because that's not what they've been used to.

Herman describes how some young people may benefit from a more direct and guided approach, but notes how in some ways that goes against the PYD approach the agency promotes:

> I think that some folks, depending on who you are and how you communicate, some people might work – respond – better to someone sitting them down and having a confronting conversation about these kind of things. We still try to do those things. But it does allow the youth – There's less padding around our ability to directly point the youth in a direction and make sure they get there. We don't want to do that in the first place. We want it to be their decisions, cause then they're more inclined to follow up with them and succeed, if it's their choices. The only issue you'd run into is that people can come in and could leave quicker because of this 50 yard line. They have a shorter chance. Maybe they haven't been exposed to something like that before. They haven't had a system that works for them in a positive way like that – it's always negative. So that's the only issue I can really see with it. Some youth can transition out of here really quickly if they don't take the rules seriously.

Herman goes to note how those young people who do transition out as a result of their inability to adapt to the model often return with an understanding that it was their decision to leave Belfort and an increased willingness to take on accountability and responsibility for their actions.

> Ultimately, in the long run, those people that do transition quickly out of Teen Living Programs, they come back and they understand how the system works. Their relationships with people who work here and other youth will be intact when they leave and they'll be intact when they get back, rather than a youth hating a staff's guts, cause they hold them responsible for kicking them out of having this happen. They understand

> the whole way that this was a decision that they made from that. When they come back, they're much more ready to get started.

Key informants describe staffing tensions in implementing a PYD approach as well. Anne begins by describing the need for qualified staff who are willing to be challenged by young people.

> You have to have a staff, first of all, that feels okay about being challenged by young people, and being trained in this model and having expectations of them by their supervisors around how they speak to young people, how they interact with them. The average person will, at some point, get frustrated and challenge that young person in a way that's not productive. I mean, been there, done that, whether it's your own child or a young person. So the staff become critical to that, and the challenge is gonna be if you don't get the right staff and you don't get staff that really subscribe to the model and believe in it and are willing to learn even though it might be challenging to them. So that's always the case. I would say the folks for whom that is too difficult because they come from, "Because I say so," models, they're not gonna last too long, and that's a good thing.

Rochelle adds additional insight, noting that while it may be challenging to find qualified staff it is certainly not a downside, suggesting that TLP's focused hiring practices work to the agency's advantage.

> It might have been more challenging over the years to find qualified staff at times. I don't – I'm not a big proponent of just filling spaces with warm bodies, so I don't necessarily think that's really a downside. I don't know how to evaluate that and say that it would be – I mean it can be inconvenient at times to have to be more particular about who you're hiring, but that's certainly not a downside in the long run.

While key informants clearly express the need for qualified staff, they did not discuss how applicants are screened for their experience with and knowledge of PYD. In addition, key informants did not discuss how existing staff are trained in applying a PYD informed approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness.

Pepper discusses the challenges she encounters personally and working with staff around issues of control. She describes how some staff struggle with providing opportunities for young people to take control of their lives, fearing that young people will make mistakes with serious

consequences. Pepper notes how this is bound to happen for young people and that it is the staff's job to assist young people in getting back up.

> The friction that we hit, often, is when we want the control, we want the power. You think, "Okay, let's take it to the youth." They go, "But what if they say do this? What if they say do that? Okay, well, what if they do?" You know, that's – when we get afraid, when we think not having the control will give them too much power and they won't know what to do with it, when we get more parental or authoritarian, that's when it gets rough. We all have those propensities. I mean I jump out as a parent sometimes, versus being a clinical director. There are things I want to protect them from and not have them go through and I can see it coming. There are some things you learn after doing this for a while. I've been working with young people almost 20 years. So I think there are some things I can say that I know pretty strongly or consistently that might come out statistically significant, but so? I still have to meet young people where they are, and to understand how they develop, and to work with what they have to work with, respectfully. We do have a place to apply our expertise. We get that.
>
> But the most important piece is understanding it's not about control. When they're out there making those decisions and living their life, nobody's controlling it but them. The best thing we can do is help them be good drivers of the car, good stewards of their lives, good drivers toward their destiny. But, we can't control it. I think that's where the fiction comes in, when we get afraid of them misusing or being hurt being out of control. But, we pull ourselves back in line. The check for us always is, "Is that what I want or is this what they want?" Sometimes you have to – as long as nobody's going to die, cause safety's number one. Sometimes you have to see that train wreck coming, and you have to let them wreck that train. Your role becomes being there in the midst of all of that, not kicking them while they're down, letting them work through the process, and then helping them learn from having been down there when they're ready. That's the hardest part about this model. Sometimes you got to see a train wreck and let it happen, cause you're not in control

E. <u>The Music Studio: A Demonstration of Positive Youth Development</u>

In this section, key informants provide a detailed account of the factors and processes that led to the development of the studio and its ongoing maintenance. Herman provides the primary narrative of the history of the TLP studio and how it has developed over the years, while other key informants add important additional insights. Throughout this section, they describe the ways in which the development of the studio and its ongoing maintenance demonstrate the agency's commitment and approach to PYD, thereby positioning the music studio as a

demonstration of the agency's commitment and approach to PYD. They describe how the studio developed out of a strengths-based approach to recreational programming. By focusing on developing and supporting recreational programming that was responsive to young people's interests, much like they created opportunities for young people to define and set their own goals around educational and vocational programming, Herman and other staff created opportunities for young people to explore their interests and find their creative voice.

In addition, Herman and the key informants describe how young people have continually shaped the development and ongoing maintenance of the studio and the ways in which the studio provides young people with opportunities to expand their definition of success and to do so in ways that are meaningful to them. They describe the studio as a youth centered space, where young people can succeed, where obstacles to their success and excuses for failure are removed, framing the studio as a space for creativity and experimentation. They also provide examples of how the studio provides young people with opportunities to take responsibility and practice accountability for their actions and decisions. In addition, they highlight Herman's role as the studio advocate and how he played an instrumental part in the development of the studio and its ongoing maintenance and success.

1. Developing recreational programming

Herman begins by describing his role as recreation coordinator, TLP's decision and rationale for providing recreational programming, and his overarching approach to recreation programming.

> I was the recreation coordinator when I first started here (2004). That was the first time the position was put out in Teen Living Programs. The supportive services department – which is the education, vocation, recreation – was added when I was hired along with some other folks. We did that based on – I think that the people who were running Teen Living Programs at the time were looking at other programs and thinking about, "What are people missing? What are youth not getting when they come to these places?"

> Because any place you go to, they're going to try and help you get a job and help you improve your education, but what else is happening in your life and what are they helping you become interested in? So I've always looked at it like what people are passionate about. I think everybody has passions in their lives that make them want to go to work. Right? So you got to go and do your job, but then you're going to come home, you're going to have something interesting to do. You're going to have something that feeds your interest in life and your passion for the things that you do.

He discusses how young people positively responded to recreational programming and how it served as a means of engagement to other supportive services, as he notes, it "was really keeping people around."

> What we noticed was that when we came in and offering field trips and music lessons and martial arts and all these different kinds of things, the youth really responded to it. We found that people were staying in the program longer. Reasons that people were saying, maybe after they left, when they came back, that they wanted to continue on with the recreation programming, that the services we were offering – Recreation was what was really keeping people around. That was, in fact, helping fuel them to do their education, then get a job, things like that. It was kind of like our – That's what the youth were attracted to in our program. Obviously, homeless youth looking for a place to live, but when they came in here, we got to keep them here, so we can get them all the services they need and recreation is a huge part of that.

Herman describes an experience he had working with a young man living with schizophrenia and how it changed the way he thought about recreational programming at Belfort, specifically how it changed his approach, moving from a passive orientation to recreation programming (e.g., going to museums and events) to a more active orientation to recreation programming (e.g., creative writing groups). In addition, he describes the process of recognizing the young man's strength as a writer.

> The big change, for me, when I thought, "We have to do something more with creativity around here," is there was a young man who was just stepping into schizophrenia when I had got here. He had drawn some pictures that looked really fantastic. I was like, "I'd like to see more of these pictures." We went upstairs and started talking about writing and how long he'd been at TLP for. He said, "Well, I have this book that I have that I wrote." I was thinking, "Okay, well, I've tried to write a book before [laughs]. Let's see what it is." He brought out this huge book that was probably – seemed like it was a couple inches thick. Full of paper. He had written – I think he called it the Book of Knives. It was his experiences being homeless and having his struggle, basically, written

> beautifully. To a point where I took his stuff and sent it to some professors of creative writing that I knew and said, "Hey, take a look at this." These are not easy to please writers.
>
> These guys are going to rip apart anything that comes their way. These guys were all floored. They couldn't believe that this was coming out of a place like TLP, that this guy had written this under a bridge and wherever else he was running around to. I know that one spot he was staying for a while was under a bridge that he did a lot of the work under. So there was this talent and this interest that not only people were excited about here at TLP, but people who weren't affiliated with TLP were looking at it and saying, "Hey, wow, this is some talent here. This is a source of what you can help people get to the next level, whatever they want to do creatively." So based on that – that was my realization that some of the folks who are living here have a lot of talent and a lot of drive and a lot of interest and get a lot back from sharing their creative work. So I thought, "Okay, I'll do some writing groups."

Herman talks about developing creative writing groups grounded in his interest and orientation to creative writing, his initial dissatisfaction with this approach, and the process of incorporating young people's writing interests into the curriculum and how that changed the group's dynamic.

> I found (the groups) not to be very fulfilling, I think just because – I'm not sure why. I love writing. People who live here love writing and they love to do it, but it wasn't as, it didn't seem as stimulating or – what do I want to say…how to describe it necessarily… It was more bland. What I noticed was that whenever I'd talk about writing, cause I was a writing major, you know, I would talk about poetry. I'd want to sit down and talk about John Ashberry's poetry. "Wow, isn't this John Ashberry poetry – Here's like a 120 page poem. Let's sit down and read it." Everybody was like, "What? Are you kidding me, man? We don't want to read this. What are you talking about?" [laughs] I thought, I was like "You know, this is definitely the case. Nobody's interested in this stuff. I'm not even sure if I'm interested in this. What's happening?"
>
> So what I found was when I'd come and we'd have writing groups, people weren't bringing in writing, they were bringing in raps. People would come in and freestyle or do whatever. I can remember having the thought in my head, because I went to school for writing, was that, "How can I explain to everybody here that, you know, freestyling is not as good as this serious writing, because of A, B, and C." Then, I started looking at myself, and I started thinking, "Well, maybe I have it wrong. Maybe I'm the one who has this mixed up." And I did. People would come in and do, you know, freestyle stuff or have, you know, raps. People would come in with like four or five notebooks. One guy had a whole book written on the stuff. I was blown away. I thought, "Whoa, look at all this work that's being done here."

In the above section, Herman describes several PYD informed decision-making processes that were instrumental in the development of recreational programming at TLP, including his decision to allow young people's interests to define the scope of the creative writing group. In other words bringing young people's voice into recreational program development. In addition, by bringing young people's voice into recreational program development he created an opportunity for young people to define and outline what they thought the group should be.

Herman's developing, PYD informed approach to recreational programming led to the development of Belfort open microphone nights. He describes:

> When I saw my expertise at the time was as a writing teacher to them, I thought, "I don't have much to offer them besides, you know, grammar and sentence structure. That's not very fun. How can I do something else?" We started doing open mic nights. So we would just have – We'd turn the lights down and have a microphone. I'd bring in an amplifier and people would do open mic nights. As we sat there and watched everybody's freestyling, we kind of thought, or I thought, "Well, I should bring a guitar in and back somebody up. Let me record this, because I got my recording equipment that I would carry around with me." So I brought it in and some guys were doing some freestyling and I recorded it and played along and then we listened to it back. They were blown away. I mean I was playing three guitar chords, nothing interesting, but they didn't have that to go with their freestyles before, because they're always doing this stuff in an empty room.

In addition to open microphone nights, Herman and other musically trained staff were offering guitar and piano lessons to young people. Herman talks about coming to an additional awareness around what kinds of music-based activities young people were seeking and his and the agency's willingness to provide access to those activities, thereby bringing young people's voice into recreational program development.

> At the time, I think I had started giving guitar lessons to a couple folks. I realized, pretty quickly, that not everybody was interested in doing guitar stuff, mostly cause the music people were listening to was more beat focused, more electronic, more hip hop. I was struggling to make the guitars sound like a legitimate hip hop instrument by itself, which is hard to do, if you can believe. So, you know, I should say as well that my interests and knowledge of music was completely different from what the youth were interested in. They're much more hip hop focused – the folks I was working with at least – and I never

> listened to a lot of hip hop growing up. So I could sit down and give a classical musical lecture, but I can't sit down and give a hip hop lecture cause I don't know enough about it to be able to teach anybody. What we did is I talked to this guy and I was like, "What would be beneficial for you? These guitar lessons I don't think are doing the trick for you." He was saying, "Well, if I had beats, I could do that. If I could record music…" I thought, "Okay, I have a portable digital recorder at my house I've used for years and I'm not using it right now." So I started bringing it back and forth on the train and I would drop it off for him for a weekend or for a day.

Herman notes that this was around 2006. He recalls training the young man on how to use the equipment, the positive results of lending it to him, and being impressed with the young man's drive.

> I think the first weekend I dropped it off, it was a Friday. We had a session on how to use it – very informal, just like, "Here's how to record your voice. Here's how to import a song into it, like an empty beat you can rap over." I came back on that Monday and the guy had hours of music recorded. It was like he'd been waiting forever to get a piece of equipment like this and it just kind of blew up on him. Then, after that point, he tried to – wanted to borrow the equipment all the time, and all the time, and all the time. He was really serious about it. I started lending him some of my digital recording equipment on the weekends if I wasn't using it. I would come back, and he'd have like eight hours worth of stuff. He was working constantly. He'd work all day and all night on it, then give it back to me and ask when he'd get it back again. I thought, "Wow, this guy is really passionate about this, and I want to try and get this stuff to him."

Herman describes how he framed access to the equipment as a leveraging tool to get the young man engaged in school and the larger positive impact he believes the experience had on the young man and his transition into adulthood.

> He didn't have his GED. At the time – this is seven years ago – we didn't require education. It was more about when folks come in, we understand that they're experiencing trauma, so we're going to give them some time to go through that trauma and readjust and then we'll have them do things. So I couldn't – When somebody came in who didn't have their diploma, I couldn't just tell them to go to school. I had to kind of convince them to go to school. So what I started doing with him is I'd say, "Okay, as soon as you get enrolled, you can use the equipment again." Sure enough, he was enrolled right away, after three months of conversation about it. He just went and did it. A couple months later, he had his GED. Then, I noticed, I remember, at one point, he showed up with a laptop. He had his own – He had Fruity Loops on there. He had his own beat thing. It was this moment where – He was using a portable digital recorder that I gave him. There was a moment where I was like, "You want to check out the equipment?" He was like, "I got my own equipment now." [laughs] He had his whole

> other thing going on – beat programs and all this stuff. It was like, "Wow, this guy's got his GED now and he got his laptop he's working on." Working with him, through the years – He left here years ago and I've kept in contact with him. He was a guy that we had did some martial arts training with us as well.
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> I kept in contact with him after he left here. He's probably 25 now or something. What I noticed was that when he got in here, I don't think he had a lot of identity stuff, necessarily. I don't think he knew who he was yet or what he was interested in, just cause he wasn't given the opportunity. As I saw him get older, he started having music shows around the city. Started getting really interesting sounding music. He also started competing in martial arts in the city. So he went from this really skinny kind of awkward dude who just always was pretty much super stoned and kind of aloof to – I think I saw him two years later and he was this big, muscular guy. He said, "Oh, I have this fight coming up. I'd love you to come." Went to the fight. Sure enough, when he's walking into the ring, they're playing his music over the PA while he's walking to the ring. I thought, "Wow. This guy stopped at TLP for a couple years, and he was able to get some interesting hobbies and passions involved. He's living his life now and he's doing his thing." I think he had a son at the time. He was really excited for his son to start taking music lessons…

Herman goes on to describe how he knew the young man wanted to make music, based on his experiences with him in the creative writing groups and how it was simply a question of access. In addition, he notes how this experience served as the catalyst for the development of the TLP music studio.

> This guy always wanted to learn music. It was obvious to me, because of all of his rap and writing that he'd done. He just didn't have access to it. As soon as he got access to equipment and the technology to do it, all of a sudden, his imagination could come to life for him. I think that for him, that was huge, you know… so my interaction with this young guy was the big catalyst.

Herman notes the supportive services team's reaction to observing the young man's increased engagement and the team's subsequent decision to approach Pepper about purchasing recording equipment for Belfort.

> We thought, "Well, hey. This is a successful thing. This guy's got a lot from this." In fact, this guy had also started doing some martial arts with us. He was getting his GED now. His life was turning around. It seemed to be this recording of music and expression of music was helping him do that. It looked like his confidence was rising. He was happier. His future was more interesting to him. Not because he thought that he was going to be a multimillion dollar hip hop star – he was just really interested in creating

> music and recording it. The value of sharing that with friends and going around and playing his stuff was enough for him to pick himself up and get back into life. So seeing those results, we thought, "Well, we should look into doing something like this on a more regular basis."

Pepper recalls Herman coming to her and asking for her support around purchasing the equipment.

> Oh, I remember the very beginning of these conversations. Herman, who has been here just two months shorter than– maybe three months – behind me… His first role was recreation specialist… in doing that work, in getting to know young people and what they enjoy or what they would want to explore, music is huge for young people. That's kind of Herman's thing, too. He was in a band, too, at the time. He talked about music and instruments and the outlet it is for young people. Then, he started reading up on the benefit of music in school, cause he was going on to become the education coordinator. He was looking at all those different pieces, particularly for our young men who were more expressive in the arts that way, but not necessarily writing in a diary or singing on a stage, but they had some things to say in a different way. It started with rap music, in that sense. More hip hop, urban expression.
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> And so Herman pitched this idea and I really liked it. I think it was another way to reach young people where they were, as opposed to, you know – Some people don't want to sit across from you and talk to you. Some people want to zone out and write music, or listen to beats or create rhythms. That's how they do it… For some young people, it's those lyrics or those beats. It's getting it out to music. When they sing it, or rap it, or even if it's spoken word, they express it. It's the cadence. It's the power. So, it wasn't hard to sell me on it, cause I got it. I felt it was another way in which we could creatively allow young people to go in and harness their own creativity and have something to show for it, that they created. So we did it and we saw an increase in the engagement in services of a lot of our young men who we were struggling with at the time. That's when Herman got so excited. "See! I told you! See! I told you this was a good thing!"

In the above section, Pepper describes several PYD informed decision-making processes that were instrumental in approving the purchase of the recording equipment, including her willingness to support recreation programming that incorporates young people's strengths and talents that met young people where they were at. She frames music-based recreational programming as a means of engaging young people, particularly young men. In addition, she describes Herman's role as an advocate for music-based recreational programming, specifically addressing his personal interest in music and his ability to use that interest to relate and connect

with young people and his essential role in developing music-based recreation programming. She continues to address engagement, Herman's role, and how that lead to purchasing the initial recording equipment:

> We had a lot of potheads [laughs]. I mean, they were bored. They weren't – They didn't want to go horseback riding or go skate. They didn't want to go do the things we were offering in the way that we were offering it. In conversations, Herman started talking about the studio and being in a band and what that was for him. His conversations around that, they really get into it. He'd start doing little pieces of bringing his own stuff in with them and teaching them guitar and piano. Then, it just kind of ran off from there. It started with learning how to play instruments. Then, "Wouldn't it be great to have a studio where you could do all this stuff and make beats with instruments that we don't have?" It kinda grew from there.

2. <u>Developing the music studio</u>

With Pepper's approval and support from the agency, Herman bought some instruments, recording equipment, and began the process of developing a music studio at Belfort in 2007.[8] He describes:

> We got money from the agency. They supported us and said that this is a good thing – we see what it's done for this guy, let's make it a little bigger. So equipment came in. We had a portable digital recorder and I had an SM-58 mic and that was it. We got the equipment. I kind of thought, "Now, we have it here at the house. I don't have to bring it anymore. What are we going to do?" So I put it in a closet and would have people check it out. They'd bring it up to their rooms. That was it.

After several months of young people checking the recording equipment out of the closet and working on music in their rooms, a visit from a church volunteer group presented a new opportunity for the then mobile recording equipment. Herman explains:

> Sometimes we have volunteer groups come in and they just say, "What do you want us to do and we'll just do it." They usually have some expertise. This group was a church group from like Kentucky that had come up. They had all these construction workers and an engineer with them and they're like, "Well, what do you want us to do?" Nobody could think of anything. My officemate at the time said, "Why don't you have them

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[8] TLP purchased 2 acoustic and 1 electric guitar, a Korg D1200 Digital Recorder and a SM-58 Microphone and received two upright piano donations from a music school.

> build a studio in the basement?" Cause we had this big, open, unfinished basement. I was like, "Well, how can they do that?"

Herman worked out a proposal and approached the executive team about building out the studio in the unfinished basement. Rochelle recalls this and Herman's role in developing music-based recreational programming at Belfort.

> (Herman) was connecting with young people through music, giving like private little music lessons and doing different stuff with them around music and sort of made a proposal to us to take some space that we had in our basement at our old building that was kind of just a yucky storage space and convert it into a music studio.

Wanting to get a better understanding of Rochelle's response from an administrative perspective, I ask her, "Can you share with me what your – if you can recall what your memories were about someone kind of coming to you and saying, "We want to do this studio space," from like an administrative perspective. What was that like?" She responds:

> Well, you know, basically, I'm in charge of all the accounting that happens in the agency, so I'm like, "How are you going to pay for that?" And I also manage, or you know, I'm responsible for risk management too, for the agency. So I want to make sure that when we do expend our resources that we are good stewards of them, so we want to make sure that we're getting good prices for things and that we're, you know, using correct controls to buy them, and then that we have security in place so that stuff doesn't disappear.

Rochelle and the executive team approved the build out. In doing so they demonstrate from an administrative and facilities perspective the agency's willingness to support a strengths-based approach to recreational programming that was responsive to young people's interests (i.e., providing physical space for the studio).

With the executive team's approval, Herman worked with the church volunteer group to build the studio. He describes the process.

> We asked (church volunteer group) and they said, "Sure, no problem." Thirty-six hours later, we had a studio built in the basement. They'd, you know, sectioned off some walls with some drywall. They built a nice large space to hang out in the studio. They built a nice little console for us to put the equipment. They had a nice glass barrier to mimic a

> soundproof booth. All the things that you would think you'd see structurally in a music studio. So that's how the whole thing started.

In the following section Herman describes the raw space, noting how it developed an identity as young people engaged with it. He talks about training young people on how to use the recording equipment, thereby helping young people access the studio and increase studio utilization. In addition he describes how the studio engaged disconnected young people at Belfort and how staff used the studio as a leveraging tool in an effort to encourage young people to work on their education goals.

> So what we did, we took the equipment that we had upstairs and we brought it downstairs. We made that the music studio. That's when it became its own space and had its own identity, rather than traveling around through people's rooms on the weekend. We started a book that was a sign-up sheet. I started training people in not any kind of official context. It was much like, "Here's the buttons you press. This is what this does. If you have any questions, come ask me." People started signing up more frequently. It started to become a hangout. I think that, I don't have the hours on me right now, but the big thing that we noticed was that a lot of the folks who were having difficulties in the program – whether it was going to school or getting a job or just kind of abiding by the rules generally – we noticed they were really using the studio. People that were really disconnected with the program – that's where their interest was. Just like with the first guy we worked with, it was kind like, "Well, if you guys want to use the studio, then we're going to have an equal number of hours of you studying for your GED or high school diplomas or what have you." They would just do it right away.

As the studio developed an identity, Herman describes its emerging communal and social qualities. In doing so he positions the studio as a youth centered space where young people engaged their strengths and talents and formed collaborations.

> We had built up this whole space, which was, "Here's a space you can come and record music. You can hang out with your friends." People were starting to hang out with their friends at that point down there. It'd become a cool social setting actually. So people were really kind of invested in the music people were recording. You know, if somebody had a couple songs and somebody could sing a little bit, maybe they sing a hook – on a hook. So people were all invested. People were using their talents in the music studio.

As I discuss in the Introduction chapter, I worked for TLP on a contractual basis around this time, facilitating harm reduction groups for young people. In making the rounds to

announce, "Group time!" for the non-mandatory group, I was drawn into the basement by the, "Thud, thud," of a muted kick drum. Unaware that the studio existed, I was surprised to find two young men working on music, one in the makeshift isolation booth, rapping into a microphone, its diaphragm protected by a makeshift popper-stopper, and the other hunched over the digital recording equipment, simultaneously working out a beat and monitoring the vocals. I had been trying to engage these young men for months with little to no success. I think one of them had come to half of one of the groups. Rather than ask the young men if they wanted to come to group, which they clearly did not want to do as evidenced by their lack of attendance, I asked them if I could hang out. I had no other participants that day, so I had the time. They said, "Okay." As I observed the young men it was clear to me that they were engaging their strengths by composing and producing their own music and that TLP was providing them with the space to do so, in a literal and more metaphorical sense.

3. Devastation and negotiation: Music studio thefts

In late 2007, as momentum built around the studio and young people increasingly defined it as their space, the recording equipment was stolen. Rochelle recalls the impact on the agency, particularly the young people.

> Sometime after we opened the music studio, it was robbed, and young people that were either living in the house or had shortly before left the house, took the equipment, and, you know, ran off with it. So we were without a music studio for a while. And then so that was really a blow. Just sort of broken trust kind of thing. I mean nobody expects young people to resist every temptation that is put in front of them, but that felt like – I know the young people felt really betrayed by their peers that had done this, and people obviously when you get robbed, you feel violated and victimized, so that was a big blow.

Herman recalls the lax security mechanisms in place at the time and overall impact of the theft on the young people.

> What was protecting the equipment at the time was a wooden, locked door on the studio door, and another locked door upstairs. Something happened. Folks got in there. The

> equipment was stolen. People were really devastated. What was really difficult for some of the guys that were working in there – they had logged, some guys, hundreds of hours and recorded one or two full CDs. All their stuff was gone. They had lost all their stuff. These guys who were more hardcore guys that we had here – these guys were almost at having tears because they couldn't believe that they'd spent all this time and someone had stolen all their equipment. They just could not believe it.

In summarizing the theft's impact, Herman states, "This sounds really extreme, but it was like somebody died at the place." While this comparison may initially seem overly dramatic, it speaks to the revered position the studio had acquired within the agency, a respected place of importance and meaningfulness.

Rather than abandon the studio as a form of recreational programming, Herman describes the agency's process in slowly rebuilding it and the mechanisms used to do so.

> We wanted to get the music studio up and running right again. But we're a non-profit. Unfortunately, we don't have thousands of dollars waiting around to build music studios. So there was a long period of time when we didn't have any equipment. So we waited for probably nine months to a year, maybe? Then, we got the equipment back.

He describes how the community, particularly the young people, came together and raised funds to replace the stolen equipment.

> (We) gathered together to replace the equipment. TLP youth held car washes and bake sales throughout the summer to match the stolen equipment valued at $1500. After the money was raised, TLP matched the amount raised by the youth to provide professional studio equipment totaling $3,000.

Ray recalls the youth led fundraising effort as well.

> We had a client that started washing cars and taking the money and saying that we're going to wash cars until we get enough money to get another studio. What ended up happening is I think they came up with half of the money, and the effort was appreciated so much that we got people to donate the other half of the money so that they could get another studio.

Young Louie, a resident at TLP at the time, recalls participating in the car wash. "We raised money and did car washes, sell cookies to get it back running."

In addition to internal fundraising efforts, TLP's development department was approached to participate in an HIV awareness campaign. This served as an additional catalyst to purchase new equipment and rebuild the studio. Herman describes:

> We had an opportunity to participate in an HIV awareness music CD, where they're giving grants out for folks to do positive music with information about HIV for people. Our development office came and said, "Hey, could you guys do something like this?" We said, "Sure, we just need a music studio and we can definitely do it." Based off of that, we were able to kind of angle for the equipment, saying that, "Hey, we can participate in this. Teen Living Program's name will be on this stuff if we can get this equipment back."

Rochelle recalls her hesitancy in considering purchasing new equipment and rebuilding the studio from an administrative perspective. "As an administrator in the agency, I was not anxious to put more equipment into the same space until we had developed appropriate safeguards to prevent something like this from happening again." In responding to the agency's concerns around developing appropriate safeguards, Herman notes, "I did a lot of writing and researching on how to secure the equipment," adding, "Now, that equipment we had locked down. We had it locked down significantly well."

In the above passages, Herman, Ray, Young Louie, and Rochelle highlight several demonstrations of how a PYD approach was threaded through the initial stages of rebuilding the studio. Young people took it upon themselves to raise funds for new equipment and the agency supported them in doing so. In addition, the agency provided additional structural support by applying for a grant to supplement young people's fundraising efforts. Herman continued to play an important role throughout the process as he assisted young people's fundraising efforts and advocated to purchase new equipment for the studio.

With the funds raised by young people, the HIV awareness grant secured, and approval from the agency, TLP began the process of rebuilding the studio. In discussing the process,

Herman recalls a pivotal interaction he had with the young man described above who served as the catalyst for the studio. In the exchange the young man explains to Herman how the recording equipment purchased for the first studio was not meeting young people's needs. Herman recalls:

> The gentleman I was discussing before showed up with a laptop, and he had Fruity Loops on it. He was like, "This is what I need. This is what I need to make these beats." He started doing his own music that way. That's kind of when we realized that the equipment that we have here is not the best fit for what people are looking to do. That was an adjustment I had to make.

Herman goes on to describe how young people's interests and needs were given primary consideration in purchasing the new equipment.

> The big difference I would say that what we did was that first equipment we purchased was purchased off of my knowledge of digital recording, which is going to be consistent with my interest in music, which, at the time, most of my expertise was in recording instruments, not in doing hip hop, not in doing these kinds of things. What I wanted to do was make sure that they had – the equipment was geared towards what they wanted to do. We did a lot of research with the youth about what the best setup for them would be for the kind of music they would want to do. Figured out the best thing to do would be buy a Mac and get some more hip hop friendly stuff, more stuff using synthesizers and drum machines and be able to loop things and try to make it more about what they wanted, rather than what I was working on in my free time.

Herman discusses his shift in thinking, from conceptualizing and building the studio from his perspective to working with young people and conceptualizing and building it with them, from their perspective, furthering incorporating their interests, talents, and strengths into recreational programming and the studio.

> When we first started using the equipment, it was mostly equipment that was about recording live instruments. It was probably the reflection of my recording experiences, which was portable digital recorders recording live bands. We started there. Then, when we figured out that, "Hey, people are more into making beats than recording live instruments," then we switched the focus to be like, "Let's get those skills then." The youth basically, by working with them and looking at what music they were into, we saw we needed to have more electronic based music. It's got to be more hip hop focused. So we went there with it. We looked to the youth and they drove to a degree what equipment we're getting. Not that they knew what equipment they'd get, but they could describe, "This is what we want. This is what would be helpful for us." Then, we'd go out and find what that gear was and put it together.

Curious as to whether Herman sees this shift as a demonstration of implementing a PYD approach to rebuilding the studio, I comment, "Based on my understanding of positive youth development, the young people leading the purchase of the equipment is absolutely an example of that." Herman responds:

> If we weren't using positive youth development, we would probably have a couple electric guitars in our studio. We would have some Suzuki Music Method books,[9] because that's the background of the people who started putting it together. Obviously, that wouldn't have been nearly as impactful. Without the positive youth development, we wouldn't have had that direction if we weren't listening to the youth. We might be instructing them for intense music theory on a chalkboard and that's happened here before, in the past. We're away from that now, because we know it doesn't work, and people are interested in different ways of learning the material or music in general. So instead of going with a portable digital recorder, we bought an iMac and Pro Logic and an M-Audio box and an SM-58 mic.[10] Having Logic there, which is an Apple based program, allowed people to make their own beats. It allowed a much more electronic slash hip hop friendly focus.

With the equipment purchased, young people began to work in the studio again. Herman describes how studio utilization increased, noting a previously unseen level of interest and engagement.

> The studio became really popular at that point. So much so that – I don't know the exact numbers off the top of my head.[11] I remember the big number was looking at the studio space Friday, Saturday nights between 10:00 PM and 1:00 AM. A lot of the folks who were living in the program at the time would go out on Friday and Saturday nights and do whatever they usually do. We found people weren't leaving TLP anymore on Friday and Saturday nights between 10:00 PM and 1:00 AM or whatever it was. They were staying inside and doing music.

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[9] Herman describes the Suzuki Music Method as a process of, "developing tonality and (the) listener's ear," with a strong focus on form.

[10] TLP purchased an I-Mac computer, Logic Pro 8 software, an M-Audio Midi Device, 2 SM 58 Mics, 1 Stereo Amplifier and 2 speakers.

[11] Herman kept a log of utilization and shared the following numbers with me at a later date: 447 hours logged from 11/24/2008 to 02/23/2009, 37 of which were on Friday and Saturday nights between 10:00pm to 12:00am

Herman notes how young people not in compliance with their educational and vocational goals began to work on them in order to spend time in the studio. He goes on to describe how from his perspective, the studio was offering young people an alternative to hanging out on the streets, which is particularly relevant given the waves of violence impacting young people where the agency is located. Herman:

> For some people who are using the studio, not everybody, but for some folks, going to the park and getting high was a normal thing to do on a Friday, Saturday night. Folks would occasionally run into issue with that, with police or other people in the park or all these other factors that can happen when people are outside, late at night. It wasn't our intent to cut that off or anything like that, but it just kind of naturally happened that I'd rather – my time is better spent making music. It's more fun than doing this other stuff I used to do. That was – That's really powerful, to have a computer system completely enrapture these youth's minds. "I'm not going to go out on a Friday or Saturday night. I'm 19, I'm going to stay home, late at night, and work on music in the studio."

Herman goes on to talk about this realization as key in his developing understanding of what the studio was providing young people and the vital role it plays within the agency. "That was a tipping point, in my mind at least, to be like, "This is really important. We have to hold onto this."

The agency moved into a new building in 2009, in the adjacent lot. The supportive services department, including the music studio, remained in the old building while the agency settled into its new space. That spring the old Belfort was broken into. Rooms were vandalized and the agency was robbed, including the studio equipment. Leigh, an intern at the time, recalls receiving news of the break in and theft. She notes the sense of loss felt by staff and young people and that it was a sad and scary time for the agency.

> So I got a call at home, and when things happen that change the way in which we work every day, it's a huge loss for the agency. That was an outlet for our youth. It was a space. It wasn't a TV that they could go and just hang out in a positive way. And we didn't have a lot of those spaces, and we still don't have a lot of those spaces. And so it was a really overwhelming sense of dread I think for the staff because it was like, "Well, we're gonna have to create these new opportunities now because they don't have that

> space." And then there was a huge loss I think for what was stolen from the youth, and kind of that a lot of the youth at the time wanted to be music producers and in the industry, and whether that was a realistic expectation, it was a dream, and it was hope, and you don't see that a lot. And so they took that away and it was really sad and there was a lot of I think tears and anger and frustration and it was a really sad time, a really scary time.

Ray's reflections on the second theft resonate with Leigh's assessment of it being difficult for staff and young people.

> Well, it hurt a lot of people. A lot of people were let down, staff and clients, because the hope was so high for the studio. And to have somebody just come and take the equipment and run off with it hurt a lot of people.

Herman recalls struggling with the second theft from the perspective of someone heavily involved in purchasing the equipment and securing it.

> It was also very difficult for me, being a person who was part of the planning, because I knew it had been stolen once before, and it was going to be tough to get it back a second time. What I forgot to say before was that the second time we got the equipment, we put a lot of time, consideration, and money into securing that equipment. Myself and another gentleman who works here did a lot of research. We had this thing clamped down to the best of our ability. I remember thinking, "There's no way that if somebody decides to break into TLP that they'll be able to get it out of here." But I was wrong.

Herman goes on to note how the second theft, "had the same effect on the youth," referring to the devastation and loss felt by young people after the first theft. Young Louie who was a resident at the time reflects on how he felt.

> Very, very terrible and sad. Just all my work that I worked hard for is just erased. Me first going in the studio, if you talk to Herman, I made one of the best beats that you probably ever hear, and if I still had it, I'd probably get signed because of that beat. But I lost that one and it was a very good beat, similar to the Lil Wayne "A Milli" beat. It was a very nice one. Hopefully, many more to go.

4. <u>Incorporating accountability and responsibility</u>

After being burglarized, robbed, and having the studio equipment stolen twice, the agency grappled with how to proceed. While it was anecdotally clear that there where benefits to the studio (e. g., providing young people with opportunities for creative expression,

incorporating young people in program development, and increased engagement in other supportive services), there was hesitancy to purchase new equipment and rebuild the studio, particularly in light of previous assurances that the equipment was secure. Rochelle shares:

> I was very reluctant at that point. We had twice been, you know, in this position. Even when we wanted to do it – not in that old space, we could not. It was not going to be secure, and if young people knew that stuff was there and they could get in in the middle of the night, it was going to be gone. So my concern always when we were talking about putting a new music studio in place was were we – I mean you told me last time that this wasn't going to happen again, so this time, we need to, you know, it just can't keep happening.

Herman eventually approached the agency about purchasing new equipment and developing a studio in the new Belfort. Anne recalls the discussion:

> I heard how important it was from people like Herman, okay, my initial thought was, and in talking to people like (former employee), it became important for me to be looking for sources of funding for arts, and those are very kinda restricted monies, and not everybody in the philanthropy world in Chicago around homeless youth wants to do that kind of funding. But I do think that there are opportunities. And so we really wanted to find a way to make it happen, and the staff were adamant that it had to happen. So although we didn't identify a funding source at the time, they said to me, "We wanna go ahead and do this, and we wanna use part of our budgets," from their programmatic budgets to do it. So I was, "Great. Go for it."

Rochelle recalls her initial reaction to the discussion:

> Well, you know, my first inclination is what are you – are you kidding me? Really? What's going to happen that's different this time? What's going to be different? And so – but I'm not – I don't usually get entrenched into positions just for the sake of having them. So if there's a case to be made, I will listen to it, and Herman made a good case, and you know, had the backing of the clinical director.

Serving as clinical director, Pepper recalls supporting Herman in making the pitch to the rest of the executive team:

> I believe in it so strongly and seen it work over the years that I would pitch it to anybody who would listen and had the money. If you got the money, it's not a lot [laughs]. You know. You think about what the benefits are. The costs are way under the benefits for the studio. That also made it an easy sell.

Rochelle concurs with Pepper, noting the importance of the studio while at the same time making a demand for a stronger security plan.

> I mean – I've – you know, it seemed like from a clinical standpoint, from a services standpoint, a valuable thing, and I didn't object to it at any level from that perspective. My perspective was always just make sure this doesn't get stolen again. Just make sure that it doesn't.

With the support of the agency to price out new equipment and develop a plan, Herman describes the process of finding space for the studio in the new building and developing a security plan to assure the safety of the new equipment. Herman describes:

> So what happened was, eventually, we built a new building that we're in right now. We don't have an unfinished basement like we did before. So that music studio, in the old building, that died with that equipment when that was stolen. Then, when we got into the new building, the idea was, "Where can we do a studio? How's it going to look? How's it going to be different?" In the new building we have, we don't have the same amount of space that we did in the old building. Much nicer, but not the same amount of space.

The decision was made to house the studio in the conference room, a space on the northeast corner on first floor, adjacent to the milieu (see Figure 12). Herman goes on to share the language developed for the security plan he laid out for the executive team.

> TLP will house the music studio in Belfort's conference room. We will purchase a roll top desk that will be securely bolted to the wall. The roll top desk will be locked with a Belkin Bulldog Heavy Duty Security lock. All equipment will be housed inside the desk and secured up to 10,000 lbs of pressure with Heavy Duty Belkin Security Kit adhesive. It will be a physical impossibility to remove the equipment.

The plan was approved and Herman moved forward with purchasing new equipment and building out the studio in the conference room. Leigh recalls her reaction to hearing the news that studio was to be revamped:

> A lotta doubt and a lot of question, but that's how I approach a lot of things. Just, "How is this gonna work?" and, "This is the conference room and how is gonna remain safe and how are the checks and balances –" the details – Herman is not a detail person. I am a detail person, and that's why we work well together. So I was just already in the process of brainstorming, "How is this gonna actually look every day," versus, "Great, this is a great idea."

In the above passages Anne, Herman, Leigh, Pepper, and Rochelle highlight the tension between the agency's desire to continue providing young people with a music studio, a historically youth centered space for creativity and expression that had also shown promise as a leveraging tool in encouraging young people to work toward their educational and vocational goals, and their hesitancy to move forward with purchasing new equipment and rebuilding the studio in light of the thefts. As a result, the agency developed increased accountability and security measures to ensure the safety of the new equipment and the studio. In doing so, the agency provides young people with opportunities to take responsibility and be accountable for their actions and decisions around studio access and utilization, thereby further embedding and implementing a PYD approach to recreational programming and the ongoing maintenance of the studio. In addition, key informants describe the agency's high expectations for staff around keeping the studio equipment safe and secure.

Anne describes the discussions around developing increased accountability and security measures.

> Any concerns I think came more out of how do you protect it so that – you know, you had two times where it was violated and the young people ultimately lose out, right? So it's more about how do we protect it in such a way – which is really a good thing, because then it gets people thinking about how do we protect it, right? And what do we do not only in this obvious of locking it up and bolting it down, but also what procedures are put in place to safeguard it, all those kinds of things.

As manager of supportive services at the time, Herman worked with staff and young people to develop processes and procedures to safeguard the studio, including an orientation and training, and check out/check in processes. Herman describes the orientation and training process.

> Initially, if someone's interested in using the equipment, they have an orientation that they go through. So when everybody does an intake here, when I meet with them to talk about what supportive services is or what their education's going to look like here, what their options are, at the end of that conversation, I always say, "We also have a music

> studio here, if you're interested in learning how to produce music, or if you're just interested in seeing what it's all about, or if you're interested in guitar or piano lessons, we offer that as well." So the first meeting, if they're interested, is an orientation meeting. It usually lasts, I would say an hour. It's just to be like, "Here's how you set up and take down the equipment. Here are the rules of the studio." It's not meant to make them an expert on anything, because these programs are really large and that's really difficult to do. So it's just about exposing them to see if they're interested in it. It's just about talking about like, "Well, what are you interested in doing in here? What do you want to do?"

Jay, a current Belfort resident, comically and poignantly recalls his experience of the orientation. He notes how it broadened his pre-conceived notions of what the studio would be and left him with a sense of accountability and stewardship for the equipment and space.

> When I first got in there before I asked any questions I was like, "What the fuck is this?" I said, "They have a computer with a microphone and a damn keyboard. You niggers kidding me? Are you serious? Is this a studio?" They broke it down saying like, "All right, you do this. You make this. You do this. You can do it like that." "Yeah, I didn't know we can do it like that." They taught all of its functions, how to hook up the microphone, how to create sounds and beats off of it, how to use the mini keyboard, how to use FL Studios. It's a pretty cool program, very good. It's a, well…You're lucky as hell to have it and shit. It's like, "Wow. Like where the hell did they get this stuff and how do I keep it up and running?

Following the orientation, Herman provides the young people with a studio test (see Appendix Q for music studio test). He describes the additional training mechanism:

> After they do that orientation, and they get a test – it's called Studio Test One. It asks questions that we discussed, like, "What's a MIDI cable? What's an input?" They have to answer those things. There's also some questions on there specifically about how to configure audio programs on the machine. There's a couple things that can happen on a regular basis that can make the process of making music a little bit difficult. Just like – where are you going to send the audio signal out? Through the headset or through the inboard speakers? Everybody always looks at me a little oddly when I give their test at first. It's like, "A test for this?" It's three pages. And you know what I tell them right away, "It's not a test. You can look this stuff up on Google. You can go talk to anybody who's in the studio already and get these answers. It has to be that you're familiar with it or aware of this stuff." And it, you know – these programs are so huge. It could take you a day to find that if somebody doesn't tell you about it. So, we make sure they have all those easy fixes so they're not going to get hung up on anything.

I had the opportunity to observe Bobbie, a current Belfort resident, work through the test in the milieu and offer her some assistance. From journal entry 11/29/2011:

> *Bobbie had yet to complete her studio test. Herman noted that she could ask for help with the test, suggesting that she work with Marcus and Theo, but Bobbie looked at me. I hung back for a bit and eventually walked over to the kitchen island. I wanted to see what was on the test and to offer my assistance. I noted that there were several questions that seemed relatively advanced, almost a bit too advanced for an introductory, this is how you get things going assessment of studio skills. But, I also note that it covered some essential technical knowledge, without which a young person might be lost in the studio, important troubleshooting skills. I helped Bobbie answer a couple of questions (e. g., what does DAW stand for?) and noted that she seemed far more focused on the number of questions than actually answering the questions. At least three times she counted the number of questions from the last question on the last page to the first question on the first page. Each time she answered a question she would recount.*

As my journal entry suggests, some young people struggle with some of the content and working through the studio test. That being said, it also prepares young people to engage with and utilize the studio in an effective and productive manner. In addition, the test provides opportunities for young people and staff to work together to ensure proper utilization of the studio, thereby increasing accountability and security in the space.

Young people are required to checkout the studio equipment in order to use the studio. This process involves notifying a staff member who unlocks the conference room/studio and the cabinet that houses the equipment. Staff and young people then use studio equipment checklists to checkout the equipment and sign young people into the studio (see Appendix R music studio sign in/out log). Checklists include date and time of check-in, the young person and staff member's signatures, and an itemization of studio equipment. Herman explains how this process provides additional accountability around the studio.

> It keeps people accountable. It keeps the equipment safe. It lets us know how often people are using it, what they're using it for, and, ultimately, that will hopefully help us get more equipment. I think that where we're at now, compared to where we were before, is a product of going through processes and analysis and figuring out that the most important thing is to have the equipment really safe.

If young people leave the studio for any reason (e. g., smoke break, snack, etc.), they are required to go through a similar process of finding a staff member to check the equipment back in. Leigh describes how young people often inadvertently overlook the latter part of this process.

> The checkout process is pretty easy. It's that check in process. So you have a 19-year-old youth in the studio and they've been in there and they're being creative and all this stuff, and then they head out 'cause they wanna a cigarette or they need to go to the bathroom, or they're done, and that process of, "Oh, I need to check this back in and I need to find a staff," that doesn't always – and I don't think it's intentional. I really, really don't. I think it's just two parts of the brain working very differently, and having to try to – and, also, making an assumption what you and I take for granted might not click always for someone who's experienced trauma and those types of things. And so I think it's just it's making those two things work.

I observed the studio unattended few times during data collection, but it did happen and there were consequences for young people. From journal entry 11/25/2009:

> *As I entered the building I headed toward the studio. A YDS1 flagged me down, yelling from the down the hall that Outlaw wasn't in there and that he wouldn't be allowed in there for the rest of the night. Apparently Pepper stopped by moments before I arrived and found the studio door wide open and the cabinet open as well, which essentially means that the studio gear could easily have been stolen. Apparently Pepper asked the YDS1 who had been in the studio. It was Outlaw. Per Pepper, he was not allowed back in the studio that evening. In addition, he received a check on his 50-yard line. Later, I ran into Outlaw in the stairwell. He asked if I was sticking around. "Yeah, I'll be in the studio working on notes. Staff said you're not allowed back in the studio?" He seemed humored but also a bit surprised, "Oh, they didn't tell me that…" and moved to head back up the stairs. I said I'd be around for a bit and if I didn't see him tonight I'd see him later.*

In describing the connection between the 50-yard line and the studio, Herman notes the importance of making sure young people understand why they are getting a check and instances in which young people have demonstrated accountability around the studio on their own volition.

> The only connection between the 50 yard line and the music studio space is if you leave the music studio equipment unattended or in any kind of way that could make it susceptible to theft or anything like that, you get a mark on your 50 yard line. I've never given someone a mark on their 50 yard line for that in the studio without them totally understanding the reason why. I've even had two separate people say, "Give me a check for that, cause I don't want to do that again." Which is about as positive as you can

> possibly have – honestly [laughs]. If somebody asked me to give them the check to help hold them accountable, something's working there. That's a good thing.

In discussing accountability and security around the studio and related equipment, Rochelle states, "I don't think that the young people are responsible for making sure that that's safe. I think staff are responsible for making sure that that's safe." Pepper picks up on this idea of staff accountability as well.

> If you don't have accountability – People go in there – A mic could be missing, earphones could be missing, and a piece of equipment that was supposed – So we have a full inventory that all of our staff are trained on and a manual – they know there's an inventory log there – all these things should be present when you're checking in and checking out and young people's signatures there just like our signature is there. We're account – If we lose something on our watch, I mean you could be accountable for replacing it. That's huge, when the agency says, "Okay, we're invested. We purchased it. We're accountable. We've secured it. We've put the structure around it. And we're making you financially accountable to it as a staff member." If something is lost or stolen because you didn't secure it, but you signed it, you're responsible for it. Don't put your John Hancock on something that you're not willing to be fully – We all get that. We all – Actually, we implemented – This is a new policy that was implemented about three years ago, where any agency property that was lost or stolen as a result of staff negligence is replaced or repaired by that staff, including the music studio. So, we take it seriously and we're fully invested in it.

"That's huge!" I say, impressed with the agency's commitment to the studio. Pepper continues:

> Humongous. Because I don't want to pay for it. Young people – and our staff – there was some rub with that. "What does that mean?" Once we clarified that we're not talking about the kinds of thefts that we had before where somebody broke in while you were working and stole it, we're talking about you signed off on having secured all of this equipment and you were the last person to have been there – when we go back and check, it wasn't properly secure and something is missing – you're now accountable to that. Once they got it was more about being negligent than anything, they got it. We're not looking to charge you for equipment. We're looking to hold you accountable for negligence. We don't have a negligent staff. That made it go over much better, cause when you hear that – Just like our CTA passes, I'm responsible for them. Thousands of dollars. If they're in my desk and I don't lock my desk and I leave here and my door's not locked, I got to replace all those CTA passes, because I didn't secure them properly. So, the studio is right in there with that. It's an essential part of programming. We've invested money and time. We should be accountable.

5. Young people as music studio experts

In addition to developing a detailed security plan and increased accountability measures to safeguard the studio, Herman envisioned young people taking on leadership roles in the studio by orienting and training new studio users. Pepper provides some background on how the idea developed:

> Herman came up with this idea – because we have limited resources and man hours – that young people who were consistent users of the studio, that he could train on higher-level – that he could train to be him, essentially – teaching a young person how to use it, acclimating them, everything – they would have to go through, I think he said, two or three trainings where he supervised the training of that young person. So, he's going to sit back and watch them do it. He'll fill in where he needs to support their growth areas, but once they've completed all that and he signs off on it, they can be paid for every young person that they trained to use the studio. Yeah. We don't want them to do his job. That's what he gets paid to do. We respect that.

Originally given the title, Studio Experts, Herman shares the language from the proposal.

> Studio experts are youth who have completed all standard and advanced studio trainings. These youth show exceptional skills and an advanced understanding of the equipment. Studio Experts can train other youth in the studio and enjoy VIP hours of operation.

While developed as a means to address, "limited resources and man hours," as Pepper outlines above, the position also provides select young people with additional opportunities to practice accountability and responsibility around the studio. In addition, it provides select young people with an increased sense of ownership in the studio and employment.

Theo, a current Belfort resident and consistent studio user, was asked to be a Studio Expert. During our interview I ask Theo to tell me more about the role. Theo responds:

> Well, I've been working with the studio for so long that I pretty much understand the basic and some detailed ins and outs of the studio program. There are so many people that want to learn it, that I kind of volunteer to help tutor and teach them how it works so they can go in and be independent artists and producers. They can mix and match to where they can do it all themselves and they don't really have to outsource and kind of depend on other people. They can be independent.

I ask Theo, "How does it feel to kind of have some employment coming around in terms of being able to tutor people and certifying them in the space and so on?" He responds:

> It feels good to know that there are other – that I'm viewed at as more than a producer or instrumentalist. I'm looked at as a teacher. I've had clients ask me to teach them how to play piano, how to learn the studio, and the different things I've learned how to do. So I'm glad that people see me in a different way now. My overall view is starting to expand.

"Your overall view of…?" I ask. Theo continues:

> Well, not necessarily my overall view but my peer's overall perception of me. So they see me as more than just, "Oh yeah, he does this and does that." They're like, "Man, he does a long list of stuff." Because I don't limit myself to anything. I've learned several instruments. I'm picking up several trades. So I'm kind of like a one-man enterprise. I do it all. There's nothing that I cannot do if I just try. Cause that's, if I just… No matter what I do, I want to at least try to do everything that I physical and mentally can before my time is up.

In the above passages, Theo describes how the Studio Expert position provides him with an opportunity to share his strengths and talents with other young people and in doing so provides them with an opportunity to be successful in the studio. In addition, he notes that through sharing his skills and training others he has the opportunity to expand their perceptions of him and build his own confidence.

The Studio Expert role was piloted during the study, but never fully realized due to some young people's lax accountability and responsibility around the studio. Pepper explains:

> I still have some hesitation because of the security of the equipment and that young people can be irresponsible at times. I've come in and I've caught the equipment not secured properly. (Young person) in particular was one of them on more than one occasion. So we've postponed implementing that until this young person can go back and consistently show his responsibility and accountability to that equipment. A young person can't pay for it if it's stolen on their watch. They'll be sorry and they'll feel bad, but it won't replace the equipment. I won't be able to, either. I couldn't even ask the agency to. It's way, way big and way, way important. And that's the one piece that I can hold my staff accountable in some ways that I cannot my young people. That means that we have to really, really, really be 100 percent sure and on the same page before we give that responsibility to a young person. But we're going there. Just gotta work that piece out.

In the above passage, Pepper highlights the ongoing tension between wanting to provide young people with opportunities to take on leadership roles and increased ownership in the studio and the realities of where young people are in their process of accepting the responsibilities that come with doing so. While the Studio Expert position was not formally implemented during the study period, Marcus, another current Belfort resident and consistent studio user, and Theo did informally orient and train several young people. Ultimately, limited financial resources delayed full implementation of the positions.

6. <u>Herman and the young people</u>

When asked to describe the factors and processes that contribute to the sustained and ongoing existence of the studio, key informants most often cited the increased accountability and security measures discussed in the previous section. In addition, they cited Herman's role in advocating for and championing the studio, young people's desire for the space, and the benefits key informants believe young people gain from their engagement with the studio. Anne describes Herman's role as an advocate for the studio. "Well, my immediate response is because of people like Herman. Herman is the greatest advocate and his energy around it garners other advocates, Pepper, and other staff." Pepper's response echoes Anne's sentiments, presenting more of a team approach, but in the end acknowledging that Herman did most of the work to get the studio up and running again.

> But the fact that we have a third opportunity, because – I think Herman and I are a team in tandem. Any way that we can find – It's important – I mean – Herman worked his butt off this time. I mean we got the equipment for the studio at major, reduced rates. I mean some was donated. Some was rebuilt. Some was greatly reduced. We worked really hard to make it happen. We had the support of our executive director. Nothing happens if you don't have the support of the administration. But once we broke down what it would cost, and we wrote up an analysis of – Herman, I shouldn't say we. Herman wrote the analysis for how it was being utilized and what it meant to young people. We had hard facts. I don't think it was a hard sell.

Leigh acknowledges that Herman's vested interest in the studio and his unwillingness to take no for an answer have contributed most to its ongoing existence.

> Honestly, I think it's Herman. He has a huge interest in it, and I hate the word "passion," but he has a vested interest in it, and he has seen what music can do, or that space can do for our youth. He has a history with it. I think he's been around for all three of the generations of it, and so he knows the importance of it. I think it's his determination to make it work. I think he hears a lotta nos, but he keeps pushing until someone says yes.

Leigh goes on to discuss her concerns about Herman's intensive role the development and ongoing maintenance of the studio, specifically the fate of the studio if and when he moves on from Belfort and TLP.

> I do have fears whenever Herman is no longer here, who will take over that. I think someone has to own it and take care of it, and nurture it and introduce it to youth, because then I think it just becomes stale space if that's something that's not – again, that positive youth – introducing them and showing – sorry, and showing them what's in there and what it's about, and it's not this big scary space, but it's a space you could actually use. So I think it's about passing that on to someone, that will take over in that same way.[12]

After hours of observation and key informant interviews, it is clear to me as well that Herman plays an important role around the studio. From developing strengths-based recreational programming, to loaning young people his personal recording equipment, to advocating for multiple equipment repurchases after the thefts, to incorporating young people's interests, strengths, and talents in each iteration of the studio, he has demonstrably played a vital role in the development of the studio and it's ongoing existence. When asked about the factors and processes that contribute to the sustained and ongoing existence of the studio, rather than discuss his role as other key informants did, he talked about the inevitability of the studio developing in an agency like TLP in a neighborhood like Bronzeville (see above section on Bronzeville in this

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[12] Since data collection ended, the agency has hired a staff member with an interest in the studio. This staff member has taken an active role in the studio by providing additional technical support to young people on a scheduled and as needed basis.

chapter for additional context). Curious as to how he saw his role and other key informants perception of his role, I asked the following question.

> I just asked you – You talked to me about why TLP has a music studio space for young people, and you talked about the community (Bronzeville). My sense is if I were to ask other staff that question, they would say, "Well, it's because of Herman." How do you respond to that idea?

Herman responds:

> I mean I think I happen to have recording gear at the same time, but I'm not the first person who played music to come here and involve themselves in music. I'm thinking of when I first started, maybe six months after I started, we had a YDS1 who was teaching guitar lessons. He had a really, really fantastic guitar lesson class actually. He did a really, really good job of it. He, I remember, put out a CD with a bunch of recordings he had done at some other studio and at our studio and had used it. So, I really think it just happens to be – Somebody happened to walk by and say, "Hey, I know where to buy this equipment. This equipment, here, will be an amazing thing." I know that's where it comes from because I didn't set out, coming here, like, "I'm going to put a music studio in Bronzeville." A guy wanted to rap and so I happened to know where to get the equipment for it. That's it.
>
> Just like if somebody wanted to be, you know, a doctor, somebody's going to say, "You need to go to med school for that. Here's how you do it. Here's what college you should go to and here's what kind of grades you can expect." It's the exact same thing. You have an interest in music. Here's how you can pursue it further. I think you're going to have less people working here that are musicians or musically based, obviously, because not everybody's going to do that. But I honestly think it was going to happen here regardless of if I was here or not. Just a matter of time. The technology has come to a point where it's affordable enough to do, and enough people have access to it. It's popular. It's going to happen, regardless of who's here.

In the above section Herman pushes back on the notion that he played a significant role in the development of the studio, citing that it was inevitable based on young people's interest. Rochelle agrees, noting that while staff certainly played a role in reopening the studio, young people's voice played the most important role. She articulates reopening the studio as a demonstration of the agency's commitment to PYD.

> Well, certainly youth want this. And I can't imagine us just saying, "Well, then we don't care about it anymore." I think that youth voice was really important in the decision to reopen it. Youth were clamoring for it. Certainly, staff were articulating it, but it was – it

> wasn't staff that really want to do this. It was the youth really want it. So I think it's a demonstration of our commitment to positive youth development that we were willing to kind of go through these steps we might not normally have gone through because of the sort of high demand factor.

Pepper builds on Rochelle's assertion that youth voice plays an important role in the sustained and ongoing existence of the studio. When I ask her why the studio persists, she responds:

> Cause they (young people) want it and we believe in it. The studio exists cause youth – We see it. The outcomes show it. It works. It enhances our services. It enhances their experience of our services. For many of them, it helps them manage this crazy thing called life. Yeah.

Pepper goes to discuss the benefits she believes young people gain from their engagement with the studio. She describes how the studio is a youth centered space focused on their creativity and freedom of expression.

> A place of escape. A place to not be observed. We don't – That's their space. Staff don't – We don't need to go in there and observe them and listen to it and scrutinize it and see if it's up to a standard or any of that. It's their space. It is truly a youth space in that sense. Freedom of expression and creativity is the best way to describe it. It's a youth space, certainly not – I mean staff go in there, but it's not our space, it's their space.

Herman builds on Pepper's assertion that the studio is space for self-expression for Belfort residents and highlights the importance of having a space for them, many of whom were formerly homeless, to do so. He notes the importance of not censoring young people and creating a space for them to voice their experiences.

> The other thing is if somebody's been out on the street for three years, I would think they have some things they want to express. They might have some perspectives on society or people or government or politics or anything that I don't have. That gives them a space to have those things heard. It's going to be recorded. It'll be there as long as they take care of it. This is a place of expression. We're not doing it in a public place. We're not putting TLP's name on it. This is art. This is people's expression. We're not going to censor that or try to interpret it in any kind of way – that's just what it is. So I think early on, people had some concerns about, "Well, of the 10 songs we recorded in the last

> month, two of them had violent lyrics. Are we going to let people just sit down there and rap about violence?" Yeah.
>
> Yeah, we are going to let them do that, because that's what expression is and that's what art is. That's a lesson that hopefully these youth are learning from it, too – that there is a place you can do this. We do have free speech in this country. What I run into most often with the youth, when we've discussed those things, is people saying, "Listen, we're not making this stuff up. We're not just dreaming. This is my story. This is what happened. This is where I came from. This is what I'm experiencing. For right or wrong, this is what I want to do right now." It's part of a process, right? People need to express that. If you were raised around violence or whatever it is – negative influences – at some point, you got to exorcise those demons. They got to come out. I think the studio's a good safe place for those to come out.

By consciously developing a music studio where young people are free to creatively express themselves and give voice to their experiences, TLP further demonstrates its commitment to a PYD approach to recreational programming and the development and ongoing maintenance of the studio space.

7. <u>Staffing and space challenges</u>

Key informants describe challenges around providing appropriate staff support for the studio. Anne addresses her broader concerns with providing appropriate staffing for recreational programming.

> I think with a lot of alternative therapy opportunities, it's staffing. That's always a challenge. You want to support that young person in engaging in that alternative therapy, whether it's music or art or dance, whatever, and then it's having the staffing to make sure that that happens. So I think that's the biggest challenge.

Prior to the beginning the study, TLP's recreation coordinator position was discontinued due to budgetary constraints. As supportive services manager at the time, Herman took on additional responsibilities to address the gaps in staffing, resulting in a decreased presence in the studio. When I ask Herman to tell me how much time he spends in the studio he notes how his presence has decreased due to increasing demands on his schedule.

> When we first started the music studio space, I think probably I was spending three to four hours a week probably in the music studio either training people or helping people figure out techniques or just talking about music with folks and what they wanted to do. Now that we are a little bit shorter staffed, I probably spend, if I'm training someone in that week, maybe two hours. If I'm not, I try to stop by, but probably about ten minutes right now – probably ten minutes a week, I would say, which is not ideal. From compared to what we had before, yeah there's just not as much time, so probably ten minutes a week at this point.

In order to get a better sense of how his presence has decreased over the years I ask, "Can you tell me a little bit about how you went from spending three to four hours a week in the studio to now, only spending about ten minutes in the studio per week – minus orientation?" Herman responds:

> I would say the main reason I'm not spending as much time down there is because I have other responsibilities at this point. I just have uhh…When we started the studio, I was still the education coordinator, so I had more free time to be able to do projects like that, and now, as a manager of supportive services and having a short staff situation, I'm mostly busy trying to cover all the things that other folks used to do as well as teaching classes. So the music studio has to be more secondary for me at this point, because my main role is to provide classes to folks.

When asked how he thinks young people perceive him, Herman notes his concerns about being busy, less present in the studio, and the subsequent effects on his relationships with young people.

> My worry the last couple months is they view me as a guy who's always running from point A to point B. I can sense that in my conversations with folks. I think they see how busy the department is, and I think that because I don't have the same amount of time to sit down for a half an hour and really listen to their music and talk to them about it and offer suggestions or input on recording techniques, they still approach me for all those things but they, I think that they realize and see how busy everything is. So I think they're more standoffish to ask me questions than before . The other thing I've noticed is when folks come in and I give them a training, I give them the training and then I might not see them for a week or two weeks. So I don't have that time to make that connection, where they kind of feel like we're on the same team, working towards their goal of making this music, or that, you know, I don't give as many piano lessons as I used to be able to give. So, there's not that direct teacher student relationship in that sense.

Staff and young people describe challenges with studio being a non-dedicated space as well. Smurf, a current resident discusses the need for the studio to be in a different, more private location with increased access.

> I think we need it in a different location because then you have more privacy and then you have more time in there and then everybody not going to hear you outside in the milieu. You know what I'm saying? It should be a quieter, you know, space where and what you're doing something you can do it right. It's like do it right, you don't got to be a little low or whatever or it got to be waiting on somebody to come out of a meeting to go into the studio. That takes up the time because you can't go in there during the daytime because they have meetings and stuff going on in there and when you're not at school and you not working you looking for those things you should be able to go in the studio and work on stuff that you like to work on. You know what I'm saying?

The above passage highlights several limitations of the current studio location. As Smurf suggests, the milieu is present in the studio and vice versa, which leads to a lack of privacy for studio users. Marcus addresses his concerns about the lack of privacy.

> I like to have my own personal space in the studio. I like to have – 'cause they way how they got the room set up, you sitting right behind the door. People could just look through the window. I don't like that 'cause it kinda throw me off distraction.

Herman discusses the current studio location and its privacy limitations as well. He describes how the current iteration of the studio differs from older iterations, noting a decreased communal fell due to its current location and how that may result in decreased utilization.

> The studio space that we currently have is very much present in the milieu, whereas if you're walking in our building, it's pretty wide-open floors. On the first floor, there's the general kitchen area, the general hang out area. Around that are staff offices. Next to a staff office is the conference room. Inside the conference room, which is a see through door, then there's the studio equipment. So it's not so much like a clubhouse anymore. It's more part of the – It's more visible, I should say, in the milieu. I see it as less of a place for folks to be able to go hide out and have their own space, and more as kind of a work station. I think that because of that, you know, people would be less likely to use the equipment, because it's not kind of in its own world, you know. In our old building, it was very much in the basement, where nobody goes. There's nothing down there, except for the studio. In here, I think that it's more visible. Less privacy involved with it. It's less of a group area and more of a one-on-one area. Not to say that people who don't definitely use – Have more people in there when they're recording. I've noticed there's not seven people down there for four hours anymore. Now, it's one person or two

> people. They'll have some people come in and out, depending on if somebody's going to sing on something or something like that. It is different. I would say that's probably because of the visibility of the studio and the lack of privacy surrounding it.

As Smurf notes above the studio is used for other purposes, as it is a non-dedicated space, serving as a conference room by day and music studio by night. She notes her frustration with the studio not being available to young people during the day. When I ask her, "Tell me why? Why?" she states:

> Because it keeps people from doing illegal stuff. It keeps them doing productive things. Writing and making music is productive. You never know. If you get more time you come up with a whole CD, you sell that CD to somebody, that somebody else get a hold to it and you now a whole big superstar or stuff like that. That stuff take time. You need more time to work on it. If it's the only resource you got you got to use it to its fullest extent. Yep.

Smurf makes a strong argument in the above passage that increased access to the studio may engage young people in safe, productive activities, harkening back to Herman's earlier assertions that the former iterations of the studio kept young people off the streets on Friday and Saturday nights. In addition to the studio not being available for young people during the day, the studio is often used for administrative meetings, groups, and other supportive services programming, including educational and vocational services, during posted studio hours. Pepper addresses the issue, noting the limitations of the building and the studio being a non-dedicated space.

> I would say the unique challenge is we use that room for so many things that even the schedule that we have isn't always the schedule that lets them use the studio. Their patience, I think, is sometimes challenging. They're working on things or they just want to get something out. "I thought you said…" That's when we feel bad, too, cause it's just like, "I know, but there's nowhere else in the building for me to do this."

V. FINDINGS: EXPERIENCES IN THE STUDIO AND THEIR ATTACHED MEANING

This second chapter of findings explores young people's experiences in the TLP music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Using data gathered from participant observation sessions and interviews with young people and Herman, I develop an ethnographic account that frames the studio as a space that provides young people with opportunities to engage in various forms of music production, education, and appreciation. Young people's experiences with music production provide them with opportunities to develop compositional, performance, and production skills as well as important interpersonal, intrapersonal, and technical skills. Young people's experiences with music education provide them with opportunities to enhance existing music related skills and develop new music related skills, as well as opportunities to play an important role in the ongoing development and maintenance of the studio. Young people's experiences with music appreciation provide them with opportunities to independently and collectively engage in a reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and recreation in the TLP music studio.

In terms of the meaning young people attach to their experiences in the studio, young people describe their experiences in the studio as opportunities for connection and engagement with other young people and staff. Young people frame the studio as a space for creative expression, noting that they also experience the studio as technically and relationally challenging and frustrating at times. Young people note that in working through challenges and frustrations, they ultimately experience the studio as a space of opportunity. Data from staff and key informant interviews as well excerpts from the co-constructed audio documentary support young people's framing of the studio as a space of opportunity.

The chapter begins with a description of the TLP music studio, including a physical description of the studio and the studio equipment. This is followed by a contextualizing examination of young people's relationship with music. In this section, young people discuss the important role of family in providing them with access and exposure to music and musical instruments at a young age. Young people describe this early exposure as important to their upbringing and continued involvement and interest in music. Young people describe their ongoing involvement and interest in music as an important means of creative expression and an outlet that has at times kept them safe and out of trouble. In addition, young people discuss gaining a sense of connection through their interest and involvement in music as well as gaining recognition for their skills, strengths, and talents. A brief note about the presentation of the data: *italicized* excerpts represent data from fieldnotes, memos, and journal entries. Non-italicized passages represent data from interviews.

A. Teen Living Program Music Studio

The TLP music studio is a non-dedicated space, serving the dual purposes of a conference room and music studio. Located in the northeast corner on the first floor of Belfort House (see Figure 14), the studio is comprised of two tables in the center of the room, shaped in a *T* formation (see Figure 16). Chairs surround the tables for young people and staff to engage in various forms of work, administrative and group-oriented work when the space is in use for meetings and groups and studio oriented work when the space is in use as a studio (e.g., song development and writing). File cabinets that house toiletries and other necessities for residents line the northern wall of the room, while bookshelves and artwork adorn the western and southern walls (see Figures 18-19). The east wall and northeast corner of the room have large windows that look out on the adjacent alleyway and park (see Figures 16-17). The gardens and

Figure 16. TLP Music Studio - East Wall

Figure 17. TLP Music Studio - Northeast Corner

Figure 18. TLP Music Studio - South Wall

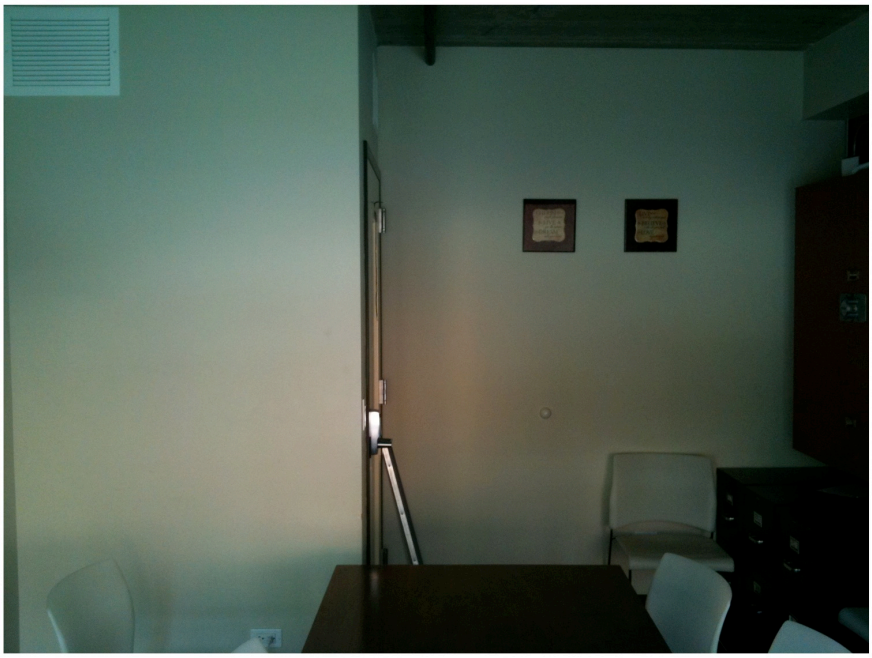

Figure 19. TLP Music Studio - West Wall

Figure 20. TLP Music Studio Cabinet/Northwest Corner

Figure 21. TLP Music Studio Equipment

green space are visible from these views as well (see Figures 9-12). While not a large space, the windows add natural light to the room, thereby making it feel more open and inviting.

The studio equipment is housed in a locked cabinet in the northwest corner of the room (see Figure 20). The cabinet is secured by a master lock in the center of the cabinet and two additional, smaller locks, one above and the other below the master lock (see Figure 20). When the studio is in use, the cabinet doors swing open and the file cabinet below serves as a workspace for studio users (see Figure 21). The studio equipment consists of a refurbished Apple IMac Desktop 21.5 inch 3.06GHz Intel Core 2 running Logic Studio audio production software. Logic Studio is a software suite, which includes Logic Pro 9, Mainstage 2, Soundtrack Pro 3, and some additional support programs. Logic Pro is the most utilized program in the studio. It is a software-based digital audio workstation complete with hard drive recording, playback, mixing, and mastering capabilities. I did not observe young people using Mainstage during the study period, which makes sense given that it is used for live audio work. Soundtrack Pro is used in audio post-production for film. While not used during the observational period of the study, the audio documentary team used Soundtrack Pro to mix the co-constructed audio documentary.

In addition to the IMac, studio hardware equipment includes a Korg X5 synthesizer that also works as a MIDI controller for Logic Pro MIDI instruments, two Shure SM58LC dynamic microphones, one 15' microphone cable, one microphone stand, a M-Audio Fast Track Pro 4X4 Mobile USB Audio/MIDI Interface with Preamps, one 3' MIDI cable, and two sets of Sennheiser HD280 Pro Headphones for recording, monitoring, and mixing purposes (see Appendix S TLP

music studio equipment list).[13] Unlike prior iterations of the TLP music studio, the current studio is not equipped with monitors. Young people use headphones and/or the IMac speakers to monitor their work. While not an optimal arrangement for recording, monitoring, and mixing their work, given the proximity of the studio to administrative offices and the milieu, this arrangement is unlikely to change in the near future.

Young people are trained on how to set up the equipment during their studio orientation. As the following fieldnote excerpt explains, it is a fairly involved process. From fieldnote 08/09/2011:

> *Unloading and setting up the studio equipment involves several steps. I've seen young people approach it different ways. Few of the young people I've observed seem to have any problems getting things set up, which is surprising as equipment set up can be complex and confusing given the various ins, outs, combinations and machinations of machines, resulting in troubleshooting nightmares. So, setting up the equipment involves:*
> - *Plugging the IMac into the power outlet, powering up, logging into the young person's password protected account, and launching Logic Pro*
> - *Setting up the Korg synthesizer, which includes pulling it down from the cabinet, getting it situated on the black file cabinet that serves as a kind of desk/console for the studio, and plugging the synthesizer into the line and MIDI-in of the M-Audio Box*
> - *Connecting the M-Audio Box to the IMac and verifying that sound is coming out of the right output, which is either the internal output (i.e., IMac speakers) or external output (i.e., headphones output on M-Audio Box).*
> - *Once the output has been established, which is where most troubleshooting takes place, young people can get to work*

In addition to Logic Pro and Soundtrack Pro, young people use other audio software programs in the studio. In the following fieldnote excerpt, Marcus uses a combination of Looperman, Audacity, and Garage Band to locate, edit, and produce beats. In addition, he notes how at times Logic Pro is too advanced for his needs. From fieldnote 08/13/2011:

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[13] The cost of the studio equipment is around $2500.00. Over the course of the study one microphone was damaged and one set of headphones went missing. Otherwise, all equipment remained intact and operable.

I asked Marcus about his choice in using Garage Band. He explained that while he liked Logic Pro, sometimes it's just too much. I asked what he meant by too much and he explained how Logic Pro is too advanced for him at times, that "it's a lot!" When I stated that he seemed proficient at it after observing him the previous day, he agreed with me, noting that in some aspects he is proficient, but not as much in other aspects. He also explained that for what he likes to do he doesn't always need everything that Logic Pro has to offer. Marcus proceeded to offer me an overview of Looperman, Audacity, and Garage Band. Looperman is an online sample database. Marcus uses the site to find samples that he likes, downloads the samples, and then loads the samples into Audacity. Audacity is a free, cross platform sample editor. Once samples are loaded into Audacity, Marcus edits the samples to his liking and then exports them as .mp3 or .wav files. He then loads the edited samples into Fruity Loops Studio (FL Studio), his preferred audio production software. Unfortunately, FL Studio is not Mac compatible, which is very frustrating for Marcus. He explained how he used to work on tracks on his old laptop using this system, Looperman → Audacity → FL, and that when he gets his laptop up and running again he will go back to using this system. He again stressed how he likes certain parts of Logic Pro, but that it is too complicated. It's interesting to note how quickly and expertly Marcus was able to move through Looperman and Audacity. In Looperman, Marcus moved through banks of audio samples, seeking out melodies and rhythms and downloading the ones that he liked. Once they were downloaded, he demoed Audacity for me by loading up the sample and showing me how to edit, trim, and manipulate pitch. After his Audacity demonstration, Marcus loaded up his new samples in Garage Band and played around with them, attempting to lay down some additional melodies and rhythm.

Herman periodically adds new software to the studio audio production software roster. In the following fieldnote excerpt, Herman discusses using a new program at home and deciding to bring it in for the young people. While not the focus of this chapter, it is important to note how Herman continues to consider and develop the studio, further demonstrating his role as the studio advocate. From fieldnote 08/26/2011:

Herman asked me if I had ever played around with Komplete, a Native Instruments (NI) audio production software suite. I noted that I'd used other NI programs, but I had not messed around with Komplete. He indicated that this was a new venture for him as well. A buddy had given him a copy of it. Here, he noted that anytime he buys or acquires audio software, he brings it to TLP to load on the studio IMac. He enjoys sharing what he finds and learns with young people. He went on to note that after loading it on his machine at home and playing around with it a bit, he was impressed with some of the programs, specifically with how well Battery and Guitar Rig interfaced with Logic Pro. Battery is a drum editor and sampler with a nice MIDI mapping function and Guitar Rig is essentially a digital guitar rig, complete with amps and a plethora of effect pedals. Noting this he immediately thought about how useful these programs would be for some

of the TLP studio users, specifically Battery for Marcus' sample based production method and Guitar Rig for Theo's layered production style. He decided to bring Komplete in and load it on the TLP music studio space IMac and offer a basic tutorial on it.

B. Young People's Relationship with Music

The following section explores young people's relationship with music, specifically how they became interested and involved in music and the role that music has played and continues to play in their lives. Young people describe the role of their families in providing them with access to their first musical experiences and instruments. In addition they discuss the role their families played in exposing them to various forms of music at a young age. Young people describe this access and exposure as beneficial in helping them develop their musicianship, providing them with opportunities to have fun, and develop an appreciation for music. They discuss how continued development as musicians, rappers, and writers provides them with an expanding skill set, which includes additional means of communication and expression that provide them with a creative outlet and coping mechanisms that have kept them safe and out of trouble. In addition, young people gain a sense of connection through their interest and involvement in music and recognition for their skills, strengths, and talents as musicians, rappers, and writers.

1. The role of family

When asked to describe how they became interested and involved in music, young people discuss the role of family in providing them with access to their first musical experiences and instruments and exposing them to various forms of music at a young age. Several young people describe playing music at a young age. Marcus describes his early memories of playing drums on dresser drawers, which eventually lead to his mom purchasing him his first drum kit:

> Far as I started music when I was little. I could say my mom, she told me when I was about five or four years old, I pulled the dresser drawers out the dresser, and I'd flip it over and I'd get a fork or a spoon and I'd just beat on it all day. She had bought me my first drum set, and then she was like, "He could play drums real good," and I started going to church with my grandma and I started seeing the people – the drummer playing drums.

Marcus goes on to discuss attending church with his grandmother, performing for the congregation, and how that opened doorways to additional opportunities for him, including working with a mentor and learning additional instruments.

> One day at the service of church, they asked people, "If you got talent, come up here. We wanna hear what you – we wanna see what you have and hear it." So my grandma, she told me to go up there. She was my strength and my comfort 'cause at first I was scared, and then next thing you know, everybody like, "Wow." I got on the drum set. Everybody was like, "He's good, good." So then they started asking me to come to choir rehearsals with them, and they started teaching me gospel – the songs they'd be singing with the drums. I had my own mentor. He'll teach me. And then my first Sunday I played for a children's choir, and that was just, like, I'm not gonna say it was a headache, but it was shock 'cause I was in front of all these people. It was like I was doing my own little concert. And even though they not just hearing just the choir, they hearing the drums, too, also, and they hearing the piano, the organ, guitar. And they said, "He did good."
>
> And it was like once they got me from doing the choir, they took it to another level, which I started playing for the choirs, and then I started playing for broadcasts and for the AM broadcast for church and for videotape and broadcast and I was like, "Wow." And I could hear myself when we recorded, and they were like, "Do you wanna hear how you play?" And they let me listen, and I'm like, "Wow. That's me?" I couldn't imagine myself even playing the drums that good, but they said I was good. And then from there, I started learning how to play the organ, 'cause my brother, he played the piano, and I'd sit there and watch him play it. And he would like – I'd just sit right on the side of him watching him playing the keys, and then after church, I started playing with the organ, and like, "You know how to play organ, too, Marcus?" And it was like, "Um, nah. I'm just learning." It's just something like, "You should play the organ since you know how to play the drums." I was like, "I'm not trying to learn how to play everything. I just wanna learn just one thing." And like, "Well, you'll do good playing the organ." I'm like, "Okay." So then my brother, he taught me how to play it. That's when I started learning how to play my keys on the organ.

In addition, Marcus describes the important role music plays in his family, noting various family members' involvement in the music industry and how he has picked up a musical skill set over the years from observing and working with his family.

> Yeah, music has always been there for me because I have a lotta family that played music. My cousin, he plays the drums. My brother, he plays the organ. I have another cousin that plays the drums. Uncle – music, it pretty much runs in my family because everybody in the family is dealing with music. If it's not dealing with music, it's dealing with engineering. If it's not engineering, it's dealing with something with music. And it's like I guess I picked up them traits from them, and they passed it down to me. And I learned the skills that they do, and I picked up the skills. And then when I picked the skills that they did, it's like I know what I'm doing now, and I watch and I see it. 'Cause after I started learning how to play music and everything, I was with my uncle. He has his own sound company called (name of company). We do sounds – we do like concerts, parties, everything. We did a broadcast service for (name of church). We done held a big concert with a lotta Gospel artists, a lotta people, like Kim Burrell, Melinda Addams. Donna McClurkin, and much more.

Theo describes playing music from a young age and being surrounded by music everywhere he went, including his family.

> I got involved in music when I was about three, because I had always been around music. My mother was a singer, and I was just always surrounded by music everywhere I went… I was maybe about five or six when I got my first keyboard. It was a little 61-key Casio that I thought was the greatest thing ever, and I just began to mess around.

Theo goes on to describe how felt when he got the keyboard. "I felt like the happiest kid ever," he states, adding, "and I annoyed my mother for months, because I couldn't play a lick, but I was Ray Charles in my room." Wanting to know more about his mother's role in his interest and involvement in music, I ask Theo, "You mentioned that your mom was a singer. Did you guys play together when you were younger, or did you have kind of separate musical kind of spheres?" Theo responds:

> Yeah, we were kind of separate. She was more of a vocalist; I'm more of an instrumentalist. So it kind of goes hand-in-hand, but until this day, she still doesn't understand how I play, but if I were to sing, that would kind of click more for her.

Theo goes on to discuss how although he was surrounded by music, he was the only person in his family taking it seriously and how his perseverance and tenacity have paid off.

> I am kind of the only like seasoned musician in my family. Like some of my family members were DJs, but nobody in my family ever took music to like a high level like I have. They never really stayed consistent with it. Like they would never really sit down for like hours and like study. It was more like kind of a spur of the moment thing for them, and it was like only a short time. But like me, music has been part of my entire life. I think that's the only reason that I'm able to do what I do today is because, for the most part, I stuck with it. It's like I'm writing songs for different people. People call me and ask me to come and do studio sessions and fly out to play. So I'm kind of glad I stuck with it.

Smiley discusses playing music at an early age with her family, noting her early involvement in her uncle's recording studio and how she has sung all her life.

> Well, I've been involved in music since I was two, actually, because my uncle, he had a studio, and I had recorded a song, and I would sing, whatever. So, I just was singing all my life, basically, and it's, like, a gateway. Like whenever I feel stressed or mad or angry, I start to sing, you know, to keep my, to keep me happy, you know, to keep my hopes up. So, yeah, I love singing.

Wanting to know more about her early experiences with music and recording a song, I ask Smiley, "Tell me about what was going on when you were two?" She responds:

> Well, everybody in my family sings, almost, and with the things that – I don't know – I didn't really know, but my mother was ill. She had AIDS. So, it was, kind of, you know, I don't know, just started to sing 'cause she used to sing, and my uncle and her and my other auntie, they used to be in a band. So, that's why they got me hooked on singing. [laughs]

In the above passage Smiley briefly mentions her mother"s death, the fact that her mother used to sing, and notes that this is one of the reasons why she began to sing. While not explicitly stated, it appears that her mother's death had an impact on her growth and development as a singer and her relationship to music. I ask Smiley if she remembers the band to which she replies, "No, but I remember the tapes with them singing, and plus, my grandmother, she was going to go and tour with BB King to be the backup singer, so – yeah, so… [laughs]." "Wow,

that's amazing," I exclaim. "I know!" she exclaims back. "I didn't even know that till they told me," she says. "So – yeah. I just love singing," she adds.

Wanting to know more about the song she recorded, I ask, "How old were you when you recorded that song? Tell me more about that, recording a song." Smiley responds:

> I was two, actually [laughs]. I remember they say I was two, and I sung a song like my mom, whatever, and just a happy moment [laughs], so yeah. I think I was four, but they say I was two 'cause I remember my mother, she was deceased so I think I was four. They tell me I was two. I don't know. I just remember being at the studio and my uncle playing the guitar, and I was on the track, you know, had the headphones on, was singing into the microphone. Yeah, it was fun [laughs], so…

I ask Smiley if she remembers the song. "No, I don't. [laughs] I don't remember the song at all. All I remember is like, the setting, like, me being in the studio. So, yeah, that's all I remember," she says. I ask her to tell me more about the studio. "Oh, they had a keyboard. They had the computer. They had the microphone. They had guitars in there. They had something else, but that's all I remember was that," she says. Wanting to get a sense of how she felt about recording at such a young age, I ask, "And do you have any memories of how you felt or what you were thinking when you were in there?" Smiley replies:

> I mean, I was happy. I was I was a kid. [laughs] I was happy. I was doing something, you know, and then once they played my voice back, you know, a kid, I was all geeked up, so… [laughs] Yeah, it was fun to me.

In the above passages, Smiley describes being happy in relation to her involvement with music as young girl. Smurf notes a similar happiness in her memories of being exposed to various forms of music at a young age, specifically recalling her grandmother's love of the blues, her father's love of old school music (e.g., dusties, Motown, older rhythm and blues, and soul), and attending family parties with stepping.

> I remember the first thing I ever, ever, ever really listened to was blues because I always be in the car with my grandma and her husband and I always had blues. So I just listened to the blues songs in the car because I couldn't listen to anything else. So I just listened

> to the blues in the car. Or when I was with my dad I always hear like old school or Michael Jackson or whatever. I went to a family function I just heard always old school like stepping music and stuff like that. When I was with my dad I always hear Michael Jackson. The first song I ever remember all the words to was "Off the Wall." Like, now I'm a real big Michael Jackson fan. So yep, from pretty much single digits all the way to now I'd say from about like from the time I could talk I've been knowing music or from the time I could comprehend what I was listening to music has been my thing. I love it. It makes me happy. Yeah.

Smurf discusses how exposure to old school music at a young age influenced her current tastes, lamenting on the state of music today and her preference for variety.

> I didn't really watch TV a lot when I was younger and when I did it was mostly music videos [laughs]. It was mostly music videos. Like, every time I turn around or wake up I hear music. So it was like an everyday thing for me pretty much. Then every time I go to a family function with my dad there'd always be music especially like now it's like it's music. Then the music they was playing then I like it because I'm used to it. I'm grooving to it and everything but now I can like really groove to it because it's like, "Oh yeah, I know what they saying." I understand why they didn't let me listen to certain stuff when I was younger then but now it's like you got half the stuff that's being played now worse than the half the stuff that was being played then. This is worse than then, you know. It's really sad to me, too. It's really sad. But the old school and everything I'll listen to it. It just was a part of my upbringing. That's all I heard. That was all I was allowed to listen to was like blues and everything. I got in some Gospel myself because my mom was like a really religion based. So I got into that myself. I like Country. I like some opera. I ain't going to lie and say I like all of it but I like some orchestra. I like a variety of everything.

Outlaw was exposed to various forms of music at a young age as well. He describes his Pop's affection for old school music and how exposure to various forms of music shaped the way he hears and visualizes music.

> Like my Pops, he didn't let us listen to rap in the house. Like when we was young, it was like if we turned on the radio or watch TV, he would be like, "Why would you wanna watch Lil' Bow Wow and his million-dollar, billion-dollar career and you should be happy what you got right here." And I was just like, "Damn, Pops, I'm young. I'm just looking at this," you know, like okay, you know? You know, Pops was emotional, you know, like I just couldn't understand it growing up but you know, now it's something different but it was old-school. So it was the Jacksons, the Heartbeats. It was Marvin Gaye, the O'Jays, you know, all type of, you know? All type of like, he had a collection like, literally. Rows, like hundreds, thousands of CDs, like, and everybody'll be coming over and like when they come to visit, they would be like, "My Pops like," to my Pops like, "Oh, let me get this. Let me get that." And you know, he really liked his music and,

> you know, it was just I feel like I caught on – I really grasped music because it was dusties it was soul music that talked to you, so you know, it really painted a picture for you. Like, and gave you sight, gave you a vision.

2. <u>Playing instruments and writing</u>

Young people described playing various instruments and engaging in various forms of writing, including poetry and rap, as they were growing up. In addition to playing drums and keyboards, Marcus discusses trying his hand at other instruments as he grew up in an effort to develop more skills.

> I tried playing the guitar, but that didn't work so good, so I left the guitar alone. I tried to play the bass guitar. I could say sort of. Matter of fact I'm not gonna say sort of. I could say just a little, like ten percent I could play the bass. I try to learn a lotta instruments, that I could play, so I could pick up all the skills. But my strongest skills is with drums, and medium piano.

Theo shares a similar sentiment, noting that in addition to playing keyboards he tried to learn as many instruments as he could growing up.

> I played alto saxophone. I played drums. I played the vibes. I played bass guitar, and I played acoustic guitar. Because I never really limited myself to just one or two instruments. I wanted to learn all instruments, to learn the different effects that a different instrument has on a song.

Theo goes on to describe how learning multiple instruments made him a better producer and provided him with additional means of musical communication and expression. Wanting to explore the connection more I ask, "It almost sounds like the more instruments you could play the more you'd be able to express yourself, or the more potential forms you'd have for expressing yourself." "Right, right," Theo responds.

Smurf provides an extensive history of playing instruments throughout her youth and young adulthood.

> Well I've played the saxophone for – I played the harmonica before, too. That was fun. [laughs] I played the harmonica and the saxophone. I've played the French horn. I've

> played the cymbals. I've played tenor drum and I was in a choir for two years when I was in school. I liked it there. But that's about it. Yeah.

Wanting to get a better sense of Smurf's experience playing instruments I ask, "While you were playing those instruments, describe what you got out of your interest and involvement in music. What did you get out of it?" Smurf responds, "Mmm mmmm. Now that's a question I don't know how to answer right now. Explain a little bit more." "Sure, sure," I say. "In your perception coming up playing French horn, playing saxophone, playing cymbals, listening to music, dancing, having fun, thinking about music how did it benefit you or how did it have any consequences in your life," I ask. Smurf responds:

> Well with the harmonica that was like fourth grade. [laughs] That was like fourth grade. Saxophone was like fourth, maybe sixth grade, somewhere in that area. No, actually it was third grade because I remember doing a play that year with my saxophone. So it was third grade when I did that. [laughs] It was fun because I like Jazz a lot when I was younger and blues and saxophone played a big part in that to me. It sounded sexy to me then even though I didn't know what sexy was. But I liked it. I liked the sound and I wanted to play the saxophone. So my dad bought me a saxophone. It was a little saxophone though. It made me appreciate horns in the music and what part they play in music because with some songs it will sound beautiful with horns in it. Some songs it'll sound like, "Why did you put horns in there?" You know? Sometimes it'll make or break it like, "Huh, okay." It made me really appreciate the sound of a saxophone, that it fit with certain songs or stuff like that. Then the harmonica, I liked the blues. [laughs] So every time I sang a blues song I played the harmonica. [laughs] It was like I don't know why. It's just when I thought blues I thought harmonica. I remember I made up a song for the [laughs] for the show and tell in fourth grade. Yep, it was fourth grade because I was in (name) class. I pretended like I was a hobo and I had the little stick and the little bandana with the cans in it and I pulled out the beans and stuff [laughs]. I had the homeless blues even then [laughs]. Oh jeepers. But yeah, I like the sound of a harmonica, too. Harmonicas are sexy. People really under-appreciate the sound of a harmonica. I like that sound. It's very unique and different. So it's like nice to the ears to me. I like it. I like the sound of a harmonica.

Smurf goes on to describe her experiences playing additional instruments throughout junior high and high school, including marching band, which she notes a particular affinity for.

> Choir was seventh to eighth grade. I don't really know what made me join the choir but I knew I liked to sing but I couldn't sing out loud by myself. So I was like, "Okay, I figure I could sing and then I'm going to be a part of the choir because the choir could back me

> up and anybody here ain't going to totally hear me all the time. So yeah, I'm definitely going to join a choir." Then I did. It was pretty fun. I liked it a lot… I was in choir for two years. Sang. Liked it. I did like two solos, two solos and one group. Well one song where it was three of us doing lead. So that was pretty cool. I liked that. Then cymbals and the French horn and the tenor drum all are band. It made me really appreciate band music because band music is very hot. I like the sound of band music. I could just sit and listen to band music like it sound really good especially when they playing a song that you already know and they playing it real clearly and you got the woodwinds and the brass and the high brass, got the low brass and you got the percussion and then you got, you know, the tubas and everything. It's hot. I like the dance sets. They're a part of the band too even though they dance. So really made me appreciate band music… Every time you hear band music everybody – I don't care who you are. You're going to move to band music especially if you at a parade. Come on now. Ain't nobody that I know not going to move. They going to either move or they just going to bob their head be like, "Yeah, that sound good," unless they sound like crap. Other than that you going to bob your head to band music. Yeah, that's how that goes pretty much. Yeah.

In the above passages, Smurf describes how her experiences of playing harmonica and saxophone, participating in choir, and playing various instruments in high school marching band contributed to her growing appreciation of music. Smiley describes her experiences in high school band as well, albeit less fondly.

> Well, when I was 16 I played the clarinet [laughs] in high school. I really wanted to play the trumpet and drums, but they was all tooken up so I had to play the clarinet. [laughs] So, that's the only instrument. Then when I was little, my grandpa, he had a piano upstairs in his attic. So, I actually tried to play that. I didn't know how, but I used to try to.

Noting that she laughed when she talked about playing clarinet, I ask, "You were laughing when you were talking about the clarinet. What was funny about that?" Smiley replies:

> [laughs] No, 'cause I didn't want to play the clarinet, but you know, once I got the hang of it, it was okay. 'Cause most people think the clarinet is lame, really. [laughs] Really, it's all about, like, the trumpet, the drums, and that's it – or at least the flute, you know, but not the clarinet. [laughs] I would've rather them gave me the flute than the clarinet, so…

I ask Smiley what attracted her to the trumpet and the drums. "What was it about those instruments that was like, 'Oh, I want to play those?" I ask. Smiley responds:

> ‘Cause those are two types of instruments that make you move, you know, especially when you on the field or at a game, yeah, the trumpet and the drums, and then when they be dancing to it, that’s really the only two instruments that get the people moving, but I just liked that though, the drums and the trumpet, so – yeah.

In addition to playing various instruments throughout their youth and young adulthood, young people described engaging in various forms of writing, including poetry and rap. Jay recalls beginning to write as a young age.

> As young as hell, like 10, 11. Yeah, I mean my poetry back then was just emulating what I heard, but at the same time I put my own personal spin on it because back then I wasn’t so lyrical or I didn’t have a very key sense of verbatim or high vocabulary back then, but now I wouldn’t say I’m on the level of most rappers at this time, but I’m close up there on most poets or songwriters or philosophers.

Jay goes on to describe how he used writing as an outlet, noting that people often enjoyed what he had to say.

> My sense is just like it was just something I could really just take as an outlet. If I couldn’t take it out on a video game or banging my girlfriend or on the basketball court it was music. The majority of the time it was music or the video game. Music was a pretty catchy thing. People enjoy hearing me talk sometimes because I did speak very off the wall things, intellectual things, sometimes philosophical, sometimes funny and humorous, slightly ignorant but true.

Outlaw recalls being young as well, eight or nine years old, and writing raps and poems with his sister and using his surrounding environment for influences and inspirations.

> Well, ever since I was a youngster, I always liked music. Me, I used to be in a room, me and my sister, writing raps and writing poems and I used to always want her to be like my sidekick so I would try to get her to rap, too, you know, because I used to be someone in the zone, like it was just music or nothing. So I wanted everybody to participate, you know, in the music so it’s kinda like controlling and demand and really – ‘cause I felt like I had structure for writing and, you know, being creative. So, you know, I was just like everything that like, anything that I could look at from the TV to CDs to the moon and stars, you, me, my auntie. I could like rap about it, like you know? So I just had that verbal image and that mental image to match. So, yeah, so I always liked to, you know, express myself, you know, through rap, poetry, stuff like that.

Outlaw describes how friends took notice of his rapping and writing skills as he continually developed and honed his style over the years. Note how Outlaw incorporates a freestyle rap in

his response (see italicized text). In the freestyle passage, Outlaw demonstrates his skills as a rapper and writer off-the-cuff and in the moment.

> I feel like as I got older, it just got like – the more I did it, it just became easy and all my friends used to be like "man, Law, you already a celebrity. You could be a celebrity. You just making up whole songs off the top of your head," and I used to always be like, "yeah, I know I'm raw,"… I mean it's just like when you feel like – *I can come from off the top. I got style so my spirit gonna let these lyrics drop. It's nothing, know my style kinda unorthodox. But I do this so you can call me Mr. Pops.* You feel me? Like, just like that, like that's just freestyle. Like, I wasn't ready for that but I was like, "I'm just gonna let it go," 'cause you know, that's what it is… I feel like music was always a part of me because just like when I told you I used to always have my sister try to rap with me, like my friends all would, "Ah, rap with me, like let's make songs, like come over, let's make a hit right now." And even if they wasn't like as advanced as I was in rapping, I'd be like, "Man, I'm gonna edit you," you know, like, "I'm gonna help you out, Joe. I'm gonna write my bars and write yours at the same time or at least help you out." I just know I really liked it and I always like, I wanna be a rapper or some type of artist like, I knew I like talking and stuff like that and I could express myself in a creative way. So it's like, man. That's what was really going on. I was just – I was basically just doing it as like a hobby or it was just something I can do like, [snaps fingers] you know, like the twinkle of a eye, snap of a finger, it was just something I could do.

Young Louie describes engaging in freestyle battles while growing up and how doing so increased his confidence and skills as a performer.

> Oh, I did a lotta battles, did a lotta song writing… Every time I walked the street I rap out loud because rapping out loud, that helps you perform in front of a lotta people. So everyone maybe think I was crazy at the time, but now I'm not afraid to rap or do whatever in front of a lotta people.

Wanting to get a better sense of the connection between battling and performance, I ask, "And so did you kinda learn how to perform when you were battling?" Young Louie responds:

> Oh, of course. When you learn how to perform, you really get your head geeked up and make you very excited to even battle the next person. You win one, you get motivated to win 'em all. That's really gave me a great experience on that. And, actually, if you battle, it make you one best rappers. That's one of the best rappers come from battling, 'cause you spitting all this stuff that's coming out your mind you've not written. If you rap every day, just freestyling, you're gonna be very good. If you freestyling every day, imagine what you can say when you actually sit down and think of some works to write on paper.

Wanting to get a better sense of the battle scene and what it was like for Young Louie, I ask, "What were you battling and writing about back then? What were some of the topics?" He replies:

> Being 11, not really much but what's going on around you, what's going on in your life. At 11, you don't really have that much to say. But when I did, know what I'm saying, it was a lot. But me being 11, I've been through a lotta things, so had a lot to say. So it was pretty cool. I was basically rapping about my situation, what I was going through, why I was going through it, and what I can to improve it. And, basically, we was battling about other people. Sometimes it was just about battling, talking about that other person. But battling, it just wasn't about battling. They acting like they had a fight with you, but they really didn't, so it just about just playing around. But we want the people that's watching to think that we're hard, you know what I'm saying, and this and that. But really, we all cool about it.

When I ask Young Louie to describe a situation that was battling about when he was eleven, he replies, "Really, when I was 11, influence in the gangs. At these times, gangs you just outta control. I wouldn't say, "Outta control," but not like it used to be. So to me, I was rapping about real gang stuff."

3. <u>The role of music in young people's lives</u>

When asked to discuss the role music played and continues to play in their lives, young people note that their interest and involvement in music provides them with a form of expression and an outlet. In addition they discuss how their interest and involvement in music provides them with coping mechanisms, keeps them out of trouble, and provides them with a sense of connection and recognition for their skills, strengths, and talents. Theo describes how given his standing as the, "odd kid," music provided him with an outlet. In doing so he was able to communicate with others and gain their understanding.

> Music was my outlet, because I was kind of like the odd kid. I never really fit in. So music was my way to get people to understand me instead of just tolerate me. So I would play – when I would record or play songs, they could hear by the different notes that I play or the chords, "Oh, he's happy," "He's not feeling too good," or "He's just playing

> whatever." That kind of got me to the point where I am now. Like music is my universal language. Everybody understands me when I play rather than when I talk.

Curious as to when this began for him, I ask, "And that kind of started for you as a child?" Theo responds:

> Yeah. Well, it started kind of later in my childhood. Maybe when I was 10 and I was conscious of the type of music I was playing. Like before, I was just playing the songs that were programmed into the keyboard. But when I began to understand music theory and how different chords can project different emotions, that's when I began to use that as a form of expression.

Wanting to get a better understanding of when his awareness to express himself through music began, I ask, "When were you aware – at what point in your childhood or your adolescence were you aware that you could use music as a form of expression?" Theo responds:

> I wasn't completely aware of it until I was maybe 14. Like when I was younger, I never really understood the importance of music. But as I got older and listened to different forms of music coming from like Gregorian chant up to the Renaissance period; listening to Mozart and Salieri; and the different musicians - like going to the jazz era, when you listen, you can hear in the music kind of the mode of the tone of the song or the music that's being played. When I understood how that worked, I began to use that so people would understand that I might not be having the best day, or I might just be having the greatest day of my life. So you have to understand how to use music to convey different messages, and that's what, when I was about 14, I learned how to do that.

In the above passages, Theo notes that as he matured in age and as a musician he learned more about theory and composition. In doing so he was better able to express himself through music, which given his standing as the, "odd kid," seems particularly important, the idea that he had a means of expression as an adolescent. In addition, it is possible that without exposure to music theory and composition as he matured, he may have had a more limited range of expression and as a result been less understood by others. Theo goes on to describe how important music as a means of expression continues to be.

> Especially now in my life because of the living situation that I'm in, music kind of keeps me from kind of stressing out. I get all my emotions out through my music, because I might be angry, but you won't necessarily see it but you might hear it. Like when you

> hear my different emotions, you can tell whether or not you want to approach me in a certain way. Instead of you approaching me and then I just, I kind of go off, and then it's like I've been mad at you the whole time. It's just that I haven't been having a great day, and if you listen, you'll understand.

Outlaw describes how getting together and rapping with friends and working on music with his cousins provided him with a creative outlet and a form of release through difficult times.

> Well, it kept me out of trouble and it always gave me, like, faith in the future because even though like I wasn't as developed and I still got, I feel like, a long way to go, but when I was going through a lot of like family problems at that time with my Pops; mother wasn't around; didn't know my biological father, whatever but it's just I had so much on my mind and when I would be with friends and everything, we would get together and we would rap, it let me release, like all of everything that was like pent-up and built up inside but in a creative way but then in a way that I can like share what's going on with me to my friends and around me in a way that they could like understand it, you know? So it was like this music is a way to, kinda like a outlet for everything that's built up inside of me. So when I would be like with my cousins and everything, and we'll be kicking it and I get to rapping and they just – and then one of my cousins rapped and she had like a laptop and she would come over and be kicking it with me and she be like, "Come on let's record," and she'll take some beats and we'll record over them and she just all like, "Cuz, you hot." She be like and my cousin, I'll be like, "Cuz, you hot," you know? And it always – it just made me forget about what was going on in the present, you know, like all my troubles and everything that I was going through and it just like, it just like put me in my own like frame of mind. So it took away a lot of the stress and pain that I would go through – it took away a lot of the stress and pain that I was going through at the moment.

In the above passage, Outlaw also describes getting together and rapping with his friends and working on music with his cousins as a coping mechanism, a way to forget about his troubles and release stress and pain.

Marcus describes his relationship with music in a similar way, noting how music helps him through his trials and tribulations.

> Music is something like I see to this day, I see a lotta people who music is like it all depends on how you feel. 'Cause you gotta lotta artists out here that make music basically on their feelings or they talking about street ways or they talking about they was raised by their momma or anything. But with me, music kinda – to this day, music helps me to get through my trials and tribulations. It helps me to deal with my past. I don't know what I could do if music wasn't never invented. I thank the person, whoever invented music, I really thank them because I probably woulda probably did something

> else. But I'm glad music is here because without music I think I wouldn't be able to focus on where I am now. I don't think I'd be the person or the man that I am today because of my past. Music helped me through so much ways dealing with my past and my past brought me through a long way and until this day. I'm able to say – I'm able to look up and, "You made it. It's been a long time, but you made it." But I couldn't do it without the help without music because if it wasn't for music, I think I'd probably be – I'm not gonna say I'd be stuck, but I'd probably just be doing a little bit of the things that I'd wouldn't be doing that I'm doing now.

During this portion of the interview, Marcus plays me a song titled, *I'm Gonna Make It*.[14] He frames the song as an aural representation of how music helps him cope with and work through difficult moments.

> I made this track when I was about like 18, either 18 or 17. That's when I was like in the middle of a storm at that time, and I was trapped. I was going through a whole lotta stuff. And I got in the studio one night and I'm like, "I'm not fixing to go through this no more." I was just making it. It was just stuck in my head. I had everything how I wanted to go, and it came out just fine but just with different sounds. Reason why I named it *I'm Gonna Make It* because I know I'm gonna make it. I know I'm gonna get through my trials and my tribulations. I know I'm gonna make it through this storm. I know ain't nothing gonna hold me back from trying to see what I need to do. I know for a fact that I'm gonna be okay and God is gonna be by my side regardless. He's not gonna leave me. And his Word has not been broken. He's been there. He has helped me through a lot. And I've made this track just to remind myself every day "You gonna make it Marcus. Don't worry no more. Don't stress yourself no more. You're gonna make it."

Jay describes how music and writing helped him cope with anger and frustration and provided him with an outlet as he was growing up:

> It was a coping mechanism. It was my mental punching bag. Like, when I got frustrated I'd pop in my MP3 player, I'd listen to music or I'd write poetry about the situation. Like I would literally rip the soul out of my body, use it as a pen, and let it bleed out all my interior, subconscious thoughts, whims, wishes and ambitions.

He describes how music and writing continue to serve a similar purpose for him today, noting that music and writing can handle whatever he has to offer.

> It's like a huge punching bag. It's like it doesn't break for me. It doesn't get tired of me hitting it. It just is there for me to get at and take my frustration, anguish, angst and all

[14] Link to *I'm Gonna Make It:* https://soundcloud.com/brianlkelly/im-gonna-make-it

> those other ratchet and foolish emotions that humans get.[15] Hell, if we didn't have any emotions we'd be robots. We design robots to be like that because we want to be like that. We want to be emotionless. We want to be perfect. We want to be that. But in the same complex – you know what I'm getting at this.

Wanting to get a better sense of his current relationship with music, I ask, "What is your relationship with music like today?" "It does play a pivotal role in me in keeping my cool," he says, adding, "Music is an oasis in the desert of pain and suffering."

Jay goes on to describe how engaging with music and writing offered him an alternative to acting out on his anger.

> It kept me from doing a lot of stupid shit, a lot of stupid shit like there were times when I was extremely pissed off where I wanted to like exact my revenge in a very vindictive and gruesome fashion but there were times when I just listened to music and it like calmed me down or when I took a pad and pen and wrote about it. It just made me more calm and more mellow. It took the fire out of the inferno and made it a small flame. I wasn't as hot headed. I wasn't about to go off as much.

In the above passage, Jay describes how music and writing, "kept him from doing a lot of stupid shit," which seems important given the potential consequences for his, "hot headed," state. It is possible then that music kept Jay out of trouble. Theo explicitly describes how his interest and involvement in music keeps him out of trouble and safe.

> I kind of stayed more so out of trouble by maybe sitting in the house for hours playing music. Like I did get in my share of trouble as a child, but music kind of kept me away from what I could have gotten into when I was younger. You know, as far as drugs and things like that, because that's the type of environment that I lived in. So music kind of kept me shielded away from all of that. It kind of still does, especially now with all the violence that's going on left and right. Music kind of takes my mind away from that where I don't have to worry about going outside and worrying about whether I'm going to make it from point A to point B.

Theo goes on to describe the important role music plays in his life, stressing that it is more than a hobby for him.

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[15] In regards to Jay's use of the term *ratchet*, I believe he is utilizing a variation of *wretched* in its slang form, meaning undesirable.

> Music is a passion. It's not just a hobby or something that kind of takes up time. It's something that I invest a lot of time and energy into. So I get satisfaction out of knowing that something positive is coming out of the time and effort that I put into it. It's helped me build relationships. It's kept me from doing things that I unconsciously wanted to do that would have taken me down a horrible road. So it's been more of a lifesaver than a hobby.

Picking up on the notion of his interest and involvement in music as a lifesaver, I ask, "Tell me a little bit more about it being a lifesaver. Like, how does that actually work, logistically, for you?" Theo responds, taking me back to an example from high school.

> Okay. Like when I was in high school, I would be in school every day. I would get to school at 7:00. We had a piano lab, and we had a band room. I would be at either one playing either one of the instruments rather than being outside hanging with people that were into negative things. Then, after school, instead of going out, hanging outside and getting into trouble, I was in the band room or in the piano lab practicing and learning. So it kind of kept me away from the environments that were dangerous and that kind of brought negative attention. So it kind of helped me keep my life together rather than go haywire and then being looked at as like a problem individual or somebody that doesn't understand the importance of what they're doing.

Theo goes on to describe how his interest and involvement in music kept him from making poor decisions and how music offered him a pause to consider his actions and the impact of his actions on others.

> Like, music kind of kept me from making poor decisions, because when you consciously or unconsciously make poor decisions, you don't really know the effects that it has on you or the people that are around you. When you make those terrible decisions that impact the people around you, it kind of changes the way people look at you. So let's say if I didn't get into music, and I was a violent person. If my temper and my rage were so out of control, would I get into a fight with somebody and not knowing how far I'd go, I kill him. That affects everybody around me, because I go to jail for life, potentially, and then that other family looses that person. Then you don't really know the affect that you've had until after you made the decision. Music made me sit down and think about the impact that that has on my life and the people around me, because by music having a positive impact on my life, it kind of forced me not to make decisions that affected other people's lives. That's kind of what a balance is.

Seeking to clarify my understanding of Theo responses, I ask if his interest and involvement in music, "allowed you a way to kind of critically think about your life. Did it help you in decision making as well then? Is that kind of what I'm hearing, too?" Theo responds:

> Like it helped me think about the decisions I make before I make them. I didn't always make the right decisions, but at least I thought about the decision I was making and the short-term and long-term affects that it has or that it had on the people around me and not just myself.

In the above passages, Theo positions his interest and involvement in music in several important ways. He describes how his interest and involvement in music shields him from drugs and violence, how it is a lifesaver, and how it keeps him from making poor decisions. These assertions of the importance of music in Theo's life seem particularly relevant given the waves of crime and violence impacting young people where the agency is located on Chicago's south side.

Young people discuss how their interest and involvement in music provides them with a sense of connection and recognition for their skills, strengths, and talents. Smiley describes the role music plays in her life. "It play a big role, you know, wake up in the morning, have music all throughout the day and just sing. I don't know. It's just – I don't know. There's just something about music. I don't know." "Tell me more about what that is; what is it about music," I ask. "I love the beat," she says. "That's all. I just love the beat of the music, you know, all the little instruments and the tunes. That's – yeah, I just love that, so…" Smiley trails off. Wanting to get a better sense of what her interest and involvement in music offer her, I ask, "What does the beat give you; what does it offer you?" Smiley responds, "I don't know – happiness. I don't know, yeah. I just get up and start dancing, you know? Then I make up my own words. I don't know." Earlier in our interview, Smiley noted that music was like a friend. I pick on that theme. "You mentioned that music is your friend. Can you describe that more for

me, that statement; what does that mean?" Smiley responds, "I mean 'cause if my other friends don't want to talk me, then I just turn on the radio, you know, listen to some music. So, yeah, it's something like that." "It almost sounds like in some ways then music offers you some support sometimes," I respond. "Yes. Yes, it does," Smiley responds, adding, "Yeah, especially gospel music."

In the above passages, Smiley describes how music offers her a sense of connection to something outside of herself when her friends are not available. Jay describes connecting with himself and others through musical performance, offering an example from a high school talent show.

> Well the band tried to play a song. We were decent. Kept forgetting lines and shit in the middle of the performance and shit. I was fucking up on the guitar like I was missing a note like de-de-nee-nee-er. It was supposed to be de-nee-nee-nee-nee. Like de-nee-nee-nee-er. Like, "What the hell was that?" But, you know hey, we all have brain farts and that but it was fun. It brought out the essence of actually enjoying the moment, actually living for the moment because music is for living a moment that you've made in time, a perfect moment, a moment of unification of body, mind and spirit. It's like it's becoming one with yourself and everyone around you. If everyone around you nod your head to the things you say you are one because they understand and they feel what you're saying.

Jay describes how it feels to be connected in those moments when people are nodding their heads, thereby communicating a mutual understanding.

> That is the ultimate feeling right there or, hell, being hit with just the right amount of electricity that makes your hair stand and it sails through your body like a full orgasmic feeling. It's like… well I'm a Leo so being the center of attention is like candy to me. It's a pretty good feeling. It's almost like a high to a point.

In addition to a sense connection, Jay discusses gaining recognition for his talent as a writer through his interest and involvement in music.

> It has gotten me slightly renowned. People on Facebook know me as much. I really did started taking off in high school and people started reading my high school poetry… It was pretty decent, you know like, "Man, Jay, you're pretty cool with your wordplay and your twists and your vocabulary and the verbatim you use, the paradoxes, and the whole,

> you know mind-bending thing. It's like you're mind fucking people with your tongue twisting tactics I guess." It's little intricate to explain.

Other young people describe gaining recognition for their skills, strengths, and talents as well. Smiley discusses gaining recognition for her talent as a singer and being asked to sing on other young people's songs at Belfort.

> I got a lot out of it. People want me to be on their tracks, you know? I don't know. That's about it. I have a good voice, 'cause I didn't think I know how to sing, but the people's like, "You've got a good voice." I'm like, "Oh, thank you," so – yeah.

Marcus discusses gaining recognition for his skills in operating Logic Pro and general studio utilization. He describes how young people come to him with questions and how he demonstrates Logic Pro functions, thereby mentoring others on how to use the software.

> Ever since I moved into the TLP, and I've been using Logic, a lotta people came to me. It's been about like at least two-three people that came to me, asked me, "How do you do this? How do you do that? Could you help me with this? Can you help me with that?" I'm like, "Sure, no problem." There been times where they done came to me and ask me can I work with them on something and I'd be like, "Sure. I have no problem working with you on anything." And then they'll get confused and they'll asked me, "Do you know how to do this?" I'm like, "It's easy," and I'll just show 'em. But I'll take it slow with them because the same way how my mentor taught me, I'm gonna teach them the same way, take it slow. It's like before you walk, you have to crawl. It's like baby steps and you need to just take it slow and be easy. Don't move too fast, because if you move too fast, you're gonna lose your train of thought and you're gonna lose everything that the mentor or the person that's trying to teach you something.

Wanting to get a better sense of how it feels to be recognized for his skills, strengths, and talents, I ask Marcus, "And so I'm wondering if you can describe for me how that feels to have people come to you and kind of want to know more about your knowledge and your skills." Marcus replies:

> It feels real good because it's like I could be that person that taught them things and they could say, "Well, Marcus did this. Marcus trained me real good and learned me how to use Logic. Marcus showed me the skills. He gave the knowledge, and now I'm using it." And they would be like, "Marcus, I thank you." And until this day, they still do it, and they say, "If it wasn't for you, I don't know what I'd do. I probably woulda learned my myself, but it woulda taken a long time. But if it wasn't for you teaching me now, it took

> me like less than –" well, it took me three months to just know the basics, and I'm still learning. I'm not gonna say I'm good at Logic. I'm not gonna say I'm the best; I know everything. I'm just saying that I would show people ways to do it, and they'll probably find out on their own, just like me, which it took me a long time.

Lest Marcus' humility in the last passage suggest otherwise, the following fieldnote excerpt demonstrates the above-described phenomenon. Marcus is engaged in production, working on a new song and listening to a recently recorded track on playback. From fieldnote PO 09/24/2011:

> *Non-consented young people filtered in and out of the studio as Marcus listened back to the recently recorded track. At one point a non-consented young woman rolled through and paused to listen to the track. "That you?" she asked Marcus. Marcus nodded and she exclaimed, "Damn! Will you teach me how to make beats?" He smiled, nodded, and said sure. They didn't make any concrete plans in the moment and agreed to talk more about it later. After she left I asked Marcus how it felt to have other young people ask him to teach them how to produce and make beats. He smiled, looked down, looked back up and around the room, not directly at me, and stated that it felt good. "I got a gift. People like my stuff and want me to teach them. That feels good."*

C. <u>Young People's Experiences in the Studio</u>

The following section explores young people's experiences in the TLP music studio. Using extended fieldnote excerpts from participant observation sessions in the studio with young people and Herman, I demonstrate how young people experience the studio as a space to engage in various forms of music production, education, and appreciation. In terms of music production, young people work in collaboration with each other and independently in the studio. In doing so they develop compositional, performance, and production skills as well as important interpersonal, intrapersonal, and technical skills. In terms of music education, Herman educates young people in the studio by providing Logic Pro lessons, while young people educate themselves and others by engaging in various forms of performance and production proficiency enhancement as well as keeping staff informed about studio users' experiences of the space. In terms of music appreciation, young people independently and with other young people and staff engage in a reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and recreation in the studio.

Finally, YouTube seems to play an important role in young people's experiences in the TLP music studio, by providing young people with access to videos that support music production, education, and recreation.

Two brief notes about the sections that follow: First, whenever possible I have chosen depth over breadth. In keeping with an ethnographic tradition, rather than present multiple brief examples of a phenomenon, I present in-depth, longitudinal data that provides a rich understanding of some young people's experiences with the phenomenon in question. That being said, as the closing thoughts in each section note, other young people experience the studio in similar ways. Second, throughout the following sections I provide links to young people's original work and other artists' work that were present during the observations. In order to gain a better understanding of young people's experiences in the TLP music studio, I encourage you to take some time to engage with these links and the related work as they do provide important, supporting context to young people's experiences.

1. Music production: Working in collaboration

This section explores a collaboration that develops among Bobbie, Smiley, and Theo. Fieldnotes developed from three different observation sessions over the course of several weeks demonstrate how the collaboration emerges and continually develops overtime, providing them with opportunities to explore various skills, including compositional, performance, production, and relational skills. In addition, through the collaborative process they develop roles in the studio, such as producer and performer, and navigate and negotiate tensions as they develop in relation to their roles within the collaboration and the evolution of their work. From fieldnote 09/12/2011:

> *It was around 5:45pm. I had been at TLP for close to 3 hours and was just now getting into the studio. I entered quietly and hung back to get a sense of what was going on.*

Theo had a song on playback and Bobbie was hunched over the table, working out lyrics, putting pen to paper. I felt a tension in the room. Theo was intermittently staring at the screen, improvising over the track, and looking over toward Bobbie. Bobbie had a bit of a scowl on her face, but also looked determined, deep in thought. I remained in the background for a bit, not wanting to disrupt their process. I assumed they were collaborating and my assumption was confirmed as I heard a woman's voice flow through the IMac speakers. The song was slow, somewhere around eighty beats per minute. It started out with a four-measure intro with just the beat. Duh-duh-duh clap, duh-duh-duh-duh clap, repeated four times. Then the melody and the vocals dropped.

My emotion's taking over me
I thought that we were destined to be
My emotion's taking over me
I thought that we were destined to be

As the song played on, I moved away from the wall, toward Theo at the console and asked him about it. He explained that the beat was a sample, taken from the Logic Pro library. He described how he laid the beat down first and then built the melody around it, using electric piano, a bass synthesizer, a bell-sounding synthesizer, and some other instruments. I asked him, "Which came first the music or the lyrics?" Theo quickly responded that the music came first. Bobbie remained hunched over the table while we talked, intensely focused on the paper in front of her, rarely looking up. As our conversation died down, Theo urged Bobbie to record an additional vocal track. "Girl, put it down then you can play around with it. Otherwise you'll be in here for three days," he said. "It has to be perfect," she shot back. "You making me nervous, pushing me," she said. "That's what producers do," Theo replied.

Eventually, Bobbie finished penning the lyrics and was ready to record. As she prepared to lay down the vocal track, she asked me to step out. She was nervous about singing in front of me. I headed out to the milieu to give her some space. After several minutes, Theo emerged from the studio. I asked him if Bobbie had finished recording her vocal track. He told me with a hint of frustration that she was still working on it. She needed more time. He headed back into the studio and they both emerged shortly there after. Apparently the executive team needed to use the studio for a meeting. As Bobbie and Theo entered the milieu, Bobbie exclaimed, "I'm done!" It was unclear if she was referring to the recording or the collaboration. Sensing the previously mentioned tension still simmering, I figured it best to give her some space.

In the above excerpt, Bobbie and Theo demonstrate several skills, including existing compositional, performance, and production skills. Bobbie has written lyrics expressing her feelings about what seems to be a recent breakup or heartache and is in the process of penning an additional verse to add to the song. Theo has provided music for the track and assisted Bobbie

with recording the vocals. Through this collaborative process, roles have developed, with Theo playing the role of producer and Bobbie playing the role of lyricist and vocalist. As they work together and try out these roles, tension emerges. Theo, in the role of producer, pushes Bobbie to record the verse, and Bobbie, in the role of vocalist, pushes back. This tension initially seems to disappear as they reenter the studio and resurfaces when Smiley joins the collaboration.

Continued from fieldnote 09/12/2011:

> *Back in the studio, Theo was at the console, playing keys along to the song, while Bobbie and Smiley were sitting on the south end of the table working on the lyrics. After sometime, Smiley decided to give the vocals a shot. She walked over to Theo to get the microphone. With microphone in hand, she walked around the tables to the other side of the room, the southeast corner, putting as much physical distance between herself, the console, and the rest of us as possible. Theo cued up the track and told Smiley, "When you hear the music, we're recording. You ready?" Without waiting for a response, Theo launched the song. The beat kicked out of the IMac speakers, followed by the melody, followed by Bobbie's voice.*
>
> *My emotions taking over me*
> *I thought that we were destined to be…*
>
> *Smiley was in the corner, with her eyes closed grooving, but not singing along to the song. Theo stopped the tape and looked over at her, eyes wide with a sarcastic smile on his face. Smiley looked right back at him with a shocked expression, as if to say, "What'd you stop the song for?" After a moment Theo slyly reminded Smiley, "You know you supposed to sing there, right? When the vocals come in?" Smiley laughed at this, "Yes, I remember. I just forgot." "Do it again!" she exclaimed. Theo asked if she was ready. She confirmed that she was. Theo launched the song again. The beat kicked in, followed by the melody, followed by Bobbie's voice, only this time Smiley's live vocals blended with Bobbie's previously recorded vocals.*
>
> *My emotions taking over me*
> *I thought that we were destined to be*
> *My emotions taking over me*
> *I thought that we were destined to be*
>
> *As she sang, Smiley kept her eyes closed, facing north as we faced her. Her head moved, nodding along to each word. Theo and I nodded along to the track and her performance. Theo let the recording role as Smiley laid down some improvisation alongside Bobbie's recorded verse. Theo eventually stopped the recording and let out a satisfied exclamation. "Girl can sing!" Theo, Smiley, and I had a laugh about this. Bobbie seemed absent from the scene at this point, disengaged. Smiley did a couple more*

> *recordings, eventually delivering a performance that satisfied Theo. As he played it back, he added some reverb to Smiley's voice, which distinguished it from Bobbie's. Listening back to the mix, Bobbie's voice was very stark and present while Smiley's voice sounded distant, seeming to come from behind and floating above Bobbie's.*

In the above excerpt, Smiley and Theo demonstrate compositional, performance and production skills. Smiley steps into the collaboration and assists Bobbie with writing the additional verse. Shortly thereafter, she decides to record background vocals for the chorus, moving into the role of a performer within the collaboration. Theo provides Smiley with engineering and production assistance, coaching her on when to begin, recording her vocal take, and praising her for her performance and overall voice. Theo also demonstrates an advanced understanding of mix engineering by adding reverb to Smiley's voice, thereby separating the two voices in the stereo mix. In addition, Smiley and Theo have fun in this process, teasing and testing each other about their recording and studio experience and knowledge. While seemingly absent from this phase of the collaboration, Bobbie steps back in and voices her concern about the direction the song is taking. Continued from fieldnote 09/12/2011:

> *With the vocals recorded for the chorus, Bobbie, Smiley, and Theo began to discuss what to do about the verse. Theo liked Smiley's improvisation. Bobbie was less pleased with it, noting that Smiley's words and delivery changed the feel of the song, which Bobbie did not like. The debate continued in mostly civil terms. At times Bobbie seemed overly critical of Smiley's improvisation and performance. Smiley remained mostly open to the criticism, but sometimes seemed annoyed, throwing attitude and looks at Bobbie. In these more tense moments, Theo stepped in and offered his thoughts on how to proceed, thereby diverting attention away from the tension developing between Bobbie and Smiley.*

In the above excerpt, Bobbie, Smiley, and Theo demonstrate maturity in relation to the developing collaboration. Writing, performing, and recording music is a challenging and vulnerable process. In the case of this collaboration, Bobbie shares lyrics about what seems to be a recent breakup or heartache, opening herself up to Smiley and Theo's feedback and criticism. Theo shares his music and production skills with Bobbie and Smiley, opening himself up to their

disapproval and/or dismissal of his work. Smiley steps into an existing collaboration, offers ideas on how to move forward with the lyrics and provides background vocals for the song, opening herself up to Bobbie and Theo's rejection of her ideas and performance. While Bobbie is somewhat critical of Smiley's ideas and improvised performance, and Smiley throws some attitude back at Bobbie, the young women are able to reconcile their differences with Theo's support. In doing so the young people put the collaboration and their work ahead of their egos, thereby fostering a collaborative and creative environment.

Later that week, I am back in the studio with Bobbie as she continues to work on the lyrics to *My Emotions*. Bobbie has yet to pass her studio test, but wants to work. With staff permission, I offer to help her by getting the equipment set up and providing some technical assistance.[16] As the following excerpt notes though, we quickly ran into an obstacle. From fieldnote 09/15/2011:

> *Once I opened the studio we realized My Emotions was on Theo's account, which neither of us could access. Luckily, Bobbie had a copy of the song on CD. She went to grab it and then we loaded it in iTunes. Bobbie walked around the table and took a seat on the southern wall. She pulled a scrappy notebook from the back pocket of her jeans, papers coming out of it all ways, and spread it out on the table. Once settled, she pulled a pen out from behind her ear, set the butt end to her temple, looked vacantly north, kind of at me, kind of at the wall, kind of at nothing. I asked her what she wanted to work on. She was still hammering out another verse to My Emotions. I was seated at the console. I cued up the track for her. She started giving me commands and I obliged. "Play that again. Rewind it. Forward it. Start it over," she said. After a while, she commanded less and got to writing. She'd write, then scratch out a line or two, keeping some ideas and dismissing others, her attention varying between her writing and the basketball courts behind the alley. After a while, I put the song on repeat, and let it play on, and on, and on; Bobbie and Smiley's voices repeating in unison over Theo's quiet storm influenced musical bed.*[17]

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[16] While key informants stress the importance of young people completing the studio orientation and test prior to using the studio, young people who have not completed the studio orientation and test are able to access the studio with support.

[17] *Quiet storm* is a term used to refer to a late-night radio format that features rhythm and blues, slow jams, and soul.

My emotions taking over me
I thought that we we're destined to be…

Smiley entered the studio after a bit. She hung by the door, listening to the track, and taking in the scene. Bobbie and I were still at our place at the southern side of the table and console, respectively. I greeted Smiley and she smiled back at me. Bobbie barely looked up to acknowledge Smiley's presence. After several minutes and another play through of My Emotions, Bobbie announced that she was, "Annoyed!" and "Tired of listening to the same song over and over!" Adding that she was "ready to move on!" Not sure what to do with the information, rather than turning the track off, I turned it down. Seemingly in response to Bobbie's exclamations, Smiley moved away form the door and approached the table. She asked Bobbie what she was working on. The two young women began to talk about the song. Bobbie explained that she was trying to hammer out the rest of the lyrics and was sick of it. She talked about how she didn't even like the song anymore. She asked Smiley what she was doing. Smiley had come in the studio to see if Bobbie wanted to work, to write and/or record. Smiley took a seat next to Bobbie. After some more small talk they turned their attention back to writing. Smiley asked Bobbie for a couple sheets of paper to write on. For a while they both listened back to the track, seeming to reflect and then jotting down ideas. They rarely compared their writing, both seeming to be in their own world.

In the above excerpt, Bobbie demonstrates persistence and perseverance by continuing to work on the song despite her frustrations and I provide the technical assistance that she needs to work in the studio. In terms of my participation, while I did little more than open iTunes, load the song, and select the repeat option, it is clear that my participation shaped the session, as she would not have been able to work without me there. As the excerpt suggests, Bobbie seems hesitant to welcome Smiley into the studio and work with her. Given the opportunity though, Smiley steps forward to assist Bobbie and/or work on something new. As the session continues the young women vacillate between working on the new verse for *My Emotions* and having fun, albeit at other young people's expense at times. Continued from fieldnote 09/15/2011:

Bobbie and Smiley continued to work on lyrics, taking breaks to talk and joke around. They talked about their fledging partnership, called R&B, and explained to me that it's much bigger than music. They talked about their envisioned clothing line. Bobbie explained product ideas, such as the Back Holder Hoodie, which would have a pocket for Dorritos in the mid section of the back for easy access, and pants called Thickies, which they envisioned for the plus size male. They both busted out as they explained Thickies to

me, noting that Thickies would be the perfect for some young men at Belfort, knowingly looking at each other, jokingly adding, "They got some hips!" They also told me about their envisioned TV show, kind of a comedy variety show with skits, singing and dancing. I asked them to tell me more about it. Smiley talked about how they come up with ideas throughout the day, while waking up and getting going, at school or work, at home, and/or getting ready for bed. These ideas then evolve into inside jokes, poking fun at themselves, their friends, other young people, family, or staff, and then become skits, songs, or dance routines. I asked for an example, at which point they looked at each other and laughed, as if to say "Is this guy for real!?" I pushed, "Come on!" Smiley caved and walked me through a bit that involved the young women in their pajamas, working on their hair, singing into their hair brushes, and poking fun at the seriousness of beauty product ads – the hard, seductive stares into the camera, the dramatic turns and flips of the hair, etc. All three of us cracked up as Smiley impersonated the models in these ads, offering stares, turns, flips and all.

After the skit demonstration, they decided to get back to writing. After some time, they started talking again. This time the tone was more serious, as they expressed their frustrations around working with Theo. They talked about the overall lack of collaboration, how they felt he bossed them around. "He thinks he a producer. He ain't no producer!" Bobbie exclaimed. She went to note that this was her track and how she invited Smiley and Theo to work on it, adding that without her there wouldn't be a track. Bobbie threatened to just pull the track and end the collaboration. Smiley nodded in agreement with Bobbie and added that Theo was just too full of himself. "He sit up there and he act like he a producer! This ain't no studio. I seen a studio and this ain't nothing." The young women talked about how stressful working in the studio can feel, both in terms of working with Theo and his demands for vocal performance, doing take after take, as well as working on lyrics and having a hard time coming up with ideas, knowing they had to pass two sets of criteria: their own and Theo's. The room felt tense as they continued to vent.

In the above excerpt, Bobbie and Smiley seemingly react to the pressure of composition, sorting through countless ideas and listening to *My Emotions* over and over, by taking a break and having some fun in the studio. They joke, laugh, and poke fun at themselves and others. In this moment, the studio becomes something more that a space for music production. It becomes a space for fun, gossip, and levity. As the following bracketed memo highlights, I relished and struggled with my role in this moment, particularly the latter as their jokes became more targeted toward other young people. Continued from fieldnote 09/15/2011:

[I was uncomfortable with Bobbie and Smiley making fun of other young people. I wasn't sure what to do. I was being brought into their joke and thereby into their

> *discussion and I didn't want to jeopardize that by being corrective or judgmental at their poking fun. So, I went with it, not condemning and certainly not participating or making any disparaging remarks about other young people.]*

This conflicted feeling intensified as they discussed their frustrations with collaborating with Theo. Of particular concern was whether they were venting to each other or me, as the latter would suggest providing feedback, which as I outline above I was unwilling to do. Over time it became clear that they were venting to each other with the added benefit of an extra pair of ears in the room.

Although uncomfortable, this observation was useful in gaining insight into the complications and frustrations of collaboration in the studio. Bobbie and Theo initially sought each other out for their existing skills as lyricist/vocalist and producer, respectively, and fell into the prescribed roles of performer and producer, respectively, within the collaboration. Over time they experienced success in developing a demo of *My Emotions* and struggled to further develop the song. Smiley brought new life into the collaboration, but not without resistance from Bobbie. While that resistance eventually subsided, new tension arose when Bobbie and Smiley reflected on their role as performers being produced by Theo and the impact of Theo's production on the work Bobbie perceived as her own.

A week and a half later I am working in the studio with Theo. As he gets to work, we engage in a conversation about collaboration and his role as a producer. From fieldnote 09/26/2011:

> *Theo got settled into the space, took his spot at the console, and got things set up to his liking. He put on the headphones, pulled up a track and began playing along, improvising. After a couple of minutes, he slipped the headphones off one ear, semi-turned to me, and asked "You got some questions you want to ask me?" half focused on his playing and half focused on me. "It seems like you have a lot going on in the studio, your own work and collaborations with other young people, like Bobbie and Smiley. Can you tell me more about that?" He noted that he did have quite a bit going on and that he was feeling good about it. He went on to state, "I'd rather be busy and have work than*

> *not have work." We talked more about how some young people were interested in making beats and raps while other young people were more interested in writing songs and producing other people's work. Theo envisioned himself in the latter category, a producer. By this point Theo had turned his attention fully toward our conversation, facing me with his side/back to the console. We talked a bit more about his role in the studio and the collaborations he's involved in. I outlined some of the tasks I envision a producer doing (e. g., coordinating talent, bringing talent into the studio, working with them to create songs, and supporting and pushing talent to perform and be their best, etc.). I asked him whether or not he feels like that is what he does. "Do you feel like a producer?" "Yeah, I do, " he replied, adding, "I feel a responsibility for my tracks. Like, I never want to hear my track is garbage. So, if I'm going to produce a track and you're gonna, you know, sing on my track, I'm going to push you to perform and be the best you can be. Period. That's what I do."*

In the above excerpt Theo clearly positions himself as a producer in the studio, one who feels a responsibility to push performers to be the best they can be. In addition, he conflates producing a track with the track being his, which may offer additional insight into some of the observed power struggle and tension discussed above among Bobbie, Smiley, and Theo. While Bobbie and Smiley vent about Theo's nerve and pushiness, Theo in turn articulates and positions his pushiness as an unyielding desire to be the best producer he can be and his desire for the performers to be the best that they can be, regardless of how they perceive him. Smiley enters the studio before we have a chance to explore this idea further. Continued from fieldnote 09/26/2011:

> *Smiley and Theo caught up for a moment, discussing what to work on and eventually decided to work on newer song called Never Give Up.[18] Theo pulled up the song and initiated playback. As the beat dropped and the melodic elements began to coalesce, Theo moved along to the music, mainly jerking his head and making the ugly face, signaling that he was feeling it.[19] Smiley was less demonstrative and more attentive, leaning into the listening experience, as if she was engaging in a more critical listen, perhaps self-conscious of her voice. After listening to the track a couple of times, Theo*

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[18] Link to *Never Give Up:* https://soundcloud.com/brianlkelly/never-give-up

[19] Smurf defines the ugly face. "The ugly face is when you so deep and you just got to be like, "Ooo, ooo, yes, yes, woo." It's the church face, too. It's like that Holy Ghost. It's like, "Yeah, Jesus." Yeah, it's pretty much that face." In other words, young people made the ugly face when they were really into something.

> *proposed rerecording Smiley's vocal track. Smiley pushed back a little, "Why? What's wrong with it?" Theo went on to explain that there was nothing wrong with it. He just felt she could do better, especially at the end when Smiley improvises. They went back and forth on it a bit, debating whether or not to redo it, presenting the pros and cons, eventually deciding to re-track the vocals.*

In the above excerpt, Smiley and Theo negotiate how to proceed with the song. Theo, in producer mode praises Smiley for her performance and at the same time pushes her to rerecord her vocals, arguing that she could do better. He handles the recommendation delicately and professionally, seeming to intuitively understand that the wrong words or phrasing might hurt Smiley's feelings and/or turn her off to the studio experience. It is possible that Theo is learning more about how to produce through working in collaboration with others, particularly in light of his comment above about feeling a responsibility to make sure his tracks are the best that they can be even it means pushing the performer. His willingness to confront Smiley and suggest that she could deliver a better performance speaks to the increasing level of confidence and maturity he brings to the studio throughout this collaboration. Smiley, in performer mode, seems initially sensitive to Theo's feedback, but not overly so, and open to the idea of improving on her work. Through this negotiation process, Smiley and Theo listen to each other's reasons and rationales and eventually compromise on the best solution for the song. As the session continues, it is unclear where Bobbie is, whether or not she remains a part of the collaboration, and what has happened with *My Emotions*. Continued from fieldnote 09/26/2011:

> *With the decision made to re-track Smiley's vocals, Theo and Smiley moved into rehearsal mode. Theo maintained his presence at the console and Smiley moved back to the southeast corner of the studio. I maintained a presence off to the side, behind Theo on the western wall. Theo had the song looped, the 2 to 3 minute track playing over and over as they both got physically situated to record. Theo grabbed the microphone and microphone cable from the cabinet where all the equipment is stored. He plugged the microphone into the M-Audio and ran the microphone to Smiley's corner. Smiley appeared self-conscious, turning away from us, facing east toward the park, as Theo prompted her to sing so that he could set the levels. With the levels set, Theo asked Smiley if she was ready to give it a go. Smiley laughed nervously and said,*

"Mmmmmm…," suggesting that she wasn't sure. Theo offered some support, "You good. You got this!" He stopped the looping track, set it back to the beginning, and asked Smiley if she was ready. Smiley nervously laughed and said, "I guess so." Theo nodded his head in agreement, offered a goofy four count, "5, 4, 7, 6," and then hit play.

In the above excerpt, Theo brings a sense of fun and levity into the collaboration and studio. Normally a four count is a basic, *one, two, three, four,* in tempo with the song, with the song beginning on the next, *one*. In this instance, Theo counts in using random numbers in non-numerical order, off tempo, in a kind of nerdy voice. He seems to get kick out of it. His energy perks up as he laughs to himself. In this moment, Theo seems to be letting his usually more stoic guard down and allowing his playful side to come out. Continued from fieldnote 09/26/2011:

As the beat-based intro played out, they both appeared focused; Smiley on calming her nerves and delivering her vocal performance and Theo on Smiley's performance as well, but from a distance, offering him the engineer/producer's ability to determine it's worth and fit with the track, preparing to offer supportive and critical feedback. As the introduction passed and the introductory rap began…

You better never, ever, ever give up

Smiley began to sing, quietly, almost too quietly to register over the other tracks, which were quite loud. Theo motioned for Smiley to cut and stooped the playback. He offered her some feedback, including sing into the microphone more, sing louder, don't be afraid to sing too loud because he could control the input level at the console, and try and loosen up and have some fun with it. Smiley took in his feedback and offered her own commentary, including that she was nervous and having a hard time getting over her nerves and focusing on the performance. Theo suggested that they keep rehearsing until she was warmed up. Smiley agreed. Theo rolled the tape again, looping it, and Smiley got into a groove, listening to the track and singing along, getting more comfortable with each pass. Theo continued to offer his feedback, pushing Smiley to try it this way and that way, playing melodic ideas on the synthesizer and suggesting she change things here and there. Smiley would listen to Theo's feedback and offer her own ideas on how to improve her performance. They negotiated and dialogued about the lyrics – "Should this word be placed here or there?" the melody – "I'm thinking that you should move into a higher note here and then drop down," and her performance – "Don't trail off here. Stay strong and hold the note." Eventually, they developed an idea of what they were going for and Theo suggested they record it. Smiley hesitantly agreed, smiling and laughing nervously.

Theo stopped the looped playback and initiated recording Smiley's vocal track. As the beat-based intro played out a noticeable shift occurred in the studio, as they moved from

preparation of the recording to the execution of the recording, which inherently has a different, more tense energy to it, a kind of "Game on!" vibe, which was tangible in the studio. As the intro gave way to the rap…

You better never, ever, ever give up

Smiley began laying down the vocals.

Never… give up, no, no

Which were noticeably louder than before, more confident, more assured. After a couple of takes, Theo suggested that they make some changes to the arrangement. He wanted moments that highlighted the rap and other moments that highlighted Smiley's performance. They negotiated this process as well, eventually deciding that Smiley would sing along for the intro, duck out during the rap, and then come back in afterward and carry on, eventually free styling at the end. As they rehearsed the new arrangement, Theo announced, "That girl a beast!" in reference to Smiley, clearly praising her and her vocal abilities. We all laughed at Theo's comment. Smiley laughed and blushed. I verbally noted that she was killing it, that she sounded great. Theo, raising the bar higher stated, "We gonna get signed to a label off this track!"

In the above excerpt, Smiley and Theo continue to negotiate how to proceed with recording Smiley's vocals, moving from the rehearsal phase to recording phase. As Smiley records her vocals, I reflect on the vulnerability required to sing in front of others and how it differs from other forms of performance and production. The following bracketed memo highlights my reflections on the moment. Continued from fieldnote 09/26/2011:

[This was special, watching this process develop. It was the first time I'd seen a vocal performance developed and recorded in the studio. I'd heard Bobbie and Smiley's work, but I hadn't seen them record. I noted that it was different than watching Theo and other young people produce. Singing is different than production. It's more personal and there is a different level of vulnerability. Watching young people produce is personal and vulnerable as well. They are inviting the observer, me into their world. But, there was something different about watching Smiley sing in terms of exposure and vulnerability. Singing is just different. There's nothing between you and the audience, whether that be one person or a thousand. I think I was picking up on this, a new level of vulnerability in the studio, something I had not witnessed before. Smiley was willing to put herself out there in front of Theo and me and be open to Theo's feedback and not shut down. It felt like I was witnessing something special, something different, a new kind of experience in the studio.]

Smiley and Theo continue with the recording process. Continued from fieldnote 09/26/2011:

> *Theo recorded several takes of Smiley's vocals, producing and giving her direction throughout the process. Smiley was receptive to Theo's feedback and in general seemed to loosen up more and more with each pass, by taking risks with the melody, pushing her range, holding some notes out, and shortening others. Theo was receptive to her improvisations, making suggestions about how to improve them. Smiley also seemed to be more comfortable with singing in front Theo and me, less self-conscious of her voice and her performance. She also got goofy a couple times, making fun of herself, and just smiling and laughing in general. Theo was having fun as well, dancing in his chair, and generally feeling it.*

In the above excerpt, the collaboration appears to be in full swing. Smiley has stepped into the role of performer and appears to be comfortable in doing so. Her ability to step into that space is facilitated by their collaboration and the necessary groundwork they have laid down. I reflect on the work it took to get to this kind of space in the studio, the compromising and negotiation, and note that they stuck with the process; that they did not throw in the towel because things got tough or allowed their egos to get in their way. As a result of their work, they appear to be having more fun in the studio, particularly Smiley as she loosens up and improvises over the track. Smiley's energy was infectious. Her smile and laughter really filled up the studio in between takes as they listened back, eventually becoming a prominent feature of the session, which at this point had a fun and playful vibe to it. It was interesting to consider the physical distance between Theo and Smiley, with Theo at the console and Smiley in the southeast corner. Given the distance, it interesting to note that observably strong connection as they work to develop the song, suggesting perhaps that music facilitates communication at a deeper level, a level that transcends physical distance. In the following bracketed memo I reflect on my position throughout the observation and its potential impact or lack thereof. Continued from fieldnote 09/26/2011:

[I was conscious of my presence and location throughout the observation, thinking about all the development, negotiation, compromise, performance, and recording that occurred with me in the studio. I wondered what impact my presence had and was struck with the idea – very little! They did this all on their own, seemingly not caring that I was there observing them and their process. If they were self-conscious, they rarely showed it, perhaps only Smiley and only when initially singing in front of Theo and me. Beyond that, they seemed neutral to my presence, preferring to focus on their work.]

Smiley and Theo continue with the recording process. Continued from fieldnote

09/26/2011:

After several more takes, they were both pleased with the introduction and parts of the improvisation section after the rap. Theo felt that the improvisation could be stronger. Smiley agreed but was struggling to find the right phrasing for the end, vacillating between different versions. They gave it a couple of more goes. Theo stopped the tape a couple of times to make some suggestions. It was hard to tell how Smiley took his feedback. It seemed like she was getting frustrated when he stopped the tape, but then would get right back into it when he rolled the tape again…

At this point I had several pages of jottings and I wanted to know how Smiley and Theo experienced the session. Waiting for an opening, I asked if I could ask them a couple of questions, which they were fine with. I began by asking them about the idea of collaboration. I wanted to know how it was going. They both reported experiencing the collaboration positively and went on to note some interesting things about how the collaboration was offering them something more than just a musical product. Smiley noted that the collaboration offers her an opportunity to, "have a voice and be put on point." I asked her what she meant by being put on point and she explained that it's a chance to be challenged to be the best she can be. She gets a voice by being able to sing and by voicing her opinion in the collaboration. "People will help you in a collaboration," and she's free to, "speak her mind," about the process, she adds, and people (i.e., Theo) will listen.

Theo noted that in working with others you're always going to run into personalities, that, "everyone's got one!" He went to state that collaborating, "helps you learn how to work in the real world, cause this is only the studio." I probed a bit, wanting to get a better sense of what he was saying. "So the studio helps you deal with real world? These skills that you're talking about, like having a voice, being put on point, speaking your mind, learning how to deal with different personalities in the studio; they help you to deal with similar situations in the real world?" I asked. To which they both replied, "Yeah," nodding their heads. I asked one more question. "How did it feel to collaborate?" Smiley, smiling and laughing, stated that it felt, "Good." Theo stated, "The track is complete and would not be without her vocals." I agreed, noting that the track sounded really great.

In the above excerpt, Smiley and Theo describe their collaboration as a positive experience. They frame it as an opportunity to learn to work with different personalities, acquire and utilize voice, and, "be put on point," in other words be pushed to be the best that they can be. When asked if these skills are transferable outside of the studio, they contend that they are. This suggests that collaboration in the studio may offer young people an opportunity to develop important intra and interpersonal skills, including the ability to compromise and negotiate, increased confidence in one's ability as a performer and/or producer, and the ability to work under pressure and persevere. Additional observed collaborations among young people, including collaborations between Hope and Theo, Marcus and Outlaw, Marcus and Theo, and the development of the co-constructed audio documentary support the idea that young people have an opportunity to develop these skills in the studio.

2. <u>Music production: Working independently</u>

This section explores Marcus' experience of working independently in the studio. Fieldnotes developed from three different observation sessions over the course of several weeks demonstrate how Marcus' work in the studio evolves over time and provides him with opportunities to develop various compositional, production, and technical skills. In addition, he experiences various compositional, production-oriented, and technical challenges that provide him with opportunities to experience success in the studio, particularly as he navigates technical challenges related to music production. From fieldnote 09/22/2011:

> *Marcus was in the process of moving through songs, looking for something to work on. After opening and closing several files, he launched a song called It's On.*[20] *As the song played, I verbally noted that it was upbeat. Marcus gave a head nod, offering his non-verbal agreement. Wanting to know a bit more I asked him what the track was about. "It's about people getting on their business. Getting stuff done." I could see it. The track starts with staccato strings and orchestra bells, playing at a fast tempo, about one*

[20] Link to *It's On*: https://soundcloud.com/brianlkelly/its-on

hundred forty beats per minute. Over time a kettledrum drops in on the one and a male choir chants "Hey" on the uh of the sixteenth notes. Then a ride cymbal drops in over the "Hey," followed after a measure or two by massive snare rolls and rushes, which cascade into a smooth, half time beat made all the more tight by the "Hey" that accentuates it. After the beat dropped and got into a solid groove, I envisioned people moving around, attending to their business, and getting their game on. Marcus and I were in a groove, heads nodding, Marcus at one hundred forty beats per minute and me in half time. We listened to the track a couple of times and talked about it. Marcus seemed to appreciate my thoughts, nodding when I commented on how I could see people bustling around to the music and smiling when I praised certain production aspects of it, such as the strings, the bells, and the fresh, crisp mix.

Marcus then opened up another track called See Me. We listened to it a bit. Then, he stopped playback and excitedly opened up Garage Band. He stated he wanted to play me another track he'd been working on called My Life. As he opened up Garage Band he explained that he'd been working back and forth between two programs on this song, creating some tracks in Garage Band, specifically the drum and synthesizer tracks for ease of sequencing, and then loading them into Logic Pro. He explained that he still wasn't comfortable with writing beats in Logic Pro, that the interface didn't make sense to him, being used to a more visually-based, sequencer interface like FL Studio. He noted that while he's feeling more confident in Logic Pro, he still feels most comfortable with FL Studio.

In the above excerpt, Marcus states that he does not feel competent in Logic Pro, yet he demonstrates aptitude and awareness with the program and his developing production skills. He notes that he produced beats and melodies for *My Life* in Garage Band and then imported the tracks into Logic Pro. This suggests an increasing aptitude and comfort with Logic Pro and an awareness of his current limitations in the studio and ways in which to work around these limitations. He realizes he is uncomfortable with creating and tracking certain instruments in Logic Pro and has the insight to use Garage Band, a program more comparable to his preferred audio production software program, FL Studio. While he frames this as a limitation, it is also clear that he is demonstrating technical strengths by indentifying and implementing solutions to his current compositional and technical limitations with Logic Pro. In addition, Marcus brings me into his process, as young people were prone to do when working independently in the studio. He plays his work for me and opens a space for dialogue and feedback. In these

moments I considered my role as a researcher, the ways in which the observation and Marcus' work are potentially impacted by my feedback and support, and whether or not young people might benefit from increased support in the studio. The following bracketed memo explores these ideas further. Continued from fieldnote 09/22/2011:

> *[It's interesting to think about the role I played, which is researcher, but also mentor, and I mean that in a loose way. While I wasn't officially in that role, I see myself merging into it, offering Marcus feedback and praise from an experienced vantage point. Meaning, I am an older, experienced musician and he knows that. He seemed to appreciate the feedback and the praise, which makes me reflect on how young people might benefit from increased staff/mentor presence in the studio, as long as it doesn't interfere with their freedom to do and say what they please. If Marcus appreciates the feedback and it offers him something good (e.g., support and validation of his work), wouldn't it be good if there were more of that that at the same time did not compromise the youth-centeredness of the studio?]*

Marcus continues to work on *My Life*, eventually encountering a challenge in his production process. Continued from fieldnote 09/22/2011:

> *Marcus was experimenting with different sounds in Garage Band, manually recording MIDI triggered electronic bass drums to bolster the existing drum tracks. As he recorded the scattered quarter and eighth notes, he talked about being a bit rusty with his production skills, having not been in the studio for a while. After messing with the bass drum for a bit, he stated that he was not getting what he wanted, not playing and recording what he heard in his head. He moved on to work out some melodic ideas, playing around with a cello instrument, specifically manipulating the pitch up and down until he found the sound he was looking for. We talked about how much fun the studio is, especially manipulating audio and making it sound so foreign. We had some fun while he was playing around with the pitch, adding different effects, such as delay and reverb, just messing with it in general. He eventually got back to searching out the sound he was looking for. He spent some time really focused, adjusting the finer controls of the cello pitch, leaning in and taking a closer look at the gradations. He turned his head to the left and brought his right ear closer to the IMac, listening intently to the My Life playback while playing the new cello melody along on the synthesizer. After several passes, he backed away from the IMac stating, "This too complicated. I'm frustrated. This would all be so much easier on FL Studio."*
>
> *I kept quiet, wanting to see what would happen next. After checking his phone, Marcus leaned toward the IMac, opened up Safari, goggled FL Studio, and pulled up the FL Studio website. With the website open, he leaned back and smiled. Then he began to laugh and fake cry at the same time, exclaiming, "I want my FL Studio!" I asked him to tell me about FL Studio. "What makes it so special?" "Have you ever used FL?" he*

> *replied. I shook my head, "No." He probed further. "Do you know what it can do?" "Kind of. It's essentially a sequencer, right?" I replied. "Kind of, but it's so much more. I'll show you." He then launched a tutorial that demonstrated the various capabilities and functions of the software. As the tutorial progressed, Marcus became increasingly irritated, literally huffing and puffing that he needed FL. As the tutorial ended he exclaimed, "Man, I miss my FL! It's easier for me! I'm mad!" As he continued to vent, I asked him if the studio was frustrating for him. "Yeah, but I'm trying to learn," he said in reference to Logic Pro.*

In the above excerpt, Marcus runs into compositional, production-oriented, and technical difficulties while using Garage Band, which he will later interface with Logic Pro. He laments about not having FL Studio, arguing that writing and recording the additional bass drum track as well as the cello track would be easier with FL Studio. Yet, as he states above, he perseveres with Logic Pro and as we see below over time demonstrates proficiency in several compositional, production-oriented, and technical areas with Logic Pro. In fact, towards the end of the data collection, Marcus had FL Studio up and running on his laptop. Yet he still used Logic Pro for many aspects of his composition and production. At the same time, it is possible that at this point in his development, Marcus is arguing for a best practice model in regards to his experience and preference is using FL studio in music composition and production.

Back in the studio, Marcus turns his attention to YouTube, pulling up and playing videos that provide insight into his musical tastes and preferences. Continued from fieldnote 09/22/2011:

> *Marcus turned his attention to YouTube and pulled up a video by The Two of Diamonds titled Aaliyah (2010).*[21] *The track starts with a female vocal saying, "Yo, turn my music up," as a filtered beat and string sample rise and move from the low-mid muddy register into a clear, crisp mix while the female voice says, "Louder." Then, a male vocal comes in through the filter singing, "Da-da-da. Da-da-da. Da-da-da. Da-da-da-da-da." Finally the mix is fully present, having worked its way through the filter, and the rapper begins his verse over a ninety-eight beats per minute rhythm. He dedicates the song to his girl, his Aaliyah, a reference to a recently deceased and renowned African American female artist. Marcus and I nodded or heads and grooved in our seats, bodies moving*

[21] Link to *Alliyah*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcBRaSFIMPk

and feet tapping, feeling it. As the track continued to play, Marcus explained that the producer was a staff member at the last program he lived at. Marcus went on to state that this guy influenced his style and taught him how to work with samples, including hunting them down on the Internet, downloading them, and then chopping and cutting them up in Audacity. I nodded and commented that the song was really good and he agreed, "I know." The track really caught our attention again as the rapper repeatedly noted, "If we get this thing right, then we can take flight," as the beat rolled on and the strings filtered in and out. We got lost in the track again, nodding our heads and grooving in our seats.

After Aaliyah, Marcus pulled up another video, this one by an artist named Seven titled Seven Makes "Flying V" for Vizzy Zone (2010).[22] *As the video loaded Marcus explained how it was one of his favorites by one of his favorite producers, Seven. The video starts with Seven working through his vinyl collection, cuing up records on his turntable, and looking for sounds to sample while paging through some magazines. After a minute or so of searching he finds his sample, a dark sounding cello melody that works up a scale and back down. With his sample indentified, Seven records it on his MPC and begins to chop it up.*[23] *At this point in the video, Marcus stated how badly he wants an MPC and that he hopes to convince Herman and TLP to purchase one for the studio. With the cello sampled and cut up, Seven creates his own sample, using the MPC pads to hammer out additional melodic ideas. He then records a beat over the newly developed melodic idea using the MPC as well. From there, he loads the files into his audio production software and works out some additional melodic ideas on a variety of synthesizers and keyboards. In the next series of shots, Seven adds drums, piano melody, acid lines, his own handclaps, and finally equalizes and effects to the mix. The final triumphant shot of the video is of Seven, his back to the camera as he faces his computer and monitors, nodding his head along to the full track he has just produced, with the idea being that the viewer just witnessed the evolution of the track from the ground up using sampling as the foundation for his work.*

After watching the Seven video with its focus on building sample-based song from the ground up, I wanted to get an understanding of what it was about sampling that was attractive to Marcus. "What is it about sampling that's attractive to you? It's seems unique to your work. I haven't seen a lot of other young people work with samples in here. Why samples?" As I asked these questions he was vibing out to another video, nodding his head and moving back and forth in his chair. He kind of looked at me, as if to say "I don't know," looked down, and gave me a kind of garbled response about, "not really knowing why" and "feeling comfortable with samples" and "not being so good with instruments, but being good with beats."

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[22] Link to *Seven Makes "Flying V" for Vizzy Zone*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0TKOUyaDt8

[23] The Akai Music Production Center (MPC) was instrumental in developing and furthering genres like hip-hop, rap, drum and bass, jungle, and turntablism in the early to mid 1990s. It is used for sampling and chopping up beats.

In the above excerpt, Marcus uses the studio to engage with work that has been influential in his development as a sample-based musician and producer as well as work demonstrating compositional and production techniques that he finds inspirational and that he aspires to. While watching the *Aaliyah* video, Marcus notes that the producer of the song, "influenced his style and taught him how to work with samples." While watching the *Seven* video, Marcus is intensely focused on Seven's production process, seeming to take mental notes and pictures, imagining how he might use the same process to further develop his own work. It was as if Marcus could see the potential for his work and the studio through Seven's video. While his response to my probe regarding an affinity for sample-based music may read as lackluster, I attribute it more to the difficulties an artist may have in attempting to articulately describe an evolving craft. I also note that Marcus shares this work with me, and in the moment I have a clear sense of how unique the studio is, how special the moment is, and how the two are dependent on each other. The studio facilitates the opportunity for us to engage and share the moment, to be in each other's company and share Marcus' musical influences, inspirations, and aspirations.

Several weeks later I observe Marcus in the studio again. He is sorting through files and looking for something to work on. From fieldnote 10/13/2011:

> *Marcus played a track I didn't recognize. A group of stringed instruments, what sounded like cellos, delivered a slow, maybe eighty beats per minute, somber melody across four measures. I took a seat next to him and asked if it was a new song. "It's a sample from Logic Pro called Demur All," he said.*[24] *"I need to chop it up." I commented on how nice it sounded and he agreed. "I like the strings… Yeah, I really like strings," he said, smiling and moving his head along to the tempo. Wanting to get a sense of whether or not there was anything particularly alluring about strings, I asked Marcus what it was he liked about them. "I don't know. I just like them," he said. I asked him if the sample was part of a new song. He said it would be, after he chopped it up. At this point he stopped playback, collapsed Logic Pro, and opened up YouTube. I asked him what he was doing*

[24] Link to *Demur All*: https://soundcloud.com/brianlkelly/demur-all-sample

and told me he was looking for a specific tutorial on chopping samples. He had watched several tutorials on YouTube in the last couple of weeks that outlined chopping up samples in Logic Pro. But, none of them provided guidance on how to chop them like an MPC, which was what he was looking for. He went to state, "With the MPC you can make your chops more like precise." I asked what that meant. He said, "Well, like, you can take your sample and break into even parts, like in quarters, eights, sixteenths, and thirty-twos." I asked him about the benefit of that. "Well, when you play then, it's better, the sample sounds better." I asked what he meant by better and he explained how more chops led to better control of the sample. With the better control, he had more options to re-interpret and re-imagine the sample for his own work. He said he would demonstrate it for me once he figured it out and turned his attention back to YouTube, eventually pulling up the correct video.[25]

The video was titled Logic Tutorial: Chop Samples EXACTLY Like A MPC.[26] *Marcus watched the eight-minute video several times, moving back and forth between absorbing the lesson and applying the content to the Demur All sample in Logic Pro, pausing between the two several times to clarify certain parts and make sure he understood what was happening. After several minutes, he threw up his arms and exclaimed, "Amazing!" Before I had a chance to ask him what had happened, he bolted out of the studio and reappeared with Smurf moments later. Beaming, he looked at Smurf and I, pointed at the computer, and yelled, "I know how to sample in Logic!" Smurf responded, "Really… wow… like… whoa!" Smurf and I congratulated Marcus. He thanked us and proceeded to demonstrate the process for Smurf, walking through it step by step. After successfully demonstrating the process for Smurf, Marcus sat back and noted how good it felt to have figured it out noting, "Now I'll be able to chop things up like an MPC, which will make beats a lot easier." As Marcus basked in the glory of successfully troubleshooting an engineering problem that had been dogging him for weeks, he and Smurf talked excitedly about collaborating. Smurf noted that she had been collecting ideas for samples from some of her favorite tracks by artists like Curtis Mayfield and other seventies icons. She asked Marcus if he wanted to check them out, which he did. He loaded them onto his desktop and turned his attention back to working on the string sample. He felt that he could fine-tune the process, noting that if he did some more precise chopping and broke the original sample into sixteen sections as opposed to eight, he would have more control over it when he went to re-interpret the sample on the MIDI keyboard. He continued to work and experiment with the process, fully engrossed not noticing that Smurf had left the studio.*

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[25] A brief note about the MPC and chopping samples: Once samples are loaded into the MPC, the user estimates and enters the samples beats per minute. Then, based on the chopping measurement chosen (e.g., quarter, eighth, sixteenth, or thirty-second notes), the MPC divides the sample into even sections that can then be played on the built in MIDI pads or another external MIDI instrument.

[26] This video is no longer available on YouTube, but similar videos are, including: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9h6UMvXPgbY

In the above excerpt, Marcus works to gain mastery over a compositional and production-oriented skill and in doing so experiences success in the studio. Faced with a new audio software production program (i.e., Logic Pro), Marcus is initially distraught and frustrated about how to produce music in the TLP studio. Rather than back away though, he identifies a skill he had previous mastery over (i.e., chopping samples). He engages in a translational process, struggling to understand how to translate that skill to a new platform (i.e., Logic Pro). In order to do so, he uses available resources to learn how translate the skill (i.e., studio equipment and YouTube tutorials). He perseveres until he successfully completes the task. In these moments, Marcus experiences success in the studio, and perhaps most importantly, he experiences success at something he really wants to succeed at (i.e., music production). It is important to note that in an agency for young people experiencing various forms of homelessness and related forms of trauma, the music studio offers Marcus the opportunity to be successful at something that is meaningful for him. In addition, Marcus seeks to share the success with others and demonstrate the knowledge he has acquired. In these moments, Marcus appears to be gaining important intrapersonal skills, such as confidence in his ability and perseverance to meet his goals, and interpersonal skills, such as sharing his emotions and experiences and connecting with other young people in Belfort.

Several weeks later I observe Marcus in the studio again. Having just returned from a smoke break, he is simultaneously writing, arranging, and producing a new song, specifically engaged in some of the more some of the more technical aspects of digital music production. From fieldnote 11/10/2011:

> *Back in the studio, Marcus shifted gears and recorded a new melody. I was curious as to where the impulse to shift gears came from. After he finished recording, I asked him, "Were you thinking about this outside?" "Yeah," he replied. I probed, "How so? Can you describe the process for me?" He talked about getting frustrated with manually*

aligning the midi notes and needing to take a break. He used the break to "step away" and "clear my mind." "So," I asked, "What happened then when you cleared your mind?" "I don't know," he said, "I just started hearing this melody and I had to get back in here and record it." Marcus then zoomed in the on the newly recorded MIDI notes and reviewed their alignment on the MIDI grid. As he did this he noticed that several of the notes were too long, extending beyond the rhythmic note range he intended (i.e., a MIDI quarter note extending beyond the quarter note range on the MIDI grid). He began to work through the MIDI notes, trimming down the ones that were too long. His body was erect in the chair and his gaze was focused on the IMac screen. The mouse was in his right hand and his left hand controlled the IMac keyboard. Periodically he would pause to consider a note length, bringing his palms together in prayer fashion, covering his mouth and the bridge of his nose, breathing deeply.

After several minutes of shortening notes, Marcus changed gears and assigned a new instrument, a symphonic string instrument, to the newly recorded MIDI track. As he listened back, this seemed to trigger a new thought for him. He opened the Logic Pro sound library selected the Demur All sample I'd heard him play before, and loaded it into a new audio track. He proceeded to initiate the sample chopping process I'd previously observed him work through. After a moment though he leaned back and said "Wait," and went on to explain that he was "confused" and "needed to watch something." He collapsed Logic Pro, opened up the web browser, went to YouTube, and pulled up the tutorial video I'd previously observed him watch on how to chop samples like an MPC using Logic Pro. While reviewing the video, he paused several times to work through and apply the key principles of the tutorial to the Demur All sample, making sure he understood what was going on. I stepped in a couple of times to offer some technical assistance (e. g., clarifying a particular point or reminding him of a point so he didn't have to re-watch the video). By the end of the video, Marcus had successfully chopped the sample up in sixteen equal parts, just like an MPC.

He beamed as he had previously when he successfully completed the task and proceeded to enjoy the rewards of his effort, playing the chopped up string sample on the synthesizer along to the previously recorded tracks of the new song. I mentally noted that there was a very good vibe in the studio at that moment, a sense of joy in accomplishment. As he continued to play along, starting and stopping the sample to the beat, and picking up on and applying the nuances of the sample to the beat. We laughed and noted how cool it sounded. Wanting to stay in that moment but also wanting to get a sense of his process, I asked Marcus what happened, why he changed gears from editing MIDI to chopping samples. He explained that he just had an idea to chop up the Demur All sample and add it to the track when he changed the MIDI instrument to strings. He decided to act on it so he wouldn't forget the idea. He went on to share that he could always go back and edit the MIDI later. We continued to discuss sampling and sample-based music. I shared that there was some very cool sample-based music out there and asked him if he would like to hear an example. He was down. I pulled up Machinedrum's Loveking (2011) on YouTube, a hectic, chopped up bass music sample bonanza, and played it for him.[27]

[27] Link to *Loveking*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IA_IzKZAug

> *Marcus' reaction was priceless – bobbing his head to the hyper rhythm and verbalizing, "Yeah," with the snares on the twos and fours. Based on my observation, I'd say he was into it. After we watched the video, I decided to head out for the evening.*

In the above excerpt, Marcus engages in MIDI note alignment, which is a technologically advanced process in digital music production. The MIDI note edits he makes are minor, something only a very trained ear would hear. It is a tedious and attention demanding process, mired in detail and focus. Marcus demonstrates a level of technical proficiency and perseverance by engaging in this process that will potentially improve his musical engineering and production aptitude. Seemingly in response to the demanding and tedious task, he steps away from it to work on a compositional idea when it comes to him (i.e., adding strings to the song). He then attempts to produce it, but runs into a technical challenge in realizing the idea (i.e. chopping the sample). He then uses the available resources to overcome the challenge (i.e., studio equipment and YouTube tutorials). In summary, he demonstrates the sample chopping process he previously demonstrated, thereby practicing and further solidifying skill. In addition, he further solidifies confidence in his ability and perseverance to meet his goals, which are important intrapersonal skills. In regards to my participation in this observation, I believe my familiarity with Marcus and the time spent with him working independently in the studio allowed us to develop a deeper relationship, which in turn allowed him to seek input, feedback, and assistance and allowed me an opportunity to offer it. In regards to sharing the Machinedrum song specifically, I saw a connection between his passion for samples and the body of bass music this song represents. I wanted to expose him to it and potentially broaden his horizons, to clue him into the potential for sample-based work and the production possibilities as other musical mentors have done for me. I note that in this moment I step out of a solely observational role

and move into more of a participant-observer role, thereby potentially having a greater impact on Marcus' experience in the studio.

Additional observations of young people, including Jay, Outlaw, Smurf, Theo, and Young Louie support the idea that while working independently in the studio young people experience opportunities to develop various compositional, production, and technical skills. In addition, they experience challenges that provide them with opportunities to develop important intra and interpersonal skills. Working independently also seemed to increase young people's awareness of and attention to my presence, which often resulted in inviting me into their process. This included offering technical support (e.g., helping with production and audio engineering issues), providing general support and feedback (e.g., offering compositional support and providing constructive feedback) and sharing music together (e.g., young people sharing music with me and sharing work with them). As I note above, at these times I note my participation in the observation session and its potential impact. In addition, I note the sense of connection that these opportunities provide, both for young people and myself.

3. Music education: Staff educating young people

This section explores a Logic Pro lesson in the TLP music and positions the lesson as an opportunity for young people to engage in music education in the studio. Herman facilitates the lessons using an interactive approach that provides young people with opportunities to demonstrate and integrate relevant and fairly sophisticated audio engineering and production skills. In this lesson, Herman, Marcus, and Jay specifically work with sample time (i.e., tempo) and pitch issues. From fieldnote 08/12/2011:

> *As we settled into the lesson, I sat along the back eastern wall, Herman sat along the southern wall, next to the projector, Marcus sat at the console, and Jay sat on the northern side of the table. Herman distributed copies of the lesson, Working with Time and Pitch. As he did, he noted that they would all take turns reading and he invited Jay*

and Marcus to take turns modeling the content of the lesson, which Marcus was prepared and in place to do. Prior to the lesson Herman explained the purpose of asking young people to take turns reading out loud. He noted how several young people at Belfort need support around their reading skills. The Logic Pro lessons provide another opportunity to engage and encourage young people to read, hopefully thereby increasing their reading skills. Back in the studio, Herman explained how the goal for the afternoon was to work through as much of the lesson as possible, stressing that it was a bit more advanced and complex than previous lessons, which were more of an introduction to Logic Pro.

Herman began reading, going over the first training module, Creating Your Own Apple Loops with the Apple Loops Utility. As Herman read, Marcus demonstrated the related content on the studio equipment. Also wanting to get a better understanding of Logic Pro as I would be observing young people using it for the next several months, my curiosity was immediately piqued by the content. Waiting for a break, I asked about MIDI loops and their interchangeability once assigned to a track. "When you drag a MIDI loop into a track are you stuck with the assigned voice/instrument or are they interchangeable?" Herman and Marcus began to answer my question at the same time, and as soon as I noticed that Marcus was responding I focused my attention on him, asking him to go on. He stated that I could change the voice/instrument of the MIDI loops. I asked him if he would demonstrate it for me. "Sure," he replied. Marcus proceeded to move through Logic Pro, searching out the MIDI loops library. Once located, he selected a loop and dragged it into a track. He then modeled for me how I can switch out the voice/instrument with ease, stressing that I am not stuck with the voice/instrument that Logic Pro initially assigns to a loop. I noted that he did all of this without any stalling, hunting, or pecking, seeming confident in his ability to model the task.

As the lesson continued, Herman often stopped and asked Jay and Marcus clarifying questions. For example, several times after reading a paragraph, rather than just moving on with the reading or into the interactive portion of the lesson, Herman asked Jay and Marcus to restate what they had read in their own words, which they were often able to do. Jay in particular seemed to have a clear understanding of the technical language, which makes sense given his experience working with computers and being an avid gamer. He seemed to display a more intellectual learning style. Marcus was also able to restate the reading in his words, but appeared more eager to demonstrate the knowledge as evidenced by demonstrating the content first and then restating it, displaying more of a tactile learning style. Seemingly in an effort to drive home the integration of knowledge in your words concept further, Herman restated what he had read when it was his turn to read, thereby modeling for Jay and Marcus what he was asking them to do.

In the above excerpt, Herman facilitates an interactive music education environment for young people. He provides opportunities for Jay and Marcus to work on their reading skills, demonstrate Logic Pro lesson content using studio equipment, and provide their own

interpretation and meaning of the content. Herman also appears attentive to and aware of Jay and Marcus' learning styles. In response to the interactive learning environment and attention to individual learning styles, Jay and Marcus appear able to demonstrate and integrate knowledge related to Logic Pro in ways that are useful and meaningful to them. In addition, I inquire about Logic Pro, the lesson, and provide Marcus with opportunity to further demonstrate his understanding of the content. As the lesson continues, the content gets increasingly complex. As it does so, I take on a more active role in the observation. Continued from fieldnote 08/12/2011:

> *The lesson prompted Herman, Jay, and Marcus to work on synching the pitch and tempo of a variety of samples on a variety of tracks that in their entirety made up a song. On first listen, we could all tell that the pitch and tempo of several of the samples were off. The task was to work through the skewed samples and adjust the appropriate parameters accordingly. The first task was to fix the tempo of a piano sample, without affecting the pitch. The tempo of the piano was off with the master tempo for the song. The task was to go in and repair the tempo of the piano sample in order to synch it up with the rest of the song, to the master tempo.*
>
> *A brief note about the complexity of this portion of the lesson: Within this particular repair, there lies an even more complex lesson of understanding the consequences of adjusting the tempo of a sample. Speeding up or slowing down the tempo of a sample inherently raises or lowers the pitch as well. In other words, if an engineer speeds up the sample, she automatically speeds up the pitch, and vice versa. Thankfully, most audio production software programs now have a device or mechanism that serves as a fix for this dilemma. In Logic Pro it is called time stretching. When this fix is engaged, speeding up or slowing down the tempo of the sample does not affect the pitch and increasing or lowering the pitch does not affect the tempo of the sample. The main point of this module was to expose Jay and Marcus to this concept, which seemed particularly relevant as they produce hip-hop, rap, and R&B, genres that often use samples. That being said, this is fairly complex content and I was impressed with their ability and willingness to hang with it.*
>
> *As they moved through the tempo module, the first task more fully presented itself. The task was to remove a slight tremor in one of the notes of the piano sample. The note was extended beyond its intended place in the measure. The asynchronous master and piano tempos created the tremor and in order to fix it, the note needed to be remapped and synched. As they were listening to the playback in order to identify and remove the tremor, my curiosity was piqued again. Waiting for a break I asked, "Do you guys hear and see that?" stressing the see in my phrasing. Picking up on my question, Herman*

> *explained how the seeing part is really essential for this level of fine detail in audio engineering and production. The projector aided in the process, as it blew up the image on the west wall. Jay and Marcus responded, "Yeah," as they located the tremor, remapped, and synched the piano note, thereby removing the tremor.*

In the above excerpt, Herman, Jay, and Marcus continue to work through the Logic Pro lesson and Jay and Marcus demonstrate an understanding of time stretching, a fairly advanced and complex process involving sample tempo and pitch. The demonstration aspect of the Herman's interactive approach to the Logic Pro lesson seems particularly important here, as the young men are able to tactually execute the task as opposed to just cerebrally conceptualizing it, which may be particularly important for Marcus given his previously observed tactile learning style. In addition, I engage in the lesson by assessing Jay and Marcus' ability to address the audio engineering problem with multiple senses. Herman supports my question and seems to encourage and support my engagement, thereby making the lesson that much more interactive.

As the lesson continues, Herman offers additional insight into how he approaches facilitating Logic Pro lessons and education in general at TLP. Continued from fieldnote 08/12/2011:

> *As Jay and Marcus continued to work through the tempo module, Marcus stepped out to take a phone call. Shortly there after a non-consented young woman entered the studio, requesting that Marcus come and meet her outside. Marcus got up and stepped out of the studio again. As he did, Herman informed the young woman that we were in the middle of a lesson. "Oh, is this the studio class?" she asked. Herman replied that it was. "I need to get in here! I got some stuff to work on," she said. Herman asked her to connect with him later to set up a time for the studio orientation. Herman appeared to take the interruptions well, not seeming to be particularly frustrated or put off. I spoke with him after the lesson and asked him about how he feels about interruptions during the lesson. He explained how he really tries not to run the Logic Pro lessons, or any classes at TLP for that matter, like a traditional top-down hierarchical classroom. Herman went on to discuss how many of the young people at Belfort have not had the best experiences in the classroom. Many of them being homeless and/or not having stability in their lives have had stigmatizing transient experiences with school, never really feeling solid or comfortable in the classroom. In addition many of the young people have not had good experiences with authority figures and so to run any lessons in an authoritative manner would most likely turn a lot of young people off to the supportive services TLP is trying to*

promote. So, Herman is not hard on phones. If young people need to take a call or step out, he allows it. He noted how it's difficult for staff to always know what's going on for young people. There may be family issues, work related issues, etc. It's better to assume that they are responsible rather than assume they are irresponsibly taking calls.

Back in the studio, as we moved into break mode I was curious as what Jay and Marcus thought about the tempo module and the related fairly complex and monotonous work it takes to address these finer audio engineering issues. To be fully transparent I judge it to be tedious and painful. It's definitely not the glamorous part of audio production and I was curious to see what they thought. I exclaimed, "The joy of audio production!" to which everyone laughed out loud. After our laughs, ughs, and groans passed, I turned to Jay in a more thoughtful manner and asked him, "Does this seem useful to you? Spending sixty minutes to just kind of tweak a thirty second sample?" He thoughtfully replied that he did find it useful. He acknowledged how working through this somewhat tedious and time consuming process will help with and inform his future work in the studio. He went on to explain how he can apply these principles to other areas of production, more specifically his own samples. Herman piggybacked on Jay's response, stressing how these concepts are applicable across multiple audio software programs. Walking out of the break, Herman appeared pleased that Jay and Marcus were invested and grasping the audio engineering processes. Throughout the lesson, Herman offered a nod or a smile when Marcus and Jay got something, whether they were looking or not, almost as a way to affirm his own feelings of satisfaction about the young people getting it.

In the above excerpt, Herman describes his efforts to create a non-authoritative learning environment at TLP and demonstrates what it looks like during the Logic Pro lesson. Rather than coming down on Marcus for answering his phone and stepping out of the studio during the lesson, Herman makes room for these events, arguing that it is hard to know what is going on for young people. In line with a PYD approach to facilitating the Logic Pro lessons and education in general at TLP, he prefers to conceptualize young people as responsible and capable of making the right decision. In addition, when probed Jay verbalizes a nuanced understanding of the broader implications of the tempo module, specifically noting its applicability to his work and the potential benefits it offers. In addition, Herman's body language throughout the lesson suggests he enjoys seeing the young men comprehend and integrate the content. As the lesson winds down due to technical errors, Marcus provides an additional demonstration of acquiring

important engineering skills in this example of music education in the studio. Continued from fieldnote 08/12/2011:

> *After the break we moved on to the pitch module of the lesson. Energy in the room was noticeably down. Marcus looked tired and Jay seemed a bit restless and focused on something going on outside. Herman noted that the pitch module was going to be as complex as the tempo module and highly technical. It was going to require some patience. Marcus was back at the console and Jay was back in his original spot. As Marcus worked through the initial steps of the lesson the computer began to slow down and Logic Pro crashed several times. The software crashes were aided by Marcus's continued hammering of multiple keys while the Apple operating system attempted to navigate the errors Logic Pro encountered. With the system rebooted and Logic Pro open, Marcus quickly worked through the initial steps of the lesson again, unaided by Herman or the handout only to have the system crash again. This process of Marcus rebooting the system and working through the initial steps of the lesson happened several more times. At some point in this process of attempting to progress with the lesson, Jay stepped out to address whatever had him pre-occupied and Marcus calmly but clearly stated, "I'm getting angry." Herman calmly and non-judgmentally checked in around whether or not Marcus wanted to push through or wrap it up. Marcus wanted to call it a day. Herman pushed back a bit, but Marcus stated that he was done with the lesson for the day. He wanted to work on some of his own music.*

In the above excerpt, while it may seem like Marcus threw in the towel so to speak, it's important to note that in working through the first few steps of the module multiple times due to errors and crashes he demonstrated an understanding of how to begin to work with pitch by successfully continually working through the initial steps of the lesson on his own without any prompting. In addition he demonstrated technical proficiency in navigating the crashes and getting back to where he needed to be in Logic Pro to continue with the lesson. Additional observations of Logic Pro lessons with Herman and young people, including Young Louie, support the idea that the music studio offers young people opportunities to engage in music education activities in the studio. In addition, the development of the co-constructed audio documentary provided young people with opportunities to engage in music education activities in the studio. These activities included listening to examples of existing audio documentary work and training on how to use digital field-recording devices.

4. Music education: Young people educating themselves and others

The following section explores young people's experiences of educating themselves and others in the TLP music studio. In terms of educating themselves, Young people encounter various technical challenges with Logic Pro and other hardware and software issues in the studio. As Marcus demonstrates in the Working independently section of this chapter and as Jay and Marcus demonstrate in the Logic Pro lesson section of this chapter, young people use available resources, including Herman, YouTube, and myself to work through technical challenges and educate themselves on how to use the studio equipment. In doing so they increase their studio competency and overall musical knowledge. Young people also engage in composing, producing, and recording original work. As Bobbie, Smiley, and Theo demonstrate in the Working in Collaboration section of this chapter and as Marcus demonstrates in the Working independently section of this chapter, young people increase their musicianship and proficiency by engaging in music composition, production. In doing so they also increase their studio competency and overall musical knowledge.

In addition, young people work on cover versions of other artists for work and their own enjoyment. As the following excerpt demonstrates, Theo works on Gospel covers for his church, providing him with opportunities to work on his musicianship and be of service. From fieldnote 08/09/2011:

> *Theo began to surf through YouTube, pulling up gospel videos and playing along to them. I had seen him do this before in an observation session with Marcus. This was different though as there was no back and forth with another young person. The dialogue seemed to be happening inside Theo's head, playing out and along with the tracks he liked and/or appreciated and moving on from those which he did not like or appreciate. After watching him for several minutes I asked, "So, what are you working on?" "I need to find some ideas for covers for my church," he replied. I probed further. "Ah… so, are you just learning the melodies, teaching yourself? Or will you record them?" Theo replied, "I'm just learning them and then need to record them." He drifted back to playing along with the YouTube clip, going back into the same process of sticking with*

> *some clips and dropping others. Throughout this process he would also sort through instruments in Logic Pro and try out different melodies and phrasings. At times he wore an exasperated look on his face – after working on a song for a bit, his playing would slow down and he would begin to pull back from the keyboard, exhaling loudly, putting his hands to his face, his eyes specifically. He would then come back to the computer keyboard and seek out a new idea, communicating that he was feeling an instrument and melody combination or frustrated with it. If the latter, he would move on. This happened several times.*
>
> *Eventually I sought more clarification from Theo about what was actually going on. I was confused, as he wasn't demoing any of the songs. I expected at some point to see him choose a song, get familiar with it, and then move into Logic Pro and record a demo of the track. This wasn't happening though. He remained in this cycle of choosing and playing along to YouTube clips. I asked, "So you're trying to find songs to cover for your church?" To which he replied, "Yeah." I pushed a little more, "So, is this something you get paid to do? Is it work?" To which he replied, "No, it's just something I do." We discussed a bit more and I learned that someone in his church band, perhaps the bandleader, charges Theo with the task of identifying and learning popular gospel songs. Wanting to get a better sense of what that's like for him, I asked him if he sees this as work. He talked about how it is work and that he does not get paid. He sees it as his way of being of service. He explained how even though he is working it's still creative. When he works on music for his church he doesn't stick to the songs note for note. Instead, he, "moves his fingers around a bit," meaning he adds his own style and flare to the song, his own interpretation. That's how it remains creative, by using the YouTube clips of gospel music as a template, a guide. And, I see him doing that. He does tend to add his own ideas to the songs.*

In the above excerpt, Theo notes the creative aspect of working on covers for his church. He describes how rather than learning a note for note rendition of the songs, he adds his own melodic and rhythmic flare, thereby working on his musicianship in the studio. In another example of young people working on a cover in the studio, Marcus and Outlaw decide to cover a song that they initially feel a strong connection to. The bracketed memo provides additional context, noting my reaction to the process. From fieldnote PO 11/08/2011:

> *Marcus pulled up a song called Letter to My Son by Don Trip (2009).*[28] *As the initial bars played out, Outlaw pushed his notebook aside, stood up, and started moving around the room, pacing and kind of bopping and popping to the rhythm. The song's intro had a dusty vibe to it, a pitched up female vocal track, Rhodes keys, and a tight rhythm section holding it all together. As the introduction played out, the camera focused on Don Trip*

[28] Link to *Letter to My Son*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQGUz-ntEPE

in what appeared to be an isolation booth. He moved along to the dusty groove and stepped up to the microphone as the introduction gained momentum. Then about thirty-five seconds into the song, the introduction gave way to low-end kicks and synthesized trumpets announcing the arrival of Trip's rap. As the beat dropped and the rap kicked in, Marcus stood up and began to move, standing in front of the console and swaying back and forth to the eighty-three beats per minute rhythm. Outlaw began to move as well, less static than Marcus, around the room and free styling along to the track. At one point Marcus turned to me and exclaimed, "This is an emotional track! Can you feel his emotion?" I listened to the first stanza:

Please, No pitty for a G
Know I got a son that I barely get to see
I see him for an hour, after that he gotta leave,
On top of that I only get to see him once a week,
Yeah, right, lucky me, well fuck you and whoever disagree
I learned a valuable lesson indeed,
But I'm just tryna' be the best father I can be

[As I listened, it was clear that the track was about Trip's experience as a young African American father attempting to show up for his son and the challenges in doing so. With that in mind, I sensed that the song held a particular relevance and resonance with Marcus and Outlaw, both of whom are young African American fathers. Marcus has a baby boy and another on the way and Outlaw, although estranged from his expecting girlfriend, was soon to be a father as well. Rather than responding to Marcus from across the room, I moved closer in an effort to communicate that, "Yeah, I feel the emotion."]

I stood up and walked over to console and told Marcus, "Yeah, I can feel the emotion." Outlaw broke from his freestyle and noted that this was his life. I asked what he meant. He went on to say that what he was rapping about, pointing to the IMac, what Don Trip was rapping about, was his life. I asked him to say more. "Well, he talkin' about being a father and not being able to see his son and that's my life too. I got a son, you know. And I can't see him 'cause his moms won't let me, you know." He then immediately fired off a freestyle rap about not being able to see his son in rhythm with the song. Marcus nodded along and suggested that they cover and record the song.

In the above excerpt, Marcus and Outlaw connect to a song about African American fatherhood and the challenges in showing up as a father when tensions arise with the child's mother. Outlaw verbally notes that Don Trip is telling his story. While Outlaw does not describe how he feels or what it means to hear someone tell his story, it appears to be a powerful experience for him. Watching him respond in freestyle form to Trip's rap suggests that the song

speaks to him. Outlaw seems to be able to talk about and/or process parts of his experience by engaging with the music. This suggests that young people may gain additional modes of expression by engaging with other artists work and developing cover versions of their songs. In addition, working on a cover version of the song provides Outlaw with opportunities to further hone and develop his freestyle skills. A week later, I am in the studio with Marcus and Outlaw enters. From fieldnote 11/15/2011:

> *Marcus and Outlaw discussed what to work on. They decided to continue working on their cover of Letter to My Son that they'd started the week before and subsequently recorded a demo version of. Marcus had found an instrumental version of the track, loaded it into Logic Pro, and recorded a scratch track of Outlaw's rap. I asked them how it sounded, whether or not they were happy with it. Outlaw said it was okay, but that it needed some work. Marcus agreed, nodding his head, and initiated playback. As the intro played out, Outlaw took a seat on the northern side of the table. He opened up his notebook and laid it out flat on the table. With his pen in hand, he stared at the notebook and nodded his head along to the rhythm. As the beat dropped, Outlaw's scratch track ripped through the speakers and filled the room. We all nodded our heads along, Marcus at the console and me on the western end of the table. Much like the original track, the lyrical content of their cover was highly personal. Outlaw rapped about being frustrated that his ex-girlfriend was giving him grief, telling him he wouldn't be able to see his child and making it difficult for him to be the father he wanted to be. There was misogynistic content and I was troubled by my position – wanting to verbally comment that some of the content was offensive, but also not wanting to pass judgment on their work. I remained silent on the point.*
>
> *As the track continued to play back, Outlaw alternated between writing in his notebook and free styling along to the track. He also offered some commentary on his performance. There were a couple of times when he commented or laughed out loud at particular line. One line in particular, "I just want my seed!" seemed to really catch Outlaw's attention, as he laughed out loud and shook his head in a "Nah…" fashion after hearing it played back. I asked him about it. "What was that about, when you said 'Nah?'" Outlaw explained how it was just blunt, how he was just putting it out there. I probed, "That's what the "Nah" meant?" He clarified, "Nah, rapping about wanting to see my seed… I mean that's raw, Joe, you know? I'm just putting it out there, you know?" "Putting what out there?" I asked. "Wanting to see my son, you know? I want to see him and she can't keep me form him," Outlaw responded.*
>
> *After a couple more playbacks, Outlaw looked up from his notebook. He set his pen down and began talking about having difficulties with writing about and relating to the topic. "My son ain't here yet," he said, "and I'm not there yet." I asked him what he meant. "I don't talk to his momma like that." I nodded and probed a bit further. "But it*

seems like you were really into it the other night. It seems like you still feel the energy. Is that true?" "Yeah," he said, as he laughed out loud, "Yeah." "What kind of energy is it?" I asked, wanting to get a better of sense of what was going on for him, what drew him to the song. "I don't know, you know, it's like it's more funny to me than serious," he said. "What do you mean by funny?" I asked. He replied, "Like, this hasn't happened to me, so it isn't real. It's funny to listen to Trip rap. It's raw." He paused and laughed, reflected for a moment, then went on, "This shit will cause some trouble for me. Baby momma will be pissed off." Outlaw went on to note that he pays his ex thirty dollars a week, to cover food and health expenses for her and the unborn child. "I'm talking care of business," he added, "but she's a mess. I don't know. I talk to her sisters everyday, but…" he paused for minute, and looked away, toward the window, to a focal point outside of the room and added, "Hopefully she'll get it together."

The room was quiet as Outlaw continued to look out the window. He was tipped back in his chair and had his hands placed on the table, supporting and offering balance. Marcus was facing the eastern wall, his elbows on his knees and his hands under his chin supporting his head. Eventually Outlaw turned his attention back to the studio and asked Marcus to pull up the original version on YouTube. As it played back, we all stood around the IMac and watched and listened. About half way through the song, right after the first chorus, Outlaw announced, "See, I can't write this. This hasn't happened to me." Marcus paused the video. Outlaw explained that he just wasn't felling the track anymore. Unfazed, Marcus collapsed the browser and started playing Outlaw different beats and demos he'd been working on.

In the above excerpt, Outlaw makes the decision to not cover *Letter to My Son*. While initially he feels connected to its content, over time he realizes that he does not. Throughout this process he explores the experience of not being in a better relationship with the mother of his unborn child, venting his anger and frustrations. The cover version provides Outlaw with an opportunity to rap about the experience of being a father and not being able to see his son, placing him in that space. Given his decision to abandon the cover due to not being in Trip's position, it is also possible he realizes it is not a position he wants to be in. In this moment, the studio offers Outlaw the opportunity to explore a potential experience and his reactions to it. In addition, Marcus and Outlaw explore their musical, rapping, and writing development throughout this process, by making decisions about what to cover and developing original lyrical content.

In terms of educating others, young people provide informal mentorship and training to other young people in the studio. As Marcus and Theo demonstrate in various sections throughout this chapter, including The Role of Music in Young People's Lives and Working in Collaboration, young people with skills in a particular area provide informal mentorship and training for other young people who are less skilled. For example, Marcus and Theo are particularly skilled in audio engineering and production and they provide informal mentorship and training for other young people on how to use the studio equipment. It is important to note that in these moments, not only do the less skilled young people learn how to use the studio equipment; Marcus and Theo gain additional mastery by teaching the skills, thereby solidifying the knowledge for themselves. The informal mentorship and training process closely mimics Herman's interactive approach to the Logic Pro lessons, both serving to reinforce young people's studio equipment knowledge and general music education.

As a result of their advanced understanding of audio engineering and production, Marcus and Theo were invited to be Studio Experts. As key informants discussed in the previous findings chapter (see Studio Experts section), Studio Experts provide formal mentorship and training to new studio users by facilitating studio orientation sessions and assisting young people with their studio tests. While the position has been grounded due to budgetary issues, Marcus and Theo continue to provide informal mentorship and training as well as periodically meeting with Herman to discuss studio related issues. As the following fieldnote excerpt demonstrates, these meetings provide Marcus and Theo with an opportunity to educate staff on the status and needs of the studio. Herman begins by explaining the purpose of the meeting. From fieldnote 02/24/2012:

> *Herman explained that his plan for the meeting was to take a look at how the studio is being used and to have a discussion about how the studio could be improved. From*

across the table, it looked like he had a brief agenda, some items and/or questions for discussion. He began by thanking Marcus and Theo for coming to the meeting and for being such good stewards of the studio. He presented a game plan – working through the studio policies, soliciting their feedback on whether or not the policies were useful and how they might be improved. Theo and Marcus were on board.

In terms of policies, they reviewed the policy regarding staff checking young people out and back in the studio. Marcus and Theo expressed their frustration about waiting on staff to open the studio, sometimes waiting as long as ten to fifteen minutes to gain access and then waiting an additional ten to fifteen minutes to check the equipment back in. They offered several solutions, including empowering young people who have passed their studio orientation to check themselves out and back in using a unique lock and code system for studio users only. They also critiqued the overall security policy for the studio as overly cumbersome and not totally fair, specifically the studio cabinet and conference room needing to be locked anytime they leave the studio, even if they're only stepping out for a minute (e.g., a phone call, a smoke, etc). Herman jotted down their ideas and noted the feasibility of each suggestion. He offered some feedback as to why the security policies are currently structured the way that they are, citing previous thefts and making the studio as staff friendly as possible while maintaining it as a young person centered space. Herman noted that in the older iterations of the studio staff were often frustrated by having to split their time between the studio, which was located in the basement, and the rest of the milieu. He also noted how staff members stressed the need for secured equipment due to prior thefts, hence the intensive security measures and policies. He noted that he would take their thoughts regarding ways to make the studio less restrictive and more accessible to Pepper and see what her thoughts were on the matter.

In the above excerpt, Herman solicits Marcus and Theo's feedback on studio policies in an effort to strategize on ways to improve the studio user experience. As Marcus and Theo provide feedback about their frustrations with staff expedience and responsiveness to checking young people out and back in as well as overly restrictive policies around leaving the studio unattended for any period of time, Herman dutifully writes down their ideas and provides realistic insight into the likelihood of these policies changing. Throughout this dialogue, Marcus and Theo educate Herman regarding their experience of the studio and the policies that shape it. As the discussion continues, they discuss problems with interruptions in the studio and the purchasing of new studio equipment. Continued from fieldnote 02/24/2012:

Herman asked Marcus and Theo whether they are able to work reasonably without interruption. He invited them to not hold back, that this meeting was a safe space for

them to vent about any and all interruptions, even interruptions from staff. He was "looking for straight feedback." Marcus offered that there were many interruptions from staff and young people. From staff, there were interruptions to do chores, grab toiletries from cabinets that line the northern wall of the studio, and requests to do favors, such as taking out the garbage, etc. Theo and Marcus noted how frustrating the latter was, with Marcus adding, " Can't you see I'm working in here?! Now you gotta come in here and ask me to take out the garbage, right now?!" Herman offered that there wasn't much he could do about the chore interruptions, but asked for suggestions about how to limit interruptions to get supplies. They engaged in a discussion about how to reposition the file cabinets as to limit interruptions from staff to access toiletries. Herman said he would address the issue of staff making requests of young people to do favors while they are working in the studio space with the appropriate staff.

In terms of interruptions from other young people, and staff for that matter, Marcus offered a two-part suggestion. First get a pull down shade to cover the glass on the conference room door. Second, make an In Session/Recording sign to let other young people and staff know when they are recording. So, when young people are in the studio they can pull down the shade to limit distractions. Then, when they're recording, they can use the sign to let young people and staff know not to interrupt them, that they're in session. Herman was open to both of these ideas and jotted them down, noting that they seemed feasible. From here, the discussion evolved into other distractions in the studio space, including noise from the milieu. Herman proffered the idea of an isolation booth, but stressed that it needed to be something that could be taken down, mobile, transient and non-permanent, as the studio is also the conference room. They engaged in a discussion about how they could build an isolation booth by using scraps of Floor rug pieces and store it in the southeast corner of the room, next to the entrance.

Herman then asked Marcus and Theo about what kinds of new gear they would like to see for the studio, both in terms of hardware and software. He was specifically looking for what kinds of tools young people needed to improve their sound. Marcus did not miss a beat. He jumped right in. In terms of software, he asked for FL Studio, noting that he wouldn't stop using Logic Pro, but that he would like to integrate both programs into his production process. In terms of hardware, he requested a new synthesizer and MIDI controller, new headphones, and a new mouse. Theo added that he would like new mouse as well, a larger, track pad mouse.

In the above excerpt, Herman solicits Marcus and Theo's "straight feedback" about interruptions in the studio and they work together to develop solutions, including new signage for the studio and a mobile isolation booth. In addition Herman solicits their input on purchasing new equipment for the studio, again dutifully writing down their ideas and giving careful consideration to their requests. In doing so, Herman creates a space for Marcus and Theo to

educate on him on their experience of interruptions in the studio, the impact interruptions have on their work, and some of their preferred practices in the studio. In addition, Marcus and Theo educate Herman on the equipment they need and want to improve their experience of the studio and their work. While not the focus of this section, the collaborative nature of the meeting, Herman's attention to Marcus and Theo's experience of studio policies and their general user experience, and his demonstrated and stated willingness to consider and bring their feedback to the appropriate staff members serves as an additional demonstration of the agency's a commitment to a PYD approach and its implementation in the TLP music studio.

5. Music appreciation: Appreciation, education, and recreation

The following section explores young people's experiences with music appreciation in the TLP music studio. Fieldnotes developed from observations with Smurf and Outlaw over the course of several weeks demonstrated how young people use the studio as a space to independently and collectively come together to appreciate original work and the work of others. Young people educate themselves and others about various kinds of music and spoken word work. In addition, young people independently and collectively come together and listen to music, thereby engaging in recreation in the studio. As in previous sections throughout this chapter, young people working independently in the studio seemed to increase their awareness of and attention to my presence. This often resulted in young people inviting me into their process, hence my increased presence in the observations presented in this section. In the following excerpt Smurf is listening to and watching music videos on YouTube. As the session progresses, she shares some of her original music video and documentary film work. From fieldnote PO 08/28/2011:

> *I made my down to the studio and found Smurf in there. As I entered I noted she was at the console listening to videos on YouTube. Curtis Mayfield's Freddie's Dead (1972a)*

was flowing out of the IMac speakers and into the room.[29] *The older, soulful music created a different vibe in the studio as to date I had mainly experienced the studio as a hip-hop and rap oriented space. As I got settled I asked Smurf what she was up to. She responded that she was looking for instrumentals or instrumental sections of songs to sample. She explained that she likes older stuff, like Curtis Mayfield, and pointed to his face on the monitor. "He's my man! I love Curtis! I love Curtis Mayfield… man!" She went on to explain that she has ideas for tracks that she wants to work on with Marcus and Theo. As the song ended, she pulled up Mayfield's Pusherman (1972b).*[30] *As the song's intro started, we both responded, our heads nodding along, looking at each other, and smiling, seeming to non-verbally communicate our admiration and feel for the song. As she continued pulling up Mayfield and other related artists' tracks, I sought clarification around how she was going about sampling audio from YouTube, thinking she would use Logic Pro in some way. Instead, she walked me through a different process of using dedicated sites to turn audio embedded in YouTube clips into .mp3 files.*

After demonstrating the conversion process, Smurf went back to her search for tracks to sample. As she searched I asked her about her work, what's she's into, what kind of music she likes. She stressed that she likes older stuff, such as soul, rhythm and blues, and disco. In terms of original work, she played me a video of a song called Where Do I Stand?[31] *In it she raps along with another young man about wanting to understand her position in life and the inherent pains in doing so. I had a chance to jot down the lyrics later.*

(Intro)
Let's go
Yeah
Alright
Yep

(Smurf Verse 1)
Yeah
I'm afraid, I'm alone
Sometimes I feel as if I don't have the will to go on
Fight it, these nightmares is like daydreams
Hoping someone will hear my silent screams
Cold, sends a shiver down my spine
Somebody please stop me 'fore I hit that mainline
This is crazy
I really don't feel y'all understand
Sometimes it me's be asking
Yeah, where do I stand?
Where do I stand?

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[29] Link *Freddie's Dead*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9nwcpGZE6A
[30] Link to *Pusherman*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7hf605a_EE&feature=plcp
[31] Link to *Where do I Stand*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SVLZUuGbV0

Where do I stand?
Somebody please help me out with this
Like, I'm not getting it right
Yeah, man, where do I stand?

(Smurf Verse 2)
This home is desolate and cold
When all I really wanted was to feel you nurturing soul
Life, revolves around me then I'm under
Shoe up on the couch drunk, under some covers
This home was supposed to be my sanctuary
But these cold walls make it feel more like a mortuary
I only come home when the sun goes down
Who knew this side my house could be so sound
Social misfit I'm mangle hearted
Everyday a funeral, dearly departed
You supposed to be my guide in life
But I'm wandering through this jungle with a hunting knife
I'm a person
My life has a plan
Sometimes I wish you could really fully understand
Why I ask myself
Like yeah, well, well, well
Where do I stand?
Where do I stand?
Where do I stand?
This is like, crazy, yeah, well
Where do I stand?

After we watched the video I shared my thoughts with Smurf, stating that it was very good, including the audio and video production and her performance. She smiled and laughed, somewhat embarrassingly looking down and thanked me for the compliment.

Later during our interview, I have the chance to ask Smurf more about *Where do I Stand*? Smurf describes the piece and its meaning.

> Well in the first verse it's just somebody writing in their diary saying that they scared and they alone and they really don't feel like they have the will, you know, to keep living. They pretty much fighting with their thoughts. They nightmares feel like daydreams so they pretty much seeing their nightmares in the day while they waking. You know, while they drifting off they having nightmares. They like, "Somebody please stop me before I hit my mainline." They pretty much really feel like committing suicide, you now, cut the main artery that's going to make them bleed out… "I really don't feel you all understand so where do I stand? Should I do it? Should I not do it? Somebody help me. Tell me pretty much."

Smurf goes on to describe what it was like to write the song and be part of a collaborative creative process.

> Well we all really put that piece together. We all wrote a piece. I wrote both my pieces and the guy I was working with, (name), he wrote his piece and they pretty much were pieces of poems and we just put them together and we just came out with "Where Do I Stand?" Like, okay, we came up with the scenarios. We were like, "So we're going to (ask) our self a question like where do we stand with this? Where do we pretty much go from here?" That's what we was asking our self. Left? Right? You know, fork in the road pretty much. So where do I stand? Which way do I go or what status? Am I good? Bad? How does that work?

Wanting to get a better sense of whether or not the song has deeper personal meaning for Smurf, I ask, "What was going on for you when you wrote this piece?" Smurf responds:

> Nothing. We just kind of randomly came up with this. It was like make it, get a point across, you know, make it have meaning. You know, what's the topic? We came up with a topic of people who going through stuff and asking for help like, "Give me a decision." That's what we pretty much came up with that. So we just came up with the lyrics like off of a spur of the moment thing. We all had separate pieces of paper and we were, like, just grabbing them and putting them together and that's what we came up with. It wasn't really nothing that was going on then. It was just like a work project that we really took to heart and came up with that. (laughs)

Smurf goes on to discuss how good it felt to have others engage with and appreciate her work.

> It was interesting because I never did it. Well I did do it before but to actually do it on a video it was funny to me because I hate how my voice sounds on a microphone and it makes me sound like a little kid. (laughs) So but it was cool and I liked it and everybody liked the song. One of my workers like literally sat there and listened to it like five times after we showed him and then we posted it on YouTube. He actually literally sat there and just listened to it a couple times and then he knew all the words, which made me feel kind of good. It made me feel good because he was actually listening to it and learning it and he learned it and he was like, "Man, that's deep stuff, good stuff." I'm like, "Okay, cool." I like that.

In the above excerpt, Smurf describes the benefits of participating in developing original work and sharing it with others, particularly noting that she liked receiving positive feedback. Back in the studio, Smurf explains how *Where do I Stand* evolved out of an internship with a local youth media organization. From fieldnote 08/28/2011:

Smurf noted that Where do I Stand was one of several video-based projects she'd worked on with the Hard Cover program at Community TV Network, an area non-profit that "Empowers low-income young adults and children in Chicago by engaging them in the creative and collaborative process of digital video production" (Community TV Network, 2013a). Hard Cover, or as it's noted on the website Hard Cover: Voices and Visions of Chicago's Youth, "is one of the nation's longest running TV shows created by and for youth. The show is produced by interns who compile our best work from over fourteen programs across the city to curate episodes about important issues that relate to young people's lives" (Community TV Network, 2013b). I asked Smurf about her internship, what she did there. She explained that she was part of a production team. She assisted on, directed, and produced her own and others' digital video work that covered a variety of topics, including local news and young people's personal interests. As she talked about her internship I noted a shift in her presence. She rose out of her casual slouched over the IMac keyboard posture. Her voice changed from a hushed conversational level and tone to a louder, more excited and focused delivery.

Her main project was a short documentary film about youth homelessness and TLP titled Home Sweet Home?[32] *Smurf pulled it up on YouTube and we watched it together. As we watched, with Smurf at the console and me to her right, the glow of the IMac screen illuminating our faces in the otherwise dusky room, I was struck by the maturity and professionalism of the film. There was a clear narrative to her work. The shots and audio were clean, as were the edits. The content was balanced, utilizing first person accounts from young people experiencing homelessness as well as homeless youth services providers. After the film I shared my impressions with her and she thanked me for the compliment, but this time not embarrassingly looking down and thanking me like she did when I complimented her on the music video. This time she thanked me and confidently accepted the compliment, noting that she'd received a lot of positive feedback for this particular work.*

In the above excerpts, Smurf shares her original work with me, including audio and video-based productions. Later in the study period, she gains recognition for her work with Community TV Network and Hard Cover, specifically the documentary film. During the production of the co-constructed audio documentary, she flies to Seattle, WA, to attend a young person's film festival where she is presented with a promising young filmmakers award. While the documentary film was not produced using the TLP music studio, there is a connection between the two. During the development and production of the co-constructed audio

[32] Link to *Home Sweet Home?:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tf12c4u1jFA&list=UUgGBgmTwofU3xPQBV7Q8dNQ&index=72&feature=plpp_video

documentary, Smurf describes how the film was shot at TLP, specifically in the studio. "Actually, the studio is where I filmed the documentary (laughs). The studio space is where I filmed the documentary that won me these awards. Cause it was based around TLP. And we recorded here in this studio." As Smurf's quote suggests, the studio played an important role in the film. In addition, the studio provides her with a space to share her music video and documentary film with others, creating an opportunity for Smurf and others to collectively appreciate and engage with her work. In addition, by sharing her work with others and having an opportunity to appreciate and engage with it, Smurf educates me about her experiences as a lyricist, rapper, music video producer, and documentary filmmaker.

Back in the studio, Smurf turns her attention to other artists' work that she appreciates. In doing so, she provides me with an education about her musical tastes and preferences and together we engage in a form of music-based recreation in the studio. Given my level of engagement in this portion of the observation, I include relevant bracketed reflective memos. Continued from fieldnote 08/28/2011:

> *Smurf directed her attention back to other artists' work, including The Isley Brothers' Voyage to Atlantis (1977a), Footsteps in the Dark (1977b), and Between the Sheets (1983), Earth, Wind, & Fire's Boogie Wonderland (1979), and Change's Searching (1980).*[33] *As she worked through the videos she exclaimed, "These are my songs!" getting more and more excited as she pulled up each video. She talked about these songs being a big part of her youth, noting, "I grew up with this stuff." She described hearing these songs throughout her childhood, from her parents, around the neighborhood, at family parties, etc. She talked about how this music played and continues to play a significant role in her life, taking her to a space, a zone that she truly appreciates and feels comfortable in. As we watched the videos, Smurf periodically commented on the*

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[33] Link to *Voyage to Atlantis:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fh6lGI1bOkw
Link to *Footsteps in the Dark:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etwIu8-FlGU
Link to *Between the Sheets:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glhdcJ7K3XM
Link to *Boogie Wonderland:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jLGa4X5H2c
Link to *Searching:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbIwR6EUmN8&feature=plcp

artists. For example, during Earth, Wind, & Fire's Boogie Wonderland video, she pointed at Phillip Bailey and exclaimed, "That's my man!"

[I was stuck by how connected she seemed to feel to the artists. Being an avid music fan myself, I can relate to having that feeling of connection with some of my favorite artists at different times in my life. In this moment I was stuck by the power of music in this studio. Meaning, the studio may not just be a space for the creation and production of music. It may also be a space for young people to enjoy and connect with music, a space for them to recreate and engage with the music and artists they love, which, I would argue, is a common phenomenon for young people.]

Smurf sang along with several of the songs. She talked about loving to sing along to these older songs, both here in the studio and when she's hanging out with her friends, including other young people at TLP. She talked about how her friends like to poke fun at her, calling her old school and saying things like, "You're so old!" Smurf explained how these jabs didn't faze her. In fact, she's proud of her taste in music. She knows about and loves music that most of her peers haven't been exposed to. She went on to describe how she enjoys educating her peers about music, turning them on to older tracks they might never been exposed to. I asked her how young people respond to her music education endeavors and she laughed, noting that some people get it and some people don't. It dawned on me in that moment that Smurf was educating me as well. As she pulled up track after track, she asked me, "You heard this?" If I said yes, we listened for bit and quickly moved on to something else, another track she was eager to hear and seemingly share. But, if she pulled up something I hadn't heard, she would exclaim something to the effect of, "Oh, Brian, you never heard this track!? This track is the bomb!" and then would play it out, singing along, highlighting her favorite parts and offering me a story of the tracks relevance to her life.

[I was struck by Smurf's broad and vast knowledge of music, specifically music from the 1970s and 1980s, which predates her birth by at least a decade. I had the sense that Smurf actively engages this music in the present and makes an effort to bring it to life, to keep it alive for a new generation. She's more than a retro fan. She's an enthusiast, a cultural historian, and an educator. In that light, this is an additional example of music education in the studio. Young people sharing their preferences and tastes and exposing others to new musical ideas.]

In the above excerpts, Smurf listens to and shares some of her favorite music with me in the studio. In doing so she demonstrates an appreciation for a particular kind of music, specifically soul, rhythm and blues, and disco from the late 1970s and early 1980s. As we watch the videos, she educates me on her musical tastes and preferences and in the process of doing so exposes me to an artist I am not familiar with, *Change*. In addition, we engage in a form of

mutual appreciation of Smurf's favorite music, thereby collectively engaging in a form of music-based recreation in the studio. Several weeks later, Smurf is back in the studio sharing more videos of her favorite songs with me. As we watch the videos together, we continue to engage in a reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and recreation in the studio and are eventually joined by other young people. From fieldnote 09/24/2011:

> *I entered the studio and Smurf was at the console. She was watching Last Night a DJ Saved My Life by Indeep (1983) on YouTube.*[34] *As the song filled up the room, I asked Smurf if she minded if I joined her, to which she replied, "Nah! Take a spot," pointing at the chair to her right. I took a seat and pulled up to the console. As the clip played, we both got into a groove, our feet keeping the slow, steady, relentless 4/4 beat and our heads and necks jerking along. After a bit Smurf exclaimed, "This is one of my all time favorite songs. This is my jam! I just love his track!" I verbally agreed, noting that I was a big fan as well, "It's a classic." The clip was a lip-synched performance. In it, two singers, one lead and one back up, are decked out in frilly, ruffled lace skirts and low cut strapless tops. They dance and groove to the beat provided by the deejay, who is clad in a slim cut suit and sunglasses, laying down the proverbial beat that saved their lives. The stage is littered with balloons. Periodic shots of the audience show them dancing along. At one point Smurf commented on the back-up singer who was taking the lead on the dance moves. "Look at her! She just feelin' it!" We both laughed as she twirled and jumped to the track, whipping her shoulder length bob for accentuation. It was a nice moment of mutual appreciation and fun.*
>
> *As the video ended, Smurf pulled up another clip, You Know How to Love Me by Phyllis Hyman (1979).*[35] *Smurf stated that this was another one of her jams, noting that Hyman committed suicide back in the 1990s. "Such a shame. Listen to that voice," she added, looking longingly at the IMac screen and nodding her head along to the rhythm. With flutes and brass, the track had a fuller sound to it, still disco, but older and more soulful than the cold and slick production on Indeep's Last Night a DJ Saved My Life (1983). Getting into a groove and enjoying the song, I asked Smurf what drew her to disco. She stated that she just liked it, adding, "It's what I grew up on." As the video ended, Smurf stated that it had reminded her of another song she wanted to play me. It took her a minute to find it, entering a variety of search terms into the YouTube search box, eventually landing on the right one. She pulled up a video of a song called If You Play Your Cards Right by Alicia Myers (1981).*[36] *As the track started, I mentally noted a difference in style – less disco, more of a steamy, quiet storm song. As the rhythm section locked into a groove, Smurf closed her eyes, raised her arms, and let them sway over her*

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[34] Link to *Last Night a DJ Saved My Life:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZnY4OXIPF0
[35] Link to *You Know How to Love Me:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoOp0UjNXBI
[36] Link to *If You Play Your Cards Right*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iA7hEfvhOPY

head. "Mmhmm. That's my jam, Brian. That's my jam," she said.

Marcus and a non-consented young woman entered the studio as the slow jam played. Marcus took a seat in the southeast corner of the room. The non-consented young woman stood to my right. I got up and offered my chair to her, wanting to give her more access to the console. At first she said "No, no," but I insisted and she accepted. Taking in the sounds and vibe of the room, Marcus said, "Smurf got that old school in her," nodding his head, smirking and eventually laughing when Smurf replied, "You know I do. You know I do!" the latter stated empathically in a singsong way, all of us laughing along. About half way through the song, Smurf stopped it and pulled up another video, Till it Happens to You by Corinne Bailey Rae (2005).[37] *As the song started, I noted a shift in style again, less quiet storm, with more of a modern rhythm and blues sound. It was a nice track, instantly likeable, had a great melody and a nice swing to it. The room was quiet as it played out, everyone having their moment with the song. Smurf eventually broke the silence, poking fun at the non-consented young woman. "Look at her! She pretending she sitting at the window, holding a glass of brandy, singing." We all laughed. The non-consented young woman continued to pretend, even hamming it up a bit, singing along and pantomiming that she was sipping brandy, smoking, and leaning on a window sill.*

In the above excerpt, as Marcus enters the studio and settles into the space he states, "Smurf got that old school in her." The statement suggests a pre-existing awareness and level of respect for Smurf's musical knowledge and what she brings to the studio. Smurf affirmatively replies that she indeed does "got that old school in her," suggesting that she is proud of her musical upbringing and the knowledge it provides. Smurf is able to bring her musical knowledge to the studio and create music appreciation, education, and recreation opportunities for other young people and herself. In addition, throughout this observation there are examples of young people having fun while engaging with music-based recreation in the studio. Smurf and I laugh and joke as we watch and groove along to Indeep's *Last Night a DJ Saved My Life* (1983), and later, Smurf teases a non-consented young woman about acting out an imagined scenario to Connie Rae Bailey's *Till it Happens to You* (2005).

[37] Link to *Till it Happens to You:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrOMY-OV4qU

The reflexive process of appreciation, education, and recreation is not limited to music in the studio. In the following excerpt, Outlaw shares videos of other artists spoken word work with me. As we engage with the content, Outlaw describes how these artists are inspirations and models for him as a poet, rapper, and writer. Given my level of engagement in this observation, I include relevant bracketed reflective memos. From fieldnote 11/12/2011:

> *As we got settled at the console, Outlaw explained how he doesn't just rap, that he also works on poetry. He opened up YouTube and pulled up a video of a spoken word performance by Kanye West titled 18 Years (2007).*[38] *Filmed at the 2007 Def Poetry Slam, West delivers a poem about a man who is paying child support. He fires off sarcastic, venomous, and at times misogynistic content about how the child's mother used child support payments to support her own extravagant lifestyle instead of raising their child. West's performance and presence become increasingly excited as he approaches the apex of the tale: after eighteen years of supporting the child he finds out he is not the father, at which point he kills the mother of the child and gets twenty-five years in prison. The audience goes wild with laughter and applause at the conclusion. Outlaw seemed into the piece, noting how West is an excellent performer, how intelligent he is, specifically citing the flow of his rhymes, cadence, and delivery, which admittedly were excellent. He had the audience in the palm of his hands, including Outlaw and me.*
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> *[I was struck by the theme of the poem, the idea of being hustled by a former partner to take care of a child that isn't one's own. I wonder how that might resonate with Outlaw, being an expecting father who seemingly has little to no contact with his ex who is expecting their child. I thought back to my observation with Outlaw and Marcus when they were working on their cover of Don Trip's Letter to My Son (2009). I wonder if the studio provides Outlaw with opportunities to work on his feelings toward his ex and his fears about his relationship with her and his unborn child.]*
>
> *Outlaw pulled up a video of another spoken word performance by West, this one titled Bitter Sweet (2006).*[39] *Filmed at the 2006 Def Poetry Slam, the video begins with West free styling for the audience. One line in particular seemed to stand out for Outlaw. Toward the end of the freestyle, West asserts, "Make black history a day, I don't need a month!" It was the final line in a stanza that had a lot of momentum and swagger. As he delivered the assertion, he extended his arms out, almost begging the audience to challenge his skills as a poet, rapper, and writer. Rather than challenge him, the audience supports his assertion and swagger, by applauding, raising their arms, and pointing at West. Outlaw and I nodded our heads in appreciation. Seemingly wanting to be sure I heard the line, Outlaw turned to me. He was laughing and nodding his head.*

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[38] Link to *18 Years*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jq1h0O48k90
[39] Link to *Bitter Sweet*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1GtBpIORJY

> *"You hear that," he asked. Then to assure that I had, he repeated the line. I nodded my head and assured him that I got it.*
>
> *[I'm noting that we both connected to this line. Not only were we impressed with West's skills as a poet, rapper, and writer, we seemed to connect with the power of the written and spoken word. In watching West's performance, we collectively witnessed and felt the power of the spoken word to challenge oppression and racism.]*

In the above excerpt, Outlaw shares some of Kanye West's spoken word work with me. As we watch the videos together we engage in a process of mutual appreciation and education. Outlaw periodically assesses my comprehension of the content by making sure I have caught the meaning of certain lines. In doing so, he educates me on why West's poems and performances are important, meaningful, and relevant to him. Additionally, we engage in a form of recreation in the studio, watching the videos and sharing the experience of doing so together. Outlaw plays more videos, moving into hip-hop and rap artists. He discusses how he prefers artists who strike a balance between intelligence and street, with a strong preference for artists who promote what Outlaw refers to as higher learning. Continued from fieldnote 11/12/2011:

> *Out law pulled up D'evils by Jay Z (2008).*[40] *As we watched the video he praised Jay Z for his skills as a writer and a performer, noting his ability to keep it street and intelligent at the same time, not dumbing down his work for the masses and at the same time not making it so intellectual and lofty that some of his fans could not relate. Outlaw stated that he respected this and that it's something he aspires to, something he tries to create in his own work, keeping it on the level and at the same time injecting some intelligence. I probed Outlaw to get a better sense of how he perceived Jay Z's work, his ability to speak to multiple audiences and what that meant to Outlaw. He talked about how Jay Z came up hard, slinging drugs and doing what he had to do to get by and how Jay Z represents that upbringing in his work. But at the same time he incorporates knowledge and intelligence into his work, that he is learned, a scholar of the texts and that he also incorporates that into his work. Outlaw noted how he tries to do that as well in his own poetry, rapping, and writing.*
>
> *I asked Outlaw what he meant by texts and he referred back to religious texts, such as the Bible and the Koran. He talked about how important it is to use religious texts as guides though and not become a zealot of any one religion or religious idea, that it was best to respect all religions and the ideals that they offered because they all offered something.*

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[40] Link to *D'evils*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mnyBp4FzzI

He went on to talk about being leery of overly religious folk and how they were missing the point, which to Outlaw is using religion to become more enlightened and intelligent. This prompted Outlaw to pull up another video, No Church in the Wild, a Jay Z and Kanye West (2011) collaboration.[41] *As the video played, I noted the tone and feel of the song. It had a swaggering, slow tempo kept in line by a simple 4/4 kick with a darker, low-end single note guitar line run through light distortion and filtered to accentuate the low-mid to low end, which made it sound darker. As the vocals came in, Outlaw sang along:*

Human being to the mob
What's a mob to a king?
What's a king to a god?
What's a god to a non-believer?
Who don't believe in anything?

We make it out alive
All right, all right
No church in the wild

After he finished singing, he looked at me in anticipation, seeming to non-verbally ask, "Get it?!" I didn't respond immediately as I'm not always the quickest when it comes to interpreting lyrics, and so he repeated it for me. "What's a king to god, what's a god to a non-believer," stopping short of completing the entire stanza, and letting the final line hang in the air. I was still quiet, preferring to have Outlaw explain his perception of the lyrics to me. He noted again how books like the Bible and the Koran were great as resources but that he did not see them as representing truth or the one, only, or right way. He talked about his experiences in seeking answers and how he prefers to look inside of himself for the answers, relying on self as opposed to relying on religion or church. He stressed the importance of knowledge and intelligence, which can partially be gained through religion and books, but he also stressed an intuitive knowledge, one that exists inside him. He went on to state that when he needs answers, he seeks knowledge through usual channels like books and the Internet. But, he noted, in the end, he must look within. He talked about having thousands of years of history living inside of him, that his ancestors live within him and that all we have to do is seek their knowledge and know that within us lie the answers to all our questions. The answers reside in the lived experiences of our ancestors who live inside us.

Outlaw went on to talk about the idea of higher learning. He explained that higher learning combines book knowledge and intuitive knowledge, the latter being the idea that vast amounts of knowledge lie within us, accumulated through the lived experience of our ancestors, who also reside within us. Outlaw stressed the importance of tapping into and listening to that intuitive knowledge, tying it back to his own experiences coming up and the music we'd been listening to. He talked about growing up in foster care and moving around a lot, never really knowing his mom, being physically and sexually abused, and

[41] Link to *No Church in the Wild*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M37VucWh06Y

getting into all kinds of legal trouble as an adolescent. He explained how having had these experiences, he knew he was more than an accumulation of them, that there was something more within him, that he's always been smart and able to use his intelligence to his advantage, citing a couple of examples where he evaded law enforcement officials in his old neighborhood. He explained how rather than looking at experiences as good or bad, it's best to remove the good/bad dichotomous label and simply see them as they are: experiences. In addition, when he finds himself falling into patterns of feeling sorry for himself and or self pity, when he gets lost in those past experiences and the memories, he relies on his ancestors to pull him through and guide him.

Outlaw talked about how the studio helps him engage in higher learning. If he's seeking inspiration for his poetry, rap, or writing, he can pull up some videos on YouTube and rap along with them or write as he listens. He also talked about using Logic Pro and producing his own tracks as a means of engaging in higher learning, noting that with increased proficiency he hopes to be able to maximize the studio and really get into producing his own tracks.

In the above excerpt, Outlaw shares his appreciation for music that challenges blind commitment to religion and promotes a balanced appreciation for and approach to religion and related texts. In seeking knowledge Outlaw describes how rather than going solely to religious texts for answers, he prefers to access the accumulated and intuitive knowledge that resides within him, something he refers to as higher learning. He notes how in doing so, he takes all his life experiences into consideration and removes labels that categorize experiences as inherently good or bad, preferring to see all experiences as potential assets and opportunities for additional development and growth. Outlaw describes how he uses higher learning in the studio, tapping into existing sources (e.g., the Internet and Logic Pro) and himself in developing original poetry, rap, and writing. There seems to a strong connection between Outlaw's perception and practice of higher learning and the strengths perspective. This is important to consider as it provides an additional demonstration of the TLP music studio as a strengths-based space. Finally, throughout this process, Outlaw shares ideas and other artists' work he appreciates with me, thereby educating me on his approach and philosophy to performance and writing. In doing so,

we engage in the reflexive process of music, poetry, and spoken word appreciation, education, and recreation in the TLP studio.

Additional observations with young people, including Hope, Jay, Marcus, Theo, and Young Louie support the idea that the music studio offers young people opportunities to engage in a reflexive process of music and related arts appreciation, education, and recreation. In addition, the development of the co-constructed audio documentary provided young people with opportunities to engage in this reflexive process by listening to and critiquing examples of existing audio documentary work and young people's audio-based fieldwork, engaging in audio-based fieldwork training, and taking pauses in our work to reflect and recreate with conversation and food.

6. <u>YouTube</u>

As amply evidenced throughout this chapter, young people utilize YouTube in the TLP music studio. As Marcus demonstrates in the Working Independently section, young people use YouTube to assist with music production and as a teaching tool. Marcus discusses this utilization in greater detail during our interview.

> The reason why you use YouTube because YouTube, it's like another – I can say it's another teaching tool. A lot of producers that I like on YouTube or that use YouTube, they show videos of how they produce their music, like what they use, what software they use, what machine, like an MPC or either they're using the SSR 24. I love it. My favorite producer right now is Seven. He produced Vizzy Zone song. And with that song, the way how he set it up, because it's dealing with strings. And he used Logic, and the way he set the beat up, I was like in tears 'cause now I know what he use and it was just amazing how he did it, because he used it from after when he sampled, he was just sitting in his chair. He was just listening to the song and like he was doing piano rolls, parts, trying to see the shape of the piano in there, or either should he put a clap. He made his own claps using his own claps on his hands. He used a drum set that he used. He used a synth and more stuff. And then like it was just videos. Like it won't show you actually how he got it set up, but he showed you how he's making his music, like how he's making his beat. And it was just so raw how he set it up and I was like, "Oh, yes. I gotta get like him now. I gotta get like him." It was amazing.

As Marcus suggests above and as Smurf and Outlaw demonstrate in the Music appreciation: appreciation, education, and recreation section of this chapter, young people use YouTube to engage with other artists work, including their favorite musicians, rappers, singers, songwriters, and spoken word artists. Young people also use YouTube to engage with and share performances and videos of their musical mentors. In the following excerpt, Theo uses YouTube to share videos of his drumming mentor with Herman and me. From fieldnote 08/09/2011:

> *I followed Herman and Theo down to the Herman's office to grab the studio log. We wound up at the copier, discussing recording equipment and music. Theo ribbed Herman about taking some drum lessons from him. As skilled as a keyboard player Theo is for his age, by Herman's reports Theo is a better drummer. I asked Theo about his playing. He responded that drums are his first instrument and he talked a bit about his mentor, at which point Herman asked Theo if he had played me any videos of his mentor. He had not and I asked him to, letting him know I'd love to see them. The three of us made our way back down to the studio. Theo unpacked some of the studio gear, just enough for us to watch the videos (i.e., the keyboard and mouse). He opened YouTube and pulled up a video of an untitled song by Tony Royster Jr. (2009), playing with a band called ASAP.*[42] *The band consisted of two keyboard players, a guitar player, a bass player, and the drummer, Theo's mentor. The music was melodically complex, polyrhythmic, and highly focused on technique and skill. As we listened we engaged in non-verbal communication, nodding our heads to the complicated rhythms, laughing out loud when a particularly complex lick or fill was played, voicing our impressions and amazements at the players' skills with each other without saying a verbal word. Theo prepped us for the upcoming drum solo. As Royster soloed we all sat back in amazement. It was impressive. As the song continued, Theo and Herman ribbed each other. "You think you could keep up?" Theo asked him. "Not with the drums, maybe with the bass and guitar," Herman responded, adding, "Could you?" Theo replied, "Yeah, I could keep up." I asked Theo how he took lessons with Royster and apparently they had lessons via Skype.*

Several weeks later Theo shares more of Royster's work as well as other drummers that inspire him. From fieldnote 10/10/2011:

> *Theo played a video of Tony Royster Jr. performing a drum solo when he was twelve years old (Royster Jr., 2006).*[43] *As we watched the video, I observed Theo. He was clearly impressed, smiling and nodding along in appreciation of the young drummer's talent, exhaling loudly and gasping at times, particularly when he pulled off a complicated fill, and talking to the video. For example, at one point during the video*

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[42] Link to *Untitled*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEe4-ZtjnT0
[43] Link to *Drum Solo*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BA5D-WEcNGA

> *Theo started yelling at the IMac screen, "How he gonna do that! He's standing up! He's 12!" I also noted that Theo was playing along at times, using his hands to tap out the rhythms of the solo on his quads and knees. He also commented on the kit. "That's a $40,000 kit and worth it. I want that kit. That's the kit I want." As we continued to watch the video, we laughed at the absurdity of someone so young having such unequivocal talent.*
>
> *Theo then turned his attention to other drummers that inspire him, pulling up additional videos on YouTube, including a video titled New Directions Drummer Getting It (2009).*[44] *He noted that the drummer he wanted me to see came in around the one-minute mark, adding, "Dude's a beast, just a beast! Wait 'til you see this." As we watched, I laughed out loud at the drummer's skills and the overall ferociousness with which he played. I commented on how he was destroying the kit and the audience to which Theo laughed and replied, "I know. He explained how the majority of gospel-oriented drummers are professional drummers who play for the church as well. Theo seemed impressed, his eyes glued to IMac screen, playing along, with a huge smile on his face. I asked about the career trajectory of these drummers and if this is something that Theo wants for himself. He stated that this is exactly what he wants. This is the type of music he enjoys playing. That's why he works so much for his church. He's working his way up, from camera operator for church concerts and masses, to playing organ occasionally, to eventually manning the drums. He added that in the end he doesn't really care what he plays as long as he is playing. He just loves music.*

In the above excerpt, Theo uses YouTube to share videos of his drumming mentor and other drummers that inspire him. YouTube plays an important role in this reflexive process of collectively appreciating the drummers' musicianship and proficiency and recreationally having fun while watching the videos, laughing in awe of the drummers' skills. Using YouTube, Theo exposes me to drumming that inspires him and provides him with motivation to work toward his goal of becoming a gospel drummer. Other young people describe using YouTube as a source of inspiration as well. During our interview Marcus states:

> Okay. Like my music space, when I start, I set everything up. Like the first thing I probably try to do, I'd probably go ahead open up Logic and then I'd just start a blank track, a black (sic) sequence so I could add my tracks. Then from there, I'd probably go on YouTube. I'd listen to a lotta music and then music I never hear before, probably a

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[44] Link to *New Directions Drummers Getting It*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEtYzGtxSwg

> little bit of old school a little bit new school. Then from that then I'll try recreating my own.

Outlaw describes how he incorporates YouTube into his writing process for additional inspiration. From our interview:

> We use the studio space as kind of a way to like inspire and to influence us. In these sessions, we might just go to the YouTube or something and go to a great poet or go to some of our favorite music and like what and might be asked, "What message did you get from this music?" Or, "What do you like about this music?" "How does this music talk to you?" "How does this music," you know, like, "inspire you?"

In reflecting on the prevalence of young people's use of YouTube in the studio, I wonder whether or not it serves to distract them from their work, compositional, production related, or otherwise. I had the opportunity to check this idea out with Marcus and Smurf during our member check focus group. Surprisingly on the contrary, they both felt that while YouTube certainly provides important assistance with music production and education through tutorial videos, it also provides respite and much needed breaks from the intense work of music composition and production in the studio and the determination and focus it requires. Building on the latter point, Smurf notes how given her short attention span, YouTube provides her with one of several activities to engage with that provide a necessary, momentary distraction from composition and/or production. Then, after taking a break on YouTube, she is able to return to studio related work with a renewed determination and focus.

D. <u>Meaning Young People Attach to Their Experiences</u>

This section explores the meaning young people attach to their experiences in the TLP music studio. Young people describe and frame their experiences in the studio as opportunities for connection and engagement with other young people and staff as well as opportunities for expression and a creative outlet. In addition, young people describe the studio as a place where they experience technical and relational challenges and frustrations. In working through

challenges and frustrations, young people ultimately describe the studio as a space of opportunity, where they can connect, engage, and creatively express themselves by collaboratively or independently engaging in various forms of music production, education, and appreciation. Staff and key informants provide additional insight into young people's experiences in the studio and the meaning young people attach to their experiences throughout the following sections.

In addition, co-constructed audio documentary excerpts are incorporated throughout some of the following sections. The co-constructed audio documentary team, consisting of Marcus, Outlaw, Smurf, Theo, and myself, met over the course of several months. Young people engaged in audio-based fieldwork that explored questions developed by the team. These questions included: How do I feel when I am in the studio? What are some of the challenges I face in the studio? And, what are some of greatest things about the studio? Responses to these questions are incorporated as they provide additional insight into the meaning young people attach to their experiences in the TLP music studio.[45]

1. Connection and engagement

In discussing their experiences in the TLP music studio, young people describe the studio as a space that provides them with a sense connection through their common interest in music. Smurf begins:

> All young people listen to music no matter what kind of music it is. All young people listen to music and that's a common interest that everybody has. Everybody has that interest in music. Okay, well there's Gospel, Country, you know, Orchestra, Opera, Hip-hop, Rap, R&B, Old School. Everybody like music…

[45] Link to co-constructed audio documentary:
https://soundcloud.com/brianlkelly/tlp-audio-doc-mastered-1
In addition, a full transcription can be found in Appendix T.

Theo agrees, noting that in addition to the studio providing young people with a sense of connection through their shared interest in music, it also provides young people with an opportunity, "To be free of the environment or the situation that they're in." Theo continues:

> You can only focus on the negative for so long before it really begins to affect you. You just become consumed with that thought of being classified as homeless and all the negative connotations that come behind that. With music, people don't just see you as homeless. They see you as a homeless individual that has extraordinary talent and that you're proud to show that talent. That doesn't happen too much, because you become so controlled by the situation that you're in, you don't really get a chance to live your life how you want to. You're worried about what the next person is going to say about the situation, and it shouldn't be like that because everybody goes through something. But, everything is different. It just so happens that the studio becomes a common ground for everybody – people that are homeless and that aren't. Everybody has some type of relationship with music. That's basically what I see.

Rochelle supports Smurf and Theo's framing of the studio as a space for young people to gain a shared sense of connection through their common interest in music, stressing the importance of music in young people's lives. She describes how the studio provides young people with opportunities for connection in a culturally meaningful way.

> Well, I think within TLP, it touches an artistic piece that we don't otherwise touch. I mean you can do creative things in a number of different ways. You can learn to cook. You can help us paint. You can do various things at TLP to engage, you know, creatively. But I think that that's a place where we can really connect with people that's culturally meaningful. So within TLP, I think it's part of our arsenal of ways to connect with young people. I think it would leave a hole if it wasn't there. And then as far as in comparison with other agencies, I'm not aware of any other place that has anything like this, and it could be that they're not talking about it. But I'm not – you know, there's sort of like these traditional modalities of recreation. You know, there's art therapy, there's massage therapy, there's yoga. And so you know, you do all of those things, but I'm not aware of other agencies doing this specifically. The studio is a way to connect with some young people; without it there would be a gap.

Rochelle describes in greater detail the cultural component that the studio brings to TLP and its potential to provide young people with a shared sense of connection to something that is theirs.

> Well, I think music is really important to young people, and I think having something that's theirs as opposed – you know, I just keep comparing this to cookies or something for some reason, but baking cookies with your grandma has a cultural component, but it's

> not like young people want to get together for cookie baking parties. (laughs) You know? So I think it's for the age group, it's something that's very at the forefront of a lot of their activities. I mean obviously, part of pop culture that's really controllable by them.

Picking up on Rochelle's framing of the studio as a space controlled by young people, I ask, "They can have some ownership?" "Yeah, yeah," she responds.

Herman describes the important role the studio plays in connecting with and engaging young people who might be defined as loners or rogue clients within the agency. He notes how through working in the studio, these clients are able to build relationships with other young people by sharing their work and developing and engaging in collaborations.

> For people coming in here, sometimes you get a loner type. I think those guys or girls, men and women, oftentimes don't connect with as much programming because they more see themselves as independent, you know rogue – rogue client of Teen Living Programs, which is totally understandable. I think they still do, because they can put on that headset and it's just them and the computer. It still has its privacy. You put a headset, you have a door closed, there's nobody coming in. It's just not in the basement anymore. I do think it still has that pull because if somebody comes in here and they're a loner – maybe they don't want to talk to people, or they're not comfortable talking to people. That's usually how you get engaged in programming. These people have a hobby they could do or some technical training they could do on their own. Some people just work better that way. I think too, some people can let people get to know them through their music. I've noticed, here, you know, there are definite – I feel like people who work in the studio have an identity in the house as people who work in the studio. I think that they value that. People in the house generally think that's cool if you can do that. So I do. I'm thinking of one gentleman in particular who moved in this summer and has struggled to connect with other youth in the house. Has been able to do that, in my view, through working with music and incorporating people into it.

Theo describes how his involvement in the studio provides him with opportunities to develop his skills as producer. In doing, he collaborates and connects with other young people and builds relationships with them.

> Well, I've been working with the studio ever since we got it. I've been working to learn more about music production rather than just music period. I've had some relationships with different clients where they come ask me to do songs or they want to work on something. That goes back to relationship building. The studio has helped me build

> more relationships and has even helped the staff to understand the kind of person that I am.

Wanting to gain a better understanding of the role music production plays in connection and relationship building, I ask, "Tell me a little bit more about the idea of music production and what's different about that than what you've done before?" Theo responds:

> Well, before I would just basically play music, and I wouldn't really record it. Often, I would just play it to just kind of vent. But with music production, it allows me to play, record. And the production part, it allows me to listen to myself, because I can hear some positive and negative things about the way I play and what I need to develop or what I need to learn more. Most importantly, it helped me understand my personality. Like I would end up asking people, "What type of personality do you think I have?" but the more I play and the more I record and listen, the more I can hear my personality through my music. So it helps me understand myself more.

Theo goes on to describe how music production is an interactive process, both with his peers and himself.

> It's interactive, but it's not just interaction with my peers, it's more so interaction with myself, helping me understand what changes need to be made. Everybody has room for improvement, and my music helps me see the improvements that I need to make.

Wanting to get a better understanding of the types of improvements he is referring to, I ask, "When you say improvements do you mean improvements in the tracks or are you talking about broader kinds of improvements?" Theo replies:

> When it comes to tracks, my music, or even like my personality. Because when I record so many tracks, and I can hear that I may sound frustrated a lot, once I hear that, I need to sit down and ask myself, "Why am I so frustrated?" I can get down to the bottom of all the underlying problems that could develop my music more and help me gauge my energy in a different way. Instead of toward frustration or anger, it can go toward just peaceful music.

In the above quotes, Theo describes music production as a means of connection that helps him build relationships with other young people and a form of reflection, through which he is better able to understand himself and help others understand him. He provides additional insight into the how the studio helps him build relationships.

> Here, like at TLP, for the most part, everybody here has some musical interest. A lot of the clients were so shy that they didn't quite know how to come out with it. They used my knowledge and my skill to help express themselves. Because it's already hard enough to express yourself verbally, but musically, it's even harder when you don't know how to quite get it out. I was kind of the bridge, you know, to get it out. I was kind of the doc to get it out.

I ask Theo what that experience is like for him.

> It's been interesting and frustrating at the same time. It's interesting because I get to see the different personalities of my peers. Like, it helps me understand them, and the experience helps them understand me as a professional. It's frustrating because I can see the potential, but they're real hesitant to get it out because of how they feel I might judge them. I have to help them understand that I'm not a judgmental person. I just want, if this is something you're serious about, I want you to be serious – I want you to just let it all loose. Don't hold it back, because then you're limiting yourself.

Seeking clarification I ask Theo, "So it is about relationship building, but there's also a way to almost kind of test the relationship in some ways, too? To build the relationship a little bit more because you kind of have to be honest in your feedback with each other? Is that what I hear you saying, kind of?"

> Right. As far as like the feedback, I can provide feedback as far as the way they record a track or how they kind of present it, then they can be honest with me as far as saying whether I may be too harsh or too strong. Then I could kind of change up what needs to be changed.

Theo goes on to discuss how his work in the studio provides staff with opportunities to get to know him better and see him in a different way.

> Yeah. Because by the staff being here, a lot of times they hear the music, and it kind of draws them to observe. When they observe, they hear how we feel, and they can even see some of the talents that they didn't know we had. Like whether it be singing or as a musician, a lot of staff here, like they didn't know I could play. When they see me in the studio, they're like, "Wow, I didn't know you could really do it." When they see the relationships that I've formed here, they see us in a different way that they wouldn't have seen us had it not been for the studio.

I ask Theo what it is like to be observed and seen in a different way.

> It's interesting because like I think, "Wow people, the staff here actually care about what I'm capable of doing." It's not like they're just here to do a job and go home. They're really interested in what our interests are and what we're good at.

Wanting to be sure that Theo's perception of staff investment is related to his involvement in the studio, I ask, "And for you, that's tied to the studio? That experience of them knowing you and what works for you? That's tied to the studio?" "Yeah," he replies. Marcus and Smurf build on this idea during our member check focus group. They note how boundaries and power differentials between young people and staff seem to dissolve more in the studio, particularly when young people invite staff to experience their original work or other artists' work that they find meaningful.

Zee, a member of the milieu management staff, discusses observing and engaging with young people in the studio. She describes a supportive and invested approach, noting a particular interest in helping young people cultivate an original sound.

> So once I first walk in, I definitely hear loud – like very loud music that you can just hear, and I can just – sometimes, it depends on the youth. Some youth, they like to listen to other music prior to creating what they want to do, so they may just listen to a song, and then kind of do their own thing. Some youth have a concept in mind, so they just kind of run with it. Then there's one youth I mentioned who we go to the same church. I can kind of hear how the church influences in his music, specifically in his chorus. And I always tease him like, "Man, do you know all the great R&B producers and rap producers used to play in the church?" He always laughs, but I told him it's the truth, and I say that it's awesome that you're able to grab from different experiences, so you could kind of create your own sound, and I always tell him when I'm in there, "Okay, I'm starting to see a pattern. Is this your sound? Is this what you're trying to go for," just so they're able to kind of own who they are and not try to mimic other sounds. And I feel like a lot of the youth who utilize the space do have their own distinct sound, and I think that's awesome, especially for them being so young to kind of have their own sound. So then along the way, maybe people could come along and kind of teach them how to tweak it to make it sound like really their sound.

In addition to offering young people support in the studio, Zee describes how the studio offers young people an opportunity to process and/or work through feelings they may not be ready to discuss with staff.

> Music is just awesome, and the space has been used to its full potential, and I feel like, you know, it's just a great opportunity for the youth to kind of express themselves, and I feel like that's important because they may not feel comfortable concerning certain feelings that they have with their case manager, with staff. So at least they have an opportunity to kind of capture that for a second by using the music studio. And maybe that can even be their form of a journal that maybe is something that they may have recorded several months ago. When they listen to it now, it takes them back to where they were several months ago, and they can kind of start processing maybe those emotions that they may have a difficult time processing at various moments for whatever reason. So definitely, it's just awesome. Music is just awesome. So yeah.

Wanting to get a better sense of Zee's perception of the studio as form of engagement, I ask:

> And so it's almost like if a young person is struggling with being able to communicate a certain idea, feeling, emotion with another peer or staff, they can kind of go and try it out, test it out in the space, and at least have a place to release it, and then determine what to do with it?

Zee responds:

> Definitely. And even if it's them like going on YouTube and picking a song and just listening to the song, I find it – I feel like when it comes to topics that make them feel uncomfortable if they play a certain song, I may ask them, "Oh, what about that line? How does that make you feel? Can you relate to that?" And it kind of opens up a dialogue where you may have not been able to get that youth to open up to you because it just may have seemed awkward, but with the song, that's just something that they can relate to and it kind of takes the conversation to a different place where you may have not been able to really be able to, you know, connect with the youth. I don't know. I mean people may just say I'm a music fanatic, but I just do feel like there is a song for every feeling. There is a song for every event, and music is something we may not have grown up in the same area, but that's something we can relate to, and I think because you're able to relate to the youth on a song, by the song, that you're able to discuss things that they may feel more comfortable to discuss because you like the song as well. So I definitely feel like it's just a way to kind of, you know, delve into topics that you may not want to talk about in the open because it just makes you feel uncomfortable and awkward, but at least with the song, at least that's something tangible that you both have that you can both kind of delve in together to get to a common place.

Jay discusses the sense of connection he feels in the studio as well. He describes the studio as space to bring Belfort together, including young people and staff.

> Honestly I think it's a good – well I think it's a program to help us explore our inner ambitions, to see if we can make something of it in our spare time other than just sitting around, waiting to go to work, job hunting, or coming home from school or going to school, doing homework or basically doing nothing. It's another activity that we can

> enjoy. It's something that can bring us together which it has brought some of us together to a certain degree and we have tried to exercise other types of ways to get closer to each other through that medium of communication. It's a good idea forum. I don't think to have a clear idea why. I mean it's a program for them and, hell, I like the program with it. You know, they're – have very good feedback from us from when they let us in the studio and we get good feedback from them. It's like a brotherly or sisterly bond.

Seeking clarification I ask, "With staff?" Jay sardonically replies, "Yeah, even though they're older than us. Some of them are fossils."

2. <u>Expression</u>

In discussing their experiences in the TLP music studio, young people describe their relationship with music and the important role it plays in their lives. From the co-constructed audio documentary, Smurf describes how music is a significant part of her life. "I mean, music is the majority part of my day, like seriously you will not catch me without headphones on, unless I don't have them. It's just like – it's a part of my daily living." Outlaw describes how he loves music because he is a part of it.

> So I love the music because, like I said, I'm part of – I'm an instrument and it's like it's the harmony, you know, the beat, the bass, like everything, you know, and then you. Your lyrics, your voice, your type of – your style, you know? So it was all that that I knew, like I just had a love for music.

Outlaw describes gaining consciousness around his relationship with music, poetry, rapping, and writing and realizing it was something that he could control, providing him with an outlet and a form of expression.

> I didn't gain that consciousness till I was like 16, like it was a lot of stuff that I was going through in my life at that time, while I was just becoming more conscious or more aware of my surroundings and who I was. You know, it was just a situation I was in and I was coming to that understanding and like, once I start understanding more things around me, I start to understand how like, everything is like one thing, like you know, like it's life and how everything like, it beats and moves together. So when I started knowing like, I control the mic, like the person that's holding of the mic, they holding it but I control the vision. I control what the message. I control what you feeling from me. I control, like, how you gonna feel, like when I learned that like, I'm the magician behind the mic, I started to be like, "Whoa. This, this is, this is me," and I was like, well, I feel like I'm a

> knowledgeable person, like I'm an illuminated person. Well as so-called conscious, awakened person and being part of like that conscious community, I feel like this is a way to manifest, basically to get heard and people wanna hear your music, they gonna react, you know, give you feedback off your music and then you can take things farther. So, yeah, so when I started learning that and I'm just like, "Yeah, okay, and you know, I control this."

When I ask Outlaw to describe his involvement in the studio, he launches into a freestyle that provides additional insight into his relationship with music and how the studio provides him with an opportunity to practice his skills and step into his rightfully self-described brilliance as poet, rapper, and writer.

> All I have to say this is my experience with the studio space. My life is like a music. You should join my movement. I'm on top while them boys steady snoozin'. I'm 23 after 6 and you boys just losin'. Yeah, I'm a real G. Why you niggas steady foolin'. But you ain't never foolin' me because I got the eye open and you just a dog fool, but I'm the dog, fool, so if you make one false move, then you through. I mean I could rap in many styles 'cause I'm a man of variety. I'm like Martin Luther King before the dream to my society and if you wanna know how I feel, I can give you verbal image 'cause I'm nothing like a chick. I don't write up in a diary. But know that I'm hot and I got skill. I'm like the blacksmith so they admire me and this is just a part of my identity because American dream, I'm living. So to be supreme or to be notorious, we'll see 'cause time'll tell and in time you will tell that I will become a living beast. So that's what the studio is to me.

In describing his relationship with music, Marcus notes how music is a part of him, a part of his heritage, and something he wishes to share with his children.

> Music is with me – music is inside me. I was born to make music. I was born to produce music. That's just something I can't give up because it's been passed on from generation to generation, and it's been passed onto me, and hopefully, I might pass it onto my future kids, and they'll pick up the traits that I did in my past. And they come better than me, but I doubt it, though [laughs]. But that's it.

During our interview, I ask Marcus to describe a time in his life when music has not been important. "I mean, it's like, music runs through my blood," he says. Marcus continues:

> I can't let music go. Music is inside me. I would sit in my room, blast my music real loud, and just probably dancing in my room, bouncing off the walls, like, "Yeah." And then just next thing I know, when I get in the studio – after when I hear like one music sound or song that I ain't never heard before, then I hear another sound, I just go in the

> studio and I do create the whole different sound. It's the same sound of they sound, but it's my own version. I done did a lotta sampling. I done did a lot. Music can't be taken away.

As Marcus suggests above, the studio provides him with an opportunity to express his essential and vital relationship with music. The following fieldnote excerpt provides additional insight into the important role the TLP music studio plays in Marcus' life. From fieldnote 09/26/2011:

> *As he continued to pack up the studio equipment I reminded Marcus about the upcoming interviews and asked him if he'd be interested in participating. He stated that he was planning to participate in the interviews, "For sure," and went on to state that he was enjoying participating in the study. I explained the developing purpose of the interviews, to get a sense of what the studio means to him and the other young people who use it. He responded, "I'll tell you what the studio means to me. The studio means life. The studio means life, and that's all I got to say about that."*

Young people discuss how the studio provides them with a creative outlet for expression. Jay describes how the studio provides young people with a reliable form of release for the body and soul while they are separated from other potential sources of support.

> Well it's a very detrimental *[sic]* piece of TLP that keeps the clients sane for a point because even though they provide good services they're still separated from the family, friends, and other well-wishers and it's a good outlet for the body and soul. It may not be much but it's something that we can rely on. It's always there for us like we respect the space and we respect the equipment and each other's time and space and our works of art.

I ask Jay, "Tell me more about it always being there for you and why that's important." He replies:

> It's a machine. Where the hell is it going to go unless someone takes it? But it's there to like… it's like an ear that – it's like talking to someone that doesn't respond. It just listens and then plays it back to you in your exact way and fashion to see how you sound, to see where your point of view is and how you really felt to that essence. You can read yourself. It's like if you speak into it you are writing chapters in the book about yourself or that poem and you can reread you, reread that mirror, that reflection.

Seeking clarification, I ask, "So it's almost like an opportunity to do some self-reflection in a way?" Jay replies:

> Yeah. The pit or the abyss of the soul runs deep even if you're the most shallowest of person. You have something deep within that lies within that surface that wants to come out whether it be love, happiness, anguish, pain, vindictive, or just fucking around. It's just something to keep us occupied and very satisfied. In so many words it's pretty much the shit. Just to have a studio in the place where you live. Like, it's pretty awesome to have a studio like somewhere we can just wake up in the morning. You have an epiphany or you have a point of fruition in your mind where you just want to say something but you're afraid you might forget it and it might have been important to make you feel important or something that really means something to you, yeah.

Jay goes onto describe how he feels secure in using the studio as an outlet, stressing how he can work without fear of others' judgments and create a permanent record of his expression.

> When I'm in here it's a very secure and wonderful feeling. Like I can actually access my thoughts without fear of being judged or shunned from my creativity of ideas. It's like, "Yeah, this is my middle finger in the snow. This is my name written in the snow and hopefully it'll never melt." Well it's more solid than that because I can keep those documents forever. I can send them to my e-mail. I can put them on my MP3 player. I can burn them on a CD or a cassette.

Theo describes the studio as an outlet, and like Jay frames the studio as a non-judgmental space for self-reflection.

> I think it's to give the youth an outlet, because some youth may not feel comfortable with talking to staff and their peers. They prefer to get it out in music. We have some poets, some spoken word artists, musicians, rappers, and singers. So they get it out kind of to themselves versus to another person so they don't feel judged. Like, a computer is not going to judge. A computer is just going to record the information and let you hear it for yourself. It's kind of like having their freedom to study themselves but be open at the same time.

Jay describes the TLP music studio as, "the ultimate expression outlet. An emotional – it's like a condensation of emotions and have the condensation activate into a downpour."

Outlaw agrees, noting that the studio provides him with opportunities for self-expression.

> It's all about self-expression. I just feel like me being able to go in there and put together music is giving me the opportunity to be heard; to be understood in certain ways and it's giving me opportunities to just share more of like what I feel like I could give to the world. So when I'm there, it's giving me that opportunity.

From the co-constructed audio documentary, Outlaw describes how he gains a sense of freedom by expressing himself in the studio.

> What the studio means to me is… freedom. It's like I can go many places in the world and have to worry about rules and regulations and I have to worry about how my actions affects the next man. It's like when I'm in the studio it's just like I can, I can be me, I can be free and I can really let loose and you know and say the things and be the things and create the things I like to create, create. So the studio for me is a place of creativity and freedom.

From the co-constructed audio documentary, Smurf builds on the idea of the studio as place of creativity and freedom of expression.

> When I am in the studio, to me it's like being in a parallel world or a different world. And I say this because (sighs) when you are in the studio you can be as free as you want to be. There's nobody else around you unless you're recording with a friend or something like that, but most of the time you are in there by yourself making beats or laying down a track, spittn' spoken word. It's just a whole different place to be. You don't gotta put on for nobody. You just in there doing you, being creative. You don't have nobody telling you, "Don't put that there" or "this don't sound right." You get to figure it out on your own. You not being stifled by anybody else, you're just going with the flow, you know. And just in the studio it's – it's like being at peace with yourself. Your mind is totally at ease. It's a whole 'nother place.

During an observation, Smurf and I discuss the importance of art in providing young people with a means of expression and release. She explains how young people need the arts, including the studio. "They need art. They need the writing. We need the studio. We need it all!" I ask Smurf, "What does art do?" "It releases the tension out from my brain. Hate, love, pain… People can't take it all, but art can," she replies.

Marcus describes how he feels when he gets in the studio and how the studio provides him with an opportunity to release "the negative."

> How I feel when I get in the studio space, it's like a releasing. It's like I'm releasing. As soon as I touch the keys and I hear a sound of one thing, it's like, "Okay. You fixing to release all this negative energy outta you and you fixing to put all this positive energy in you." I put all my positive energy towards my music and I let go all the negative.

Young Louie describes how the studio provides Belfort residents with an opportunity to work on any problems they might have and how doing so is the ultimate form of expression.

> Because this Teen Living Program organization is a place for different kinda people have problems, and they came off the streets into a shelter. I'm sure they going through things, so I guess like putting it on the audio and getting out their problems is the best way to express their selves, so that's the reason why I think they have the studio.

Leigh discusses the importance of providing young people with creative outlets for expression and how it aligns with PYD.

> I think part of positive youth development – and I'm sure I've said this, but I will say it again – is developing the scope of an individual. And so it's about showing their strengths in different areas. And I think a lot of times, I would say sometimes even socioeconomic, those types of things, they haven't been given the creative side of that, and they've been told, "You need a job." That's usually what our youth are told the most, "You need a job." Like education is not always valued. Creative is not always valued. I would say a job and depending on the environment, a relationship with a higher power, usually God, are the two most important things that they come in as a framework, groundwork, is developing a sense of a human being. There's lots of different aspects of an individual and what make them work. And so if any one of those things, whether it's spiritual, emotional, physical aren't working, then there's not a balance. And so I think part of that is having that creative side, that creative outlet for different people that is different things. Some people, it's writing or hanging out with friends and just having that outlet that way. Music studio is also a way in which I think we're exposing our youth to a different outlet. Whether it's really just an outlet or whether it's actually something that is gonna go someplace for them, I think we've had youth with varied skill [laughs] in the music studio, and amazing stuff comes outta there, and sometimes it's just an outlet for youth.

3. <u>Challenges and frustrations</u>

In discussing their experiences in the TLP music studio young people describe challenges and frustrations with learning how operate the studio equipment. From the co-constructed audio documentary, Outlaw states

> The most challenges I have with the studio is learning how to deal with the equipment I have no knowledge of. I mean I'm more of a lyricist. I'm, I'm more, I mostly deal with words you know and poetry, rappin' you know, laying 16ths, you know 32s, whole songs, things of that nature. So when it comes to certain equipment like mastering, and mixing and cutting and fading you know all that type of stuff…

Outlaw trails off here in the audio documentary, but discusses similar challenges during our interview. He notes how the more he learns about the studio, the more complicated it gets.

> Yeah, because it's a lot to music. You gotta learn how to master music, mix it, like fade music, and add this, take away this, and just all that together, like it's just that you gotta be, have experience. So I feel like I learned more, a lot when I'm – the more I learn, the more difficult it get. Like, it just shows me that it's so much that you can do. So like the more you learn, then you learn how much you don't know. Then you pay attention to it so you wanna learn what you gotta learn so you could learn more things. So I'm just saying like, you really got a like, have a passion to like really be in there, I'm just saying 'cause it's a lotta hard work like, it's just not – it's not gonna happen overnight. Like, you're not gonna make hits and like be successful like just, "Ah, we're gonna get in studio," and "Ah yeah, we have a hit, so it's just – it's hard work.

Smurf describes the process of trying to learn Logic Pro and the challenges and fears she encountered in doing so.

> It was hard, hard. Because I'm not all computery and everything but it was kind of hard for me. It was difficult because it wasn't my area. Wasn't my area but I'm trying to learn it. So it kind of scared me because there was a lot of everything. [laughs] So yeah, it scared me… Buttons, switches, equalizers and pitches and meters and stuff. [laughs] Yeah, it scared me.

Marcus describes learning Logic Pro as well, stressing that it is the hardest challenge he has encountered in the studio:

> No, but the only – oh, now I – the challenging thing with me for music to this day right now is Logic. Logic is a program I never used before, and I'm so used to FL Studio 'cause I been using FL Studio ever since my teen years. And once I moved into TLP, and I discovered they had a studio and my laptop had crashed so I wasn't able to make music no more, they had their own a studio and they wasn't using FL Studio, but they was using Logic. And like Logic was really hard to use. And once I started learning how to use it, it took me I'd say two to three months for me to learn how to use Logic. And to this day, I'm still learning how to use Logic, and it's real hard. It's easy for probably about some people, but for me, it's hard… I'm gonna just say this. Logic was the hardest challenge ever, but I'm still learning how to use it, and I'm not gonna stop learning.

Herman is aware of the challenges, fears, and frustrations young people face in learning how to use the studio equipment and working with an audio production software program as

complex as Logic Pro. He describes how the studio may be intimidating for young people without a musical background.

> I think the challenges for the young people are mostly around getting used to the technology. I would say 25 percent of the people who go into the music studio can pick it up pretty quick. People who have had music lessons in the past pick it up quicker, cause they understand music in a different way. But for folks just jumping in, I think it can be intimidating. It's a lot of stuff. We built our equipment up now from very easy, simple, easy to use stuff, to this is more challenging equipment. There's way more to consider. We have hardware now that are outside – we have software – things that I struggle with when I'm working on this equipment at my house, where it can be really stressful. Just getting used to working with high tech computer programs and how it works – I think that once people get further into the equipment, the recording of music turns more into, "How do I have the best sounding mix or master?" That's a couple light years away from, "How do I record my voice on this machine? How do I make a beat?" Anybody who records music will understand that. So that's the challenge, I think. Can people stick with it long enough to understand what the equipment can do?

Herman frames the Logic Pro lessons as one way the agency attempts to provide young people with instruction on how to use the studio equipment and additional structure and support for advanced Logic Pro training.

> We had Logic Pro classes every Friday for about two and a half hours. We went through the first four or five of them and we had pretty good attendance. I would consider good attendance for something like that – in-depth technology or something like that – two to three people. We had two or three people a couple times. We were working from a book that I bought that was kind of in detail, techy stuff. Stuff I had not necessarily encountered yet on the program, because when I'd usually go through the process, I don't do a real technical based thing. We talk about concepts more and what it can do and people's interests based off of that, take them a little bit further. But when we had gotten to the real nitty gritty, "Here's how you do this very specific professional recording technique that maybe I'm learning for the first time," people's patience wasn't as much. I do know that if I sit down and I have a keyboard in front of myself and a youth and the program, I can make that interesting for five hours, going through sounds and talking about things. But what I kind of thought they maybe wanted more was more professional instruction. That's not what they wanted, from what I saw. I think they enjoy that it's not taught or discussed like that – it's a more organic experience. So I think the challenges are, for the youth, that once they get to the point where, "Hey, this technology is really fun to work with and I can do this amazing stuff with it," how far can they bring that up? How far will they travel into that program? That's the concern.

During our member check focus group, Marcus and Smurf address the Logic Pro Lessons, noting the need for increased interaction and hands-on instruction. Interestingly, they also suggest developing a YouTube channel of relevant Logic Pro tutorials as an alternative.

Herman discusses his concerns about providing young people with access to advanced and expensive recording hardware and software equipment and what happens for young people when they leave Belfort House.

> One thing that I do sometimes worry about is that the equipment to do this kind of thing on a certain level is expensive. Once folks leave here and don't have access to that equipment anymore, if they're really into it – which a lot of folks are – they're going to want to buy that equipment. I get a lot of phone calls about that because they've skipped a lot of steps of a normal musician collecting and buying equipment. They're kind of going from no equipment whatsoever to pretty good prosumer equipment. They didn't go through the thing of saving up for a $100.00 microphone or a $200.00 digital recorder that's going to break on you nine times. They kind of walked into it. It's like, "Well, here's a pretty complete setup." So when they leave, I do worry about them wasting their money on expensive music equipment. That's a concern I have. I haven't really seen that. Doesn't mean it hasn't happened. Talking to people – especially when they leave and they say, "I want to continue working in this stuff. How do I set this up at home?" Then, going through them with how much that costs and what they would have to do to do that, I worry that's a big let down for them. Now they don't have access to the equipment anymore. This stuff was a magical part of their existence. They walk out the door and all of a sudden, "Well, there's no more of this music equipment. There's no more of this experience." The only way you can get it is to drop $2,500.00, which they're not going to have. That's my concern, is that it's – that they might irresponsibly waste their money on equipment before they're ready to get it. So the conversations I have with folks are very much about, "What do you need?"

Herman goes on to describe a recent experience of having that conversation with a former Belfort resident. He describes the tension young people experience between not being able to afford the equipment and wanting to continue writing, recording, and producing their work.

> I had a guy in my office this week that was asking about that. He wanted to be able to do the same thing he was able to do in the studio here. He had – I asked him what his budget was. He said he had $200.00. He doesn't have a full-time job right now. For $200.00 for digital music production, you can't do anything. You can buy your microphone and that's about it. So to talk to him about, "Well, let's start somewhere, you know, really small and you can build your equipment up." I'm always realistic with them, but that's a consequence. Thinking about it now, in this conversation – when they

> leave here, they're going to want to recreate that. Can they recreate that without money? Is that something they can – Now, you're just going to go back to freestyling for the time period and you're going to buy studio time. You're not going to have this whole process. I guess, if you think about it, for myself, if I was playing guitar when I was younger, I got really used to playing guitar every day. I was starting to get good and people were saying, "Hey, you're pretty good at guitar." Then, I left, and I couldn't play guitar anymore unless I had $2,000.00 I mean – that would be difficult. I think there is a hole for people, when they leave, based on talking to people. Like the conversation I had this week – you know, which was, you can't do it on the cheap. Be careful when you buy this stuff, cause it's expensive and it goes out of date quick. Recording music is an expensive process. We can handle that expense on our end here. We struggle to do what we're able to do, but that would be my concern of consequence. When they leave, does that passion disappear? Is it dependent on the equipment? Obviously, it was there before they got here, but do they experience it at the same level without that technological equipment? I don't know.

Despite his concerns, Herman argues that the studio provides young people with exposure to important technical and technological skills that are adaptable to other technology related fields. He provides an example of how one young person applied skills learned in the studio to his paid internship.

> I think the most real world skill through all this kind of stuff is the ability to adapt to technology. That's what these folks are looking through at the world right now anyways – being able to adapt to technology and how quickly it's moving now. A lot of folks come in here and they haven't worked with a lot of higher end programs, which most people haven't really worked with until they get to college, probably. They start looking at these bigger programs. I'm talking technology fields. I know for a fact that we had this one guy who has been in the studio before. He got an internship at Year Up, which is a technology based training program. What they do is they put them through this technology training and it's got college credits attached. They go out and they get a real world paid internship doing technology stuff. This guy happened to be helping do the wireless and the layout for the new hospital in Chicago.
>
> So he came back here a couple weeks ago and was talking about it. One of the things we say when we're doing the studio training is, "Hey, this is going to – this technology, your ability to use this stuff, is going make other technology easier for you." Because these programs are large and complicated, and very specific driven in what they're trying to do. This guy came back and said, "Hey, you know what? When I was doing my training, these programs that we're using are not anywhere as big as Logic is. They're just not. Working in that interface helped me to be able to transfer those skills." For him, specifically, I think it was he hadn't worked on Apple computers before. He was exposed to Apple computers. He was exposed to Apple's high-end hardware or software and understands how to use it. He says, "This works."

Young people also describe challenges and frustrations in working with others in the studio. In discussing working in the studio, Theo describes the process of working with others and determining who is serious and who is not.

> Well, first I get asked by one of my peers to create an instrumental. Then they would come in, listen to it, and write lyrics to it. Or they'd just freestyle with the instrumental. I record it. We go back, and we listen to make any necessary changes – change instruments if necessary, add, delete, and do the simple production of, you know, editing and making sure everything sounds right. The more we record and the more we add and subtract, that's when the hard part comes in to figure out just what we want to do. We can record and edit all day long but figuring out where exactly we want to go. So that helps me understand what I need to do, and that helps my peers understand what they need or want to do. Those sessions help me to kind of see who's serious and who's not.

Seeking clarification I ask, "And is that important, the distinction of who's serious and who's not?" Theo responds:

> That's very important because as busy as my schedule is and as serious as I am, I'm kind of at the place now where I want to work with people who are as serious as I am about music so I don't feel like I'm wasting my time or energy.

During an observation, Marcus and I discuss young people's increasing interest in the studio. Marcus voices his frustration with this phenomenon and frames the studio as a serious space for release and work. From fieldnote 09/26/2011:

> *I asked Marcus about the overall energy around the studio; my perception that the studio was being used more. "I've noticed that the studio is more in use. More people want to get in here." To which he replied, "Yeah, there's more people that sing and want to work on stuff... but, I mean this is where I come. I use Logic to release and work." "So, this is kind of a serious space for you? You come here to work," I asked. Marcus replied, "Yeah this is where I come when I'm feeling... I just want to work out how I'm feeling." I followed up, "And other people might not take this space seriously?" To which he replied, "Yeah." Marcus had a very serious and earnest tone to his voice and look on his face when responding to me. He was looking directly at me, which is not his normal body language. I mention this to highlight his verbal and non-verbal body language, which communicated the importance of his point.*

In describing how others feel about the work they do in the studio, Marcus makes distinctions between young people who know the true meaning of the studio and those who do not.

> I think they feel good about it because some people go in there just to make music and just let people listen to it and see – like to get their results off of it to see, "You think I should go public with it, or you think I should just move forward, or do I need more work?" Some people probably go in there and try to see if they could probably get their music out there to big record companies so they could get signed and so they could be a big million dollars. Other people, I probably think they just go in there just to go in there. They don't really know the true meaning in the studio.

Seeking clarification, I ask, "Is it important to know the true meaning of the studio?" Marcus replies:

> It's not really important to know the true meaning of the studio, because you got some people in there, they just go in there just to just go in there. But I mean like equipment like that, that we have in studio, it costs a lotta money, and if you break it, you're gonna have to pay for it because them are not toys. And those equipment breaks easily and real quick. If you even do one move, it's gonna break or if you even drop it real hard or you throw it somewhere against a wall or step on it or break it, that's something you gonna have to replace that. Like the studio, me, personally, I think the studio should be for people that wanna do something like to probably let out energy, let out just release stuff, just to get things off their chest, or probably just to record something just to record, but just don't go in there just to play, 'cause the studio ain't no toys because that is actual equipment that, that type of equipment could break real easily. I don't want – mm-mmm.

In describing how others feel about the work they do in the studio, Smiley pushes back on the idea that young people must have talent to work in the studio, thereby challenging Theo and Marcus' notion of the studio as a serious space for work. I ask Smiley, "Tell me about how you think others feel when they're in the music studio space?" She responds:

> I bet they feel good, you know, 'cause you about to put yourself out there so other people hear your voice, you know, your friends or something. You know, it's just fun because it doesn't work if somebody has a talent and they holding it back, you know? Do something about it. You know, they can go in the studio and sing, you know, something like that.

"Have you seen a lot of people here, kind of, do that, kind of, assert their talents and get in there and do some work," I ask. "Kinda, yeah, probably, like, six people that I know of, including myself," she says, adding with a disappointed expression, "So – yeah." Picking up on the expression I ask, "When you say that, you kinda look a little bit disappointed, almost. Is that true or no?" "No. [laughs]," she replies, adding "I mean, you can't force a person to do it, you know, but I mean, no, I think all the people that went in there, they all have talent, so – yeah."

Wanting to know more about talent and its place in the studio, I ask, "And do you think that you have to have talent to be in the studio; is that, like, a requirement?" "No, no," she says, "You should be able to go in there and joke around and have a good time, so it's not – nah." "So, it's not like this, like, super serious space where you can only be serious," I ask. Smiley replies:

> I mean, some people might be serious about it, but you just have to wait until their session is over before somebody go in there during your time, you know, instead of trying to joke around with somebody else's time because you don't know how they feel about it. They probably be serious about this. This probably be their dream. So, you know, just try to wait till they're finished. Then go in on your time or your session.

In the above quotes Smiley frames the studio as a space for fun and space for serious work, highlighting that the studio can be both.

In discussing working with others in the studio, Smiley describes encountering difficulties in sharing feedback, being heard, and being respected.

> There is a point in time where you won't like what somebody's doing, and then you try to tell them your idea, and then they don't take it in perspective about what you're saying, you know, and that's kinda wrong because it goes both ways. So, that's the only thing.

Smiley goes on to describe how this is played out in a recent collaboration in the TLP music studio with two other young people, a fellow singer and a director (i.e., producer). She stresses how collaboration and negotiation need to go both ways, between performer and producer.

> Yes, the director because when I work with another fellow – my friend, other fellow singer, we had ideas, and the director wasn't taking it to perspective, you know? He was just trying to do it his way, and we got mad because, you know, it goes both ways, and we have our ideas, too, and he just look at it like try to tell us how to sing, but we're the ones that's singing, and then we're the ones that's trying to make up a song, you know, but we was able to work through it, so – yeah.

During our member check focus group, Marcus and Smurf address the frustrations inherent in collaborations and working with others as well, stressing that frustration is a key element of collaboration. Smurf talks about how in collaboration feedback and input flies back and forth between performers and producers. Collaborators have fifty-two arguments about who is right, who is wrong, and how to proceed. She went on to note how the differences in compositional and production styles are often what cause these frustrations, but at the same time these elements also make the collaboration. They're what draw the collaborators together. Seeking clarification I ask if given all the frustration collaborations cause, are they worth it? Marcus and Smurf adamantly note that they are, stressing that collaborations are where the best work comes from.

4. <u>Opportunity</u>

In discussing and describing their experiences in the TLP music studio, young people ultimately frame the studio as a space for opportunity. Throughout this chapter young people demonstrate how the studio provides opportunities for independent and collaborative music production, which provides opportunities for compositional, performance, and production skill development as well as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and technical skill development. Young people and staff demonstrate how the studio provides opportunities for music education by staff educating young people and young people educating themselves and other young people and staff. Young people also demonstrate how the studio provides opportunities for music appreciation, where young people independently or collectively with other young people and/or

staff engage in a reflexive process of music appreciation, education and recreation. Through these various modes of music production, education, and appreciation, the studio provides young people with opportunities for connection and engagement with themselves, other young people, and staff. In addition the studio provides young people with opportunities for creative expression and opportunities to work through technical and relational challenges and frustrations.

In discussing his overall experiences in the studio, Outlaw notes how he feels, "like a boss," and how the studio provides him with opportunities for additional growth and development."

> Basically, I feel like a boss. Nah, honestly, I feel like man, I feel like a boss. Like that sums it up, you know, like man, like… I feel like I'm in control of my future. Like I'm in control of like what I do. Like, yeah, so it's like opportunity and a boss is all about opportunity and I feel like, well, hey. I just feel like I'm gonna get this done. I feel like it's an outlet. It's a big outlet for me. You feel me? Like, but it's a positive and it's beneficial. It's influential.

Wanting to know more about opportunities, I ask, "Tell me more about opportunities. Like what kind of opportunities do you feel are possible in the music studio?" Outlaw responds:

> It's all about self-expression. I just feel like me being able to go in there and put together music is giving me the opportunity to be heard; to be understood in certain ways and it's giving me opportunities to just share more of like what I feel like I could give to the world. So when I'm there, it's giving me that opportunity; and then it's giving me the opportunity to network with other people, you know, to collab.

Seeking additional clarification I ask, "And what is the benefit of all of that – of being able to network; of being able to collaborate; of being able to express yourself? What's the benefit of all that?" Outlaw replies:

> It's the benefit for me to live my life and to like piece together my dreams and to like test the waters and see like, really, what I can to in the studio and to develop. It's development. It's something where I could – it's something that's giving me the opportunity to have this space. It's giving me the opportunity to, when I'm mad to come express myself. Like, when I want to be productive about something that I need to do like, in my personal life, like I'm doing verbal images and I need to get a piece together or use the studio space to type up something or to meditate or something, it gives me the

> opportunity to get a lot of things done in my everyday life. So; and still develop – and grow and develop at the same time.

When asked why he thinks TLP has a music studio for young people, Marcus frames the studio as a space that provides young people with opportunities to develop skills and talents.

> Well, I think the reason why they probably got a music space for the young people, 'cause they know a lotta people probably express their feelings, a lotta people like to make music – Might be like a lotta people that like to make music or people that like to sing, or people just wanting just do whatever, or rap. I think they try to support that part. And the reason why I think that's why they support the part, so like, well if you have these skills, use 'em. Don't stop your skills of what you're doing. Use 'em. Let it be. Just keep on going. Just fly. Just fly with the studio and just go on. That's how I see it. 'Cause, I don't know. They didn't have the studio, I probably still find a way – would a found a way to use a studio, but I wouldn't be upset about it, but I'm glad they do got the studio. It has helped a lot with me.

When asked the same question, Smiley describes the studio in a similar light, stressing that the studio is a space to develop new skills and talents as well.

> I mean, they support it a lot because they built the studio. So, evidently, you know, they support the music 'cause they want, you know, the youth to explore their talents and whatnot, you know, further their talents. That's all.

I ask Smiley, "What is it like to be at an agency where there's space for you to explore your talents; what is that like?" "I think it's good," she says, "that shows, you know, it's caring. I just think that's good, so…"

Seeking clarification I ask Smiley, "So, you kinda have the sense then that TLP cares?" "Yeah, yeah," she says. Probing a bit more I ask, "And it sounds like it's not just that they care about the young people that they work with, but they also want to, kind of – they care about their talents, too?" Smiley responds:

> Yeah, I mean, 'cause some people never been in a studio. So, with them bringing the studio, having it through the program, I think that's good, too, and it's also good for people that, you know, they don't know how to rap or sing, you know, you can just play around. They might know how to do – sing, you know, rap or even do poetry through songs.

Seeking additional clarification I ask, "So, it's almost like you're saying the studio is a place for people who already have talent as well as for people who might not have experience with their talents or might not know they have talents to kinda work on. Is that true?" "Yeah, because you never know," Smiley says. "A person might not know how to do none of that. They might not like it until they try it, and then, okay, they want to go far with this, so – yeah."

In discussing how they feel about the work they have done in the studio, young people describe a sense of pride. Smiley states, "I feel good. Like I said before, I'm proud of myself. Mm-hmm, I have talent." Theo offers a similar sentiment, "For the most part, I'm very proud of the work that I do." Smurf feels a sense of pride as well, adding that although she needs to continue to advance her skills she is content.

> Well I'm proud of it. I need to do better. I need to get a little more done and everything, try my hand at a little more stuff in there, you know, get a little bit more advanced at it. But I like the little work that I've done. I need to finish on it though but I like the little work that I've done because I'm making a little process [*sic*] every now and then when I do get to get in there. So I'm content with it. I'm content with it.

Jay notes how he admires his work, but that he can always do better.

> I'm highly judgmental about all of my work. Nothing is ever perfect. It can always be better. There's no such thing as perfection. There's always room for something to be better. I mean I like my work. I really do admire my work but I can always make it better. I can always sound better. I can put more bass in my voice. I can put a different sound to it. I can add some more influential words to it. But I do enjoy my work and it's very fulfilling.

Young Louie shares Jay's sentiment about his own work in the studio, "I feel great about it. I always can get better. That's with anything you do, so that's that."

In discussing how young people feel about their work in the music studio, staff describe a similar sense of pride. Herman states, "You know, I don't know. I know that they're proud of it. I know that it's a sense of pride, because of the CDs that get passed around, and the mp3 players

or whatever happens with it." Zee agrees, noting that young people's work in the studio is a process.

> They're very proud, very proud. And I mean some people who may be veterans may think, "Oh, it's all right," but I think that for them just even being able to come up with the stuff that they do, they should be proud, and it's a process. You know? Like Rome wasn't built in a day, so I definitely do see improvement with everyone that utilizes it, and just their openness just to them getting feedback from staff and their peers.

In developing the co-constructed audio documentary, young people describe what they get out of their involvement in the TLP music studio. While not explicitly framed as opportunities, their responses offer additional insight into the benefits young people gain by working in the TLP music studio. Theo reiterates how the studio provides him with opportunities to build relationships

> Um for me the greatest thing is, is being able to form so many positive relationships. It's not always a power struggle. It's, you know, when I can come and collaborate with others to produce a high quality product that many people will enjoy, that's the greatest thing for me 'cause I'm about pleasing my audience.

Smurf describes how the studio provides her with a sense of power and control, where she feels like, "Superman in the smallest space," and ultimately happy.

> It, it really gives me a place to go and be at peace with myself, you know. It's pretty much like my oasis. It's a place just for me. Even when I am working with somebody else I still feel like I have control over everything that goes on. Really, it's like the studio gives me power. It's like I'm Superman in the smallest space. It's a small space, but it feels big. So, and by me being a small person and I have control over a big place in my mind, it pretty much makes me feel good. The studio makes me happy.

VI. SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

This chapter further analyzes and synthesizes the major findings presented in the previous findings chapters while also exploring areas of potential development for the TLP music studio. As chapter IV outlines, the agency's organizational commitment to PYD, the development of in-house holistic supportive services, specifically recreational services, the inclusion of young people's voice in recreational program development, and the role of the studio advocate play a vital role in the development of the studio and its ongoing maintenance. As chapter V outlines, young people experience the TLP music studio as space to collaboratively and independently engage in music production, education, and appreciation. Young people describe their experiences in the studio as opportunities for connection, engagement, and expression. Young people also describe experiencing challenges and frustrations in the studio, but ultimately frame their challenges and frustrations as additional opportunities for growth and development. In the following sections these major findings are brought into a synthesized focus and analyzed with particular attention to developing conceptual models that respond to the research questions. In addition, I explore tensions within the data that raise addition questions and highlight areas for future research.

A. Ongoing Organizational Commitment to Positive Youth Development

Key informants describe a historical and ongoing organizational commitment to PYD. With a decision to focus solely on working with young people experiencing homelessness on Chicago's south side in the late 1990s, the agency began the process of adapting and implementing a PYD approach in its programming and services. The agency's initial adaptation and implementation of PYD led to intentionally hiring staff with a demonstrated and/or stated understanding of PYD and the development of in-house holistic supportive services, which

include educational, recreational, and vocational programming. As these services were developed and as the agency continued to adapt and refine its PYD approach, the agency actively sought ways to incorporate young people's interests and voice in programming and supportive services development. Key informants describe this shift to focusing on young people's interests and voice as an important moment in the agency's history, when the agency began focusing on meeting young people where they were at and developing holistic supportive services that offered young people opportunities to succeed in ways that were meaningful to them.

In discussing and summarizing their PYD informed approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness, key informants describe an approach and process that: (1) incorporates a strengths perspective in assessing and working with young people, (2) recognizes the importance of young people having a voice in defining and setting their goals, (3) creates opportunities for young people to define and set their own goals, (4) provides young people with opportunities to define success in ways that are meaningful to them, (5) challenges pre-conceived notions of what young people are capable of, a process whereby staff and young people work together to expand their definitions of young people's success, and (6) provides young people with opportunities to take responsibility for their lives and accountability for their actions and decisions.

Key informants describe how the TLP music studio developed out of this approach, specifically by applying a PYD informed, strengths-based approach to recreational programming. By focusing on developing and supporting art and music-based recreational services that were responsive to young people's interests, including writing groups focused on rap and spoken word work, guitar and piano lessons, Belfort House talent shows, Herman loaning his personal recording equipment to young people, and the eventual development of the

music studio, TLP created opportunities for young people to explore their interests and find their creative voice. Young people's voices and interests have continually shaped the development of the studio (e.g., the purchasing of electronic and beat oriented hardware and software as opposed to instruments) and its ongoing maintenance (e.g., young people providing formal and informal mentorship and training). By providing young people with opportunities to participate in the ongoing development and maintenance of the studio, TLP provides young people with opportunities to expand their definition of success and to do so in ways that are meaningful to them (e.g., young people overcoming musical, relational, and technical challenges in the studio). As a result, the agency has made great strides in developing a young-person centered space for creative expression, which is an important component of PYD.

B. <u>Young People's Interest, Voice, and the Role of a Studio Advocate</u>

In discussing the development and ongoing maintenance of the TLP music studio, key informants describe the interrelated factors of young people's interest in the studio, their voice in advocating for it, and Herman's role as a studio advocate. Herman was instrumental in developing recreational programming within the agency, initially providing creative writing groups and music lessons for young people. As Herman developed creative writing groups, young people voiced a desire for groups that were reflective of their interests in rap and spoken word work. In voicing their interest young people played an important role in shaping early forms of recreational programming within the agency. Herman responded by rethinking the groups and providing young people with opportunities to explore their interests, thereby setting an important precedent in the development of supportive services within the agency – incorporating young people's feedback. As recreational programming opportunities developed and evolved, young people voiced an interest in producing and recording original beats and raps

and Herman responded by loaning young people his personal recoding equipment. Overtime, Herman approached the agency about purchasing their own recording equipment for young people based on their voiced interests. Through this collaborative process, Herman and the young people worked together to develop the first TLP music studio.

Following the first theft of the studio equipment, key informants describe a tension within the agency; a complicated process of mourning the loss of the important supportive service, grappling with the resultant effects of the theft and the related feelings of violation of trust, doubts over replacing the equipment and rebuilding the studio due to young people's safety as well as the safety of the equipment, and the desire to continue providing young people with a space to work on music. Herman and the young people acted on their desire to replace the equipment and rebuild the studio by collaboratively advocating, engaging in fundraising efforts, and participating in activities such as the HIV awareness project. When the agency approved the repurchasing of the studio equipment and rebuilding of the studio, Herman worked with young people to identify, within means, a system that would best suit young people's interest in hip-hop and rap oriented production and recording. In doing so, Herman prioritized young people's interests and created an opportunity for young people to play an important role in developing the second TLP music studio.

Following the second theft of the studio equipment, a similar process ensued, albeit with an increased sense of tension within the agency surrounding the safety of the studio equipment. Over time the combined factors of young people's continued voiced interest in the studio and Herman's efforts to provide increased accountability and security measures around the studio equipment lead to the development of the third TLP music studio. Herman and young people continue to play an important role in the ongoing maintenance of the studio. Herman provides

formal and informal training and mentorship through orientation sessions and Logic Pro lessons, Studio Experts provide formal and informal training and mentorship through orientation sessions and general studio support, and young people continue to provide Herman with important feedback on equipment purchases and the impact of studio policies.

In analyzing young people and Herman's role in developing recreational programming, the TLP music studio, and attending to its ongoing maintenance, it is clear that this longitudinal and collaborative process is a demonstration of the agency's approach and ongoing commitment to PYD. By providing young people with opportunities to voice their interests in recreational programming, by hiring staff that are responsive to young people's interests, by creating space for them to collaboratively develop services, and by continuing to support the services after multiple thefts, TLP demonstrates an ongoing commitment to providing young people with services that are meaningful for them and that provide them with opportunities for engagement and creative self-expression.

In review, several key factors contributed to the development of the TLP music studio and continue to play an important role in its ongoing maintenance (see Figure 22). The agency's organization commitment to PYD created two important opportunities. First, it allowed for the development of in house holistic supportive services, including recreational programming. Second, young people's interests and voice were prioritized in the development of holistic supportive services, specifically recreational services, creating a participatory model of program development. In addition, the agency's organizational commitment to PYD created an opportunity for Herman to develop young person informed recreational services and advocate for those services when needed.

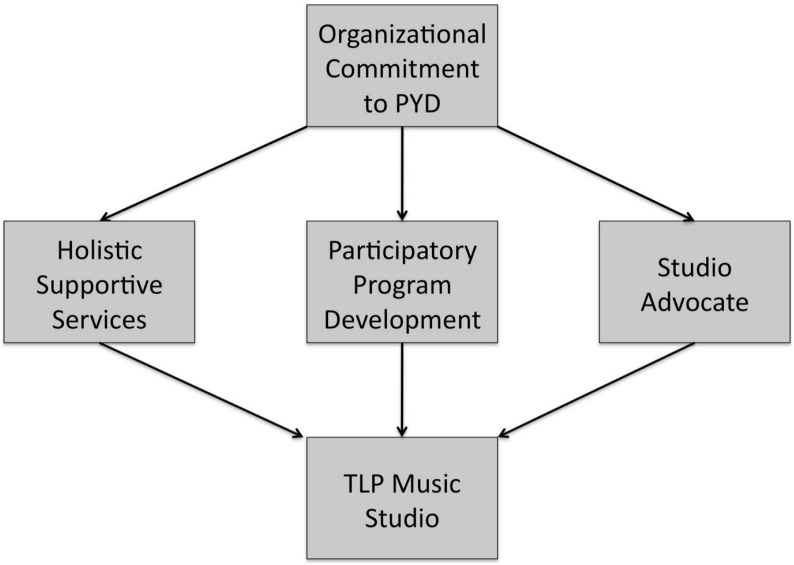

Figure 22. Organizational Commitment to PYD

C. Reflection: Potential for Increased Mentorship and Support in the Studio

While Herman's role as a staunch advocate for the TLP music studio has not changed over time, his physical presence in the studio has. Herman explains:

> When we first started the music studio space, I think probably I was spending three to four hours a week probably in the music studio either training people or helping people figure out techniques or just talking about music with folks and what they wanted to do. Now that we are a little bit shorter staffed, I probably spend, if I'm training someone in that week, maybe two hours. If I'm not, I try to stop by, but probably about ten minutes right now – probably ten minutes a week, I would say, which is not ideal. From compared to what we had before, yeah there's just not as much time, so probably ten minutes a week at this point.

At the outset of the study, Herman was manager of supportive services and had recently lost half of his staff due to budget cuts, including the education and recreation coordinator positions. As a result, Herman's time was increasingly stretched thin throughout the study period, resulting in spending less time in the studio than he would prefer. Herman explains:

> I would say the main reason I'm not spending as much time down there is because I have other responsibilities at this point. I just have uhh…When we started the studio, I was still the education coordinator, so I had more free time to be able to do projects like that, and now, as a manager of supportive services and having a short staff situation, I'm mostly busy trying to cover all the things that other folks used to do as well as teaching classes. So the music studio has to be more secondary for me at this point, because my main role is to provide classes to folks.

Later in our interview, I ask Herman how thinks young people perceive him and he laments the potential impact of his decreased presence in the studio.

> That's a good question. I'm not sure. I think they probably perceive me as someone who knows how to do some interesting technical things. My worry the last couple months is they view me as a guy who's always running from point A to point B. I can sense that in my conversations with folks. I think they see how busy the department is, and I think that because I don't have the same amount of time to sit down for a half an hour and really listen to their music and talk to them about it and offer suggestions or input on recording techniques, they still approach me for all those things but they, I think that they realize and see how busy everything is. So I think they're more standoffish to ask me questions than before. The other thing I've noticed is when folks come in and I give them a training, I give them the training and then I might not see them for a week or two weeks. So I don't have that time to make that connection, where they kind of feel like

> we're on the same team, working towards their goal of making this music, or that, you know, I don't give as many piano lessons as I used to be able to give. So, there's not that direct teacher student relationship in that sense. Instead, that's kind of – I have that relationship through a GED class now or an I-skills class, which is good but not as rewarding for me personally at least, because there's nothing more interesting.

In the above passage, Herman notes his perception that his relationships with young people have changed due to his decreased presence in the studio. In addition, he describes missing an important connection that occurs with young people in the music studio and suggests that young people benefit from his presence and the connection it provides.

In observing young people in the TLP music studio, I noted the times when my presence seemed influential to young people's experience in the studio in order to increase the trustworthiness and authenticity of the data. These instances included times when I offered technical assistance (e.g., helping with audio engineering and production issues), times when I offered creative feedback (e.g, noting that a mix sounded good or offering compositional feedback), and times when young people and I collectively engaged in music appreciation, both the times when young people shared meaningful work with me and times when I shared meaningful work with them. In reviewing these instances, I am struck by the sense of connection I felt with young people in those moments. Interestingly, young people seemed to feel a sense of connection as well, as demonstrated by responding positively to my presence, at times noting their appreciation of my presence, and inquiring about when I would be in the studio again.

As the study entered the co-constructed audio documentary phase of data collection, my role in the studio changed significantly. Where previously I played the role of participant observer, periodically offering young people technical assistance and creative feedback, now I played the role of project manager, where at various times throughout the development of the

audio documentary I provided young people with support and mentorship in the studio. Examples of such support include providing the initial structure for the audio-based project, exposure to existing audio documentary work, training on how to use the field recorders and conduct audio-based fieldwork, guidance in developing and producing the audio documentary, and weekly stipends for their participation in the project. After several months of work, we had a finished product. As we excitedly listened back to the documentary something noteworthy happened. Outlaw, Smurf, and Theo stated that this was the first project they had ever completed in the music studio. I asked them for clarification, "What do you mean?" They explained how they start various projects in the studio all the time, but are unable to complete them for various reasons. I asked them why they thought this was, wondering if it had anything to do with the built-in structure of the co-constructed audio documentary project. They noted that it had everything to do with built-in structure and timeline of the project.

In reflecting on these observations, Herman's lack of presence in the studio and his suggestion that young people may be missing something as a result of it, my perceptions of young people's positive response to my presence in the studio, and young people's assertion that the audio documentary was the first project they completed in the studio due to the inherent structure, I am left wondering about the impact of Herman's decreased presence in the studio and the potential impact of and need for increased mentorship and support in the studio (see Figure 23). What might young people's experiences in the studio look like with increased support and mentorship?

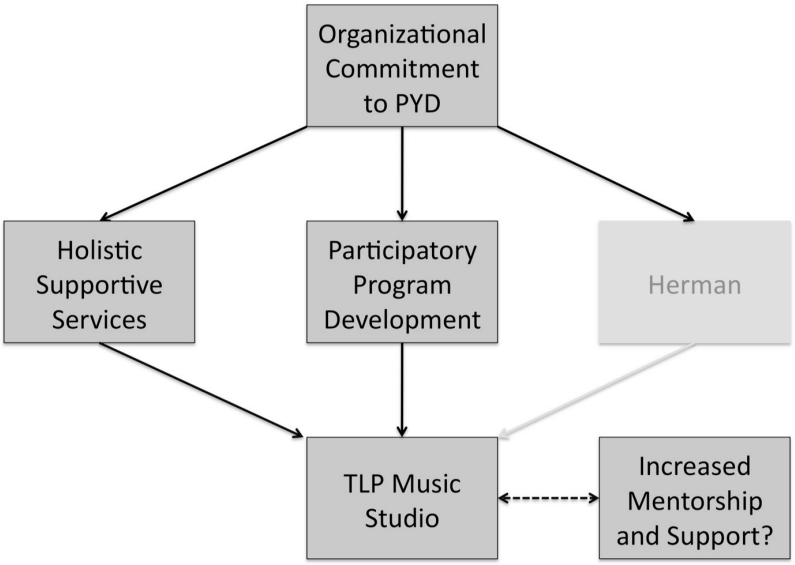

Figure 23. Potential for Increased Support and Mentorship in the TLP Music Studio

To be clear, young people did not articulate this need, but observations, interviews, and the co-constructed audio documentary seem to suggest that young people may benefit from it. It is a complicated proposition in that the studio is a young person centered space and the agency and young people are invested in keeping it that way, a space for young people to be free to express themselves as they see fit. That being said, young people responded well to the mentorship and support provided during the audio documentary project and were pleased to share the finished product with staff and peers. Since ending data collection, an agency outreach coordinator has taken a more active role in the studio, providing weekly technical support sessions. Additional research on the impact of his presence on young people's experiences in the studio, their output, and their feelings about their experiences and output may be useful in continuing to explore the TLP music studio.

D. <u>Young People's Relationship with Music</u>

Young people describe a longstanding relationship with music prior to entering TLP and engaging with the music studio. They discuss the important role their families played in providing them with access to musical instruments and exposing them to various forms of music at a young age. Young people describe this early access and exposure as important to their upbringing and continued interest and involvement in music. They note the benefits gained from their continued interest and involvement in music, including increased proficiency in musicianship, rapping, and writing skills. Young people discuss how their continued interest and involvement in music provides them with opportunities for fun, a means of communication and expression, as well as coping mechanisms that often times serve as important methods of keeping them safe and out of trouble. In addition, they note that their early and ongoing

relationship with music provides them with a sense of connection and recognition for their skills, strengths, and talents as musicians, rappers, and writers.

E. Music Production

Young people engage in collaborative and independent music production in the TLP music studio. In doing so they develop compositional, performance, and production skills as well as important interpersonal, intrapersonal, and technical skills. In addition, they experience various compositional, production-oriented, relational, and technical challenges while engaged in music production in the studio (see Figure 24). In terms of working collaboratively, young people seek each other out and develop collaborations based on existing compositional, performance, and production skills. As young people engage in collaborative production processes, they develop various roles in the studio, including beat maker, engineer, lyricist, musician, poet, producer, rapper, singer, and spoken word artist. As roles develop within production processes, young people forms connections with each other, engage in creative forms of expression, and have fun while doing so.

Young people experience relational challenges and frustrations within their collaborations as well, including compositional challenges (e.g., lyrical, melodic, and rhythmic challenges), questions about engineering and production (e.g., rerecording and editing tracks), and general frustrations with collaborators (e.g., vocalists feeling pressured by producers and producers feeling misunderstood by performers). These challenges and frustrations provide young people with opportunities to work through stumbling blocks in the collaboration and develop important relational skills. Based on observational data, it is clear that some young people may choose not to work through these relational challenges and frustrations. But for those who do, it seems that by working through such challenges and frustrations within

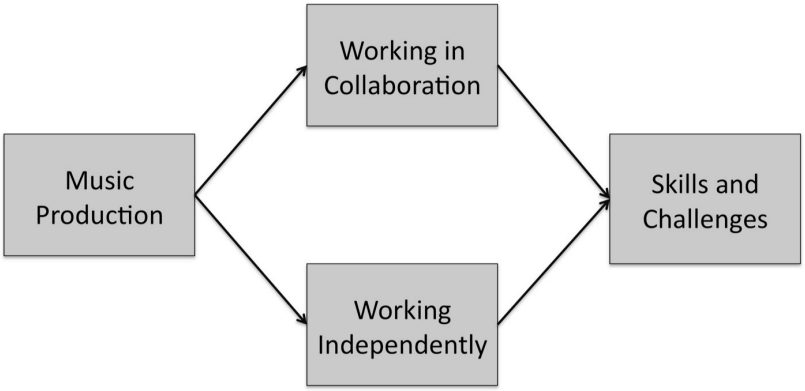

Figure 24. Music Production in the TLP Music Studio

collaborations, young people develop important interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, including the ability to compromise and negotiate, increased confidence in one's role within the collaboration, and the ability to persevere and work under pressure.

Young people experience challenges and frustrations in the studio that provide them with opportunities to further develop their technical skills. Several young people report anxiety around learning and working with Logic Pro and some young people experience challenges and frustrations in producing their work with the software. By working through challenges and frustrations with Logic Pro and indentifying and implementing solutions to perceived technical limitations with the software and other studio equipment, young people experience success in the studio in a way that is meaningful for them and that has a direct impact on work that is important to them (i.e., by learning how to operate the studio equipment young people can produce music). Young people often share technical knowledge and skills gained in the studio with each other, thereby solidifying their own understanding of the skills as well. In these moments, young people appear to gain important interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, including connecting with other young people while sharing knowledge and skills as well as gaining confidence in their ability and perseverance to meet their goals.

Collaborative and independent music production in the TLP music studio provides young people with opportunities to engage existing music related and relational skills and strengths. In addition, it provides them with opportunities to develop their skills and strengths and experience success in ways that are meaningful to them. Young people gain a sense of connection to their peers and a creative form of expression, thereby providing them with a sense of belonging and mastery. In addition, by sharing skills, strengths, and knowledge acquired in the studio with

others, young people positively contribute to the music studio and the larger TLP community, thereby engaging in a form of generosity.

F. Reflection: Gender, Seriousness, and Music Production

In analyzing and coding fieldnotes and interview transcripts, I began to consider the relationship between gender, seriousness, and music production in the studio. As recruitment numbers suggest, young men tend to engage in the studio more than young women (participant observation recruitment, *n* = 10, 6 young men, 4 young women; interview recruitment, *n* = 7, 5 young men, 2 young women; and audio documentary recruitment, *n* = 4, 3 young men, 1 young woman). During our interview, Pepper offers some insight into this phenomenon. She describes conducting intake sessions and learning about young people's relationship and connection with music, particularly young men's interest in creating music.

> Music comes up because I save, for the end, several questions that are about them, knowing more about them after we've done all the technical stuff. I always ask them what their strengths are, what they're really good at, what are some of their passions, what do they really love to do, hobbies, interests. Then, what are their growth areas? What gets them off track? Then, where do they go when they need support? Who do they seek out? What do they seek out? That conversation, right there, is where you often hear about music. My guys in particular will tell me. I feel like I hear – You know I would have to go back and look, but anecdotally, I feel like I hear music and the opportunity to create it a lot from my male clients. Yeah. In that way, when it talks about creating, I do hear a love of music from my female clients, of course, but when we talk about creating beats and the excitement that comes from hearing about a studio, that's usually a lot of my male clients.

Wanting to get a better sense of young men's relationship with music, I ask Pepper, "Can you talk to me more about that? You've worked with young people for 20 years. Do you have any perspective on that kind of gender piece?" Pepper responds:

> I would say – again, this isn't research, but just my own opinion from experience – I think it has something to do with our culture in that females are often given the tools to articulate what's on the heart – how they think, how they feel. We're talkers. We're expressers. We're emotive. But in our culture, men aren't given the same liberty or freedom to express the full range of emotion or even to articulate that when they express

> themselves. I think music is a way that many of them have found to do that, whether it's expressing aggression that would otherwise scare somebody to death, or a vulnerability that scares them to death, music is a safe way to do that. They find a way to explore how they feel about things and what they think about things in the music. That's anecdotally what I think.

Based on Pepper's observation of young men's relationship with music, it seems that music may be a particularly important form of expression for young men at Belfort and that the music studio may be a particularly important place for their expression. Young men describe the studio as a space for expression throughout chapter V. In addition, as I note in the Challenges and frustrations section of chapter V, some young men frame the TLP music studio as a serious space. Theo describes a process of determining who is serious about working in the studio and who is not; stressing the importance of doing so as his resources and time are limited and valuable. Marcus frames the studio as a serious space for work and release, noting that the studio is for people who know the true meaning of the studio. Smiley, a young woman, pushes back on this idea. She notes that the studio is not just for young people with existing talent and that the studio should be place for young people to have fun as well. This tension prompted me to reflect on the types of work that young men and women do in the studio and what types of work are prioritized and valued.

Overall, young men predominantly engaged in production-oriented work in the studio (e.g., Marcus and Theo), while young women engaged in performance-oriented work (e.g. Bobbie and Smiley). In reviewing and reflecting on the data, I note how production-oriented work tends to be labeled as serious, which prompted me to consider how performance-oriented work is perceived in the studio. During our interview, Marcus discusses the predominantly female performance-oriented work that goes on in the studio.

> Far as I can see, most of the girls that comes in the studio, they like to sing. They just come in and just sing, and that's pretty much it. They like singing. I think they sing just

> to go in there just to sing, just so they can their voice out so they could be big artists. That's all I see. And I guess that's it.

Later in the interview, Marcus revisits the topic.

> Other two girls, they just go in there just to sing. That's all they do. They'll probably just go do like a little Karaoke thing and that's it, and record their voices to see do they sound good and sing or try to battle each other in singing. That's it.

While not explicitly dismissive of singing and performance-oriented work in the studio, Marcus seems to imply that the work is not serious, preferring to label it as, "a little Karaoke thing."

During our interview, Pepper describes how issues of gender played out in earlier iterations of the studio and how the agency has worked to address the perceived gender bias.

> You know, that's been a mixed bag because initially there was competition. The girls thought it was for just the boys because the boys used it the most and did it frequently and tag teamed and like, you know, I could see how they got that message, that it was just for them, so we had to balance out the gender piece. In our community meetings, it's one of the things we talked about. That's another part of the model – community meetings. Everybody has a voice. And so what's working? What's not working? Let's talk about it in a respectable manner so we can get to a solution. That was one of the early plays on it where, amongst young people was – They felt their was a gender bias to the guys. We did a better job at balancing it out.

This cumulative data promoted me to consider three points. First, what types of work get defined as serious in the TLP music studio? Second, how are issues of gender played out in that process? And third, are there consequences for young people's collaborative and independent music production and related skill development within this dynamic process? (see Figure 25) I had the opportunity to ask Marcus and Smurf about this perceived phenomenon during our member check group and they agreed that some studio work does get defined as serious and some does not, although they did not explicitly define what serious and non-serious work are when probed. When I presented my observation that production, a predominantly male-oriented task, tends to be defined as serious and performance, a predominantly female-oriented task, does not, we had some interesting discussion. They did not explicitly agree or disagree with me.

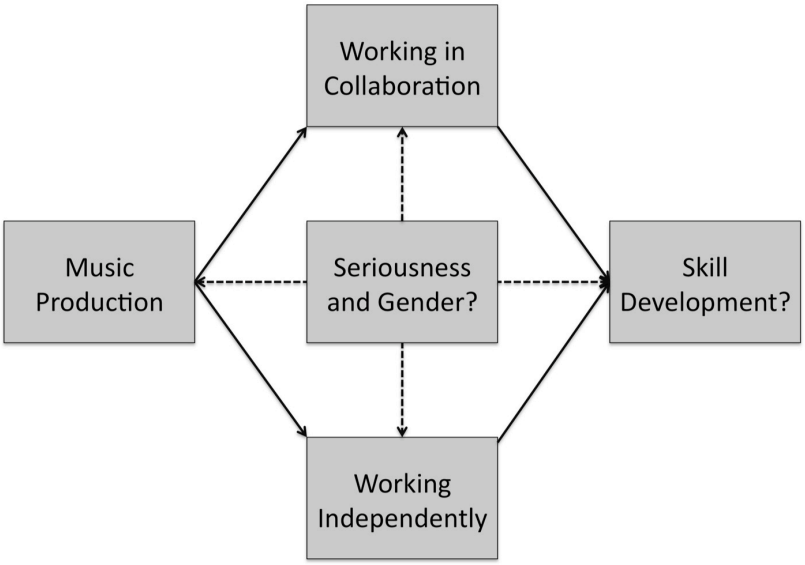

Figure 25. Gender, Seriousness, and Music Production in the TLP Music Studio

Rather, they voiced their frustrations with people who do not take the studio seriously, with *seriously* being operationally defined as not honoring commitments and collaborators' investment and time in projects. In addition, they stressed the importance of performance and production, noting that they are both essential for quality work. Herman offered insight as well, noting that there may be a supply and demand dynamic at play in the studio, where there are more performers (e.g., rappers and vocalists) than producers (e.g., young people with a compositional and music engineering background). Therefore, producers' time and energy are more in demand, making them a limited and valued commodity in the studio. Additional research on the relationship between seriousness and gender, and its impact on young people's experiences in the studio may be useful in gaining a better understanding of how young people experience the TLP music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences.

G. Music Education and Appreciation

Young people and staff engage in music education in the TLP music studio. Herman provides educational opportunities for young people and young people educate themselves and others in the studio. In terms of Herman providing educational opportunities, he facilitates studio orientations and Logic Pro lessons and offers general technical assistance. In educating and working with young people in the studio, Herman utilizes an interactive, non-authoritative teaching style that provides young people with opportunities to demonstrate and integrate audio engineering, compositional, and production skills. In addition, these educational opportunities provide young people with a sense of connection to Herman and an understanding that TLP is invested in young people's success in the studio.

In terms of educating themselves, young people work through technical challenges with Logic Pro and other studio equipment by using available resources, including Herman, YouTube,

and myself. In doing so young people educate themselves on how to use the studio equipment, increase their studio competency and overall musical knowledge, and are better able to use the studio to meet their self-defined goals as related to music education and production. Young people also educate themselves by composing, producing, and recording original music, poetry, and spoken word work as well as rehearsing and recording covers of other artists' songs. In dong so, young people build on existing and develop new compositional, engineering, musicianship, and production skills. In addition, by working through technical challenges and engaging in composing, producing, and recording original and/or covered work, young people gain a sense of accomplishment and pride.

In terms of educating others, young people provide formal and informal mentorship and training to other young people in the studio, although as previously noted the formal mentorship role, Studio Experts, has been temporarily cut due to budgetary issues. For example, young people with skills in a particular area (e.g., audio engineering and production), provide informal mentorship and training for other young people who are less skilled in that particular area. In doing so, skilled young people gain a sense of mastery by sharing their knowledge with others and demonstrating and solidifying their own understanding of the skills. In addition, by educating others young people positively contribute to the music studio and the larger TLP community, thereby engaging in a form of generosity. Young people also educate staff about studio utilization, policy implementation, and equipment needs. In doing so, they demonstrate a sense of ownership and pride in the studio.

In review, music education in the TLP music studio is a reciprocal process, where staff (i.e., Herman) educate young people and young people educate themselves and others, including staff (see Figure 26). Music education provides young with important opportunities to connect

Figure 26. Reciprocal Process of Music Education in the TLP Music Studio

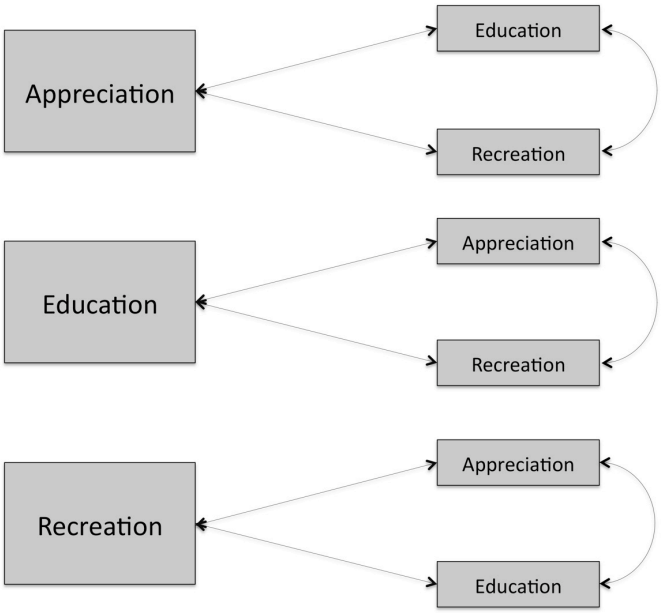

Figure 27. Reflexive Process of Music Appreciation in the TLP Music Studio

with staff and each other, enhance existing and develop new skills, strengths, and talents, work through technical challenges and gain a sense of accomplishment and pride in doing so, and gain a sense of generosity and mastery in sharing their skills with others.

Young people use the TLP music studio to engage in music appreciation, a reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and music-based recreation (see Figure 27). Young people share original and other artists' films, music, poetry, spoken word work, and music videos with other young people and staff. In doing so, young people invite peers and staff to appreciate work that is meaningful to them, while at the same time educating others about the work and inviting them to engage in music-based recreation in the studio. Young people also explicitly educate other young people and staff about different eras and types of music that are meaningful to them. In these moments, they collectively engage in music appreciation and recreation, by young people sharing the music they appreciate and inviting others to engage in music-based recreation in the studio. Other times, young people independently or collectively use the studio to listen to music and engage in music-based recreation in the studio. Doing so, particularly collectively, provides young people with an opportunity to appreciate music together and educate each other about music that is meaningful to them as well as their musical preferences. YouTube plays a significant role in this reflexive process, as it is young people's demonstrated and stated preferred method of listening to music. It also important to note that YouTube plays an important role in music production and education by providing young people with access to important engineering and production tutorials.

Engaging in music appreciation in the TLP music studio and the interrelated, reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and recreation provides young people with opportunities to connect and engage with each other and staff as well as time to connect with

themselves. It also provides young people with an important form of expression, where they can share and educate others about films, music, poetry, spoken word work, and music videos that are meaningful to them, and often have fun while doing so. In sharing this finding with Marcus and Smurf during our member check meeting, Smurf offered additional insight into music appreciation in the studio. She noted that although young people have their own rooms at Belfort, they are not allowed to be in each other's rooms without staff permission due to safety and security issues. Smurf described the studio as a place where young people can come together to engage with and listen to music, and how important that is in place like Belfort – a twenty-two bed transitional living program, spread across four floors, with a full residential staff – where privacy is often a limited commodity.

Smurf's thoughts about the importance of the studio as a space for music appreciation suggest that the studio provides young people with a communal space to gather and appreciate music that is not otherwise available within Belfort. On a deeper level, it suggests that the studio, when used in this way, provides young people with a space to develop a certain level of intimacy with each other and staff by relating in ways they otherwise may not be able to in more open spaces. A similar argument could be made for collaborative music production, where young people engage in the intimate and vulnerable process of composing, arranging, recording, and producing music together, thereby opening themselves up to each others' criticisms and feedback. Music appreciation provides young people with increased opportunities and avenues for positive use of recreational time as well as a sense of belonging and generosity in the studio by proving them with opportunities to share their interests and connection through the reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and recreation.

VII. DISCUSSION

Guided by the strengths perspective, ecological resiliency theory, and a positive youth development (PYD) model, this study utilized case study and ethnographic methods to explore a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness, specifically the Teen Living Programs (TLP) music studio. The research questions explored: (1) the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness, (2) young people and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio, and (3) the meanings young people and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio. In addition, I worked with a team of young people to develop a co-constructed audio documentary that explored their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. This chapter responds to the research questions and considers study findings in the context of the larger youth homelessness and youth homelessness services literature as well as literature exploring the use of recreational, art, and music-based activates in social work and related fields. In addition, I present implications for youth homelessness research, policy, and practice in social work and related fields, implications for the utilization of recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields, implications for social work education, and the study limitations.

A. Processes Involved in Promoting and Developing the Music Studio

In terms of the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness, TLP's historical and ongoing organizational commitment to PYD, which incorporates the inclusion of young people's interests and voice in program and services development, particularly recreational program development, as well as the role of the studio advocate, have played and continue to play a vital

role in the promotion, development, and ongoing maintenance of the music studio. The agency's strengths-based, PYD informed approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness reflects several key tenets of the strengths perspective (Saleebey, 2009), including the acknowledgement and incorporation of young people's talents, strengths, and interests in assessment practices, treatment planning, program and service development, and evaluation. The agency acknowledges that the young people they serve may have experienced trauma as a result of their homelessness, but rather than focus on working with young people from a deficits perspective, they choose to continually build on young people's strengths. In addition, the agency never assumes young people's capacity for growth and change and continually works with them in a collaborative fashion in order to ensure the best possible outcome for young people. This is best demonstrated by the agency's ongoing commitment to young people and staff working together to set goals and collaboratively challenge their pre-conceived notions of what young people are capable of.

In discussing the strengths perspective, Saleebey (2009) notes, "Every environment is full of resources," (p. 18). TLP's strengths-based, PYD informed approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness concretely builds on this idea by creating a youth-centered, inclusive community within Belfort House. In addition, the agency's approach reflects several key elements of PYD described in the extant literature, including creating opportunities for young people to "move from being taken care of to taking care of themselves," as best demonstrated by the agency's implementation of the 50-yard line, as well as providing practitioners with "a set of practices," to use in providing young people, "with the types of relationships and experiences needed to fuel healthy development" (Ansell et al., 2008, p. 6). In discussing their approach to PYD and the development and ongoing maintenance of the studio,

key informants describe a process whereby the agency appears to building on what Ansell at al. (2008) describe as the importance of developing "safe and structured spaces" for young people to "recreate and socialize," as well as "increased opportunities and avenues for positive use of time," and, "self-expression" (p. 7).

The TLP music studio is a demonstration and embodiment of the agency's ongoing organizational commitment to PYD. Through engagement in music production, education, and appreciation, the studio provides young people with opportunities to develop their talents, strengths, and interests in music related activities. In addition, the studio provides young people with opportunities to share and demonstrate their talents, strengths, and interests as related to music and in doing so form connections with other young people and staff. Through these processes, young people ultimately gain a sense of belonging and connection with their peers and staff as well as a sense of generosity by contributing to the development and ongoing maintenance of the studio. As Ansell et al. (2008) note, belonging, mastery, and generosity are key elements of a PYD approach to working with young people. In discussing their approach to PYD, key informants did not explicitly reference the "Six C's" often described in the PYD literature (Lerner, 2005), but it is clear that young people are demonstrating competence (e.g., studio related skill development), confidence (e.g., overcoming studio related technical challenges), connection (e.g., working through studio related relational challenges), character (e.g., utilizing music production in the studio as a form of expression), caring (e.g., taking time to share with and teach each other), and contribution (e.g., giving back to the studio through peer mentoring and teaching) as it relates to music production, education, and appreciation in the studio.

Given the lack of empirical knowledge regarding the effectiveness of homeless youth services and interventions (Milburn, Rosenthal, & Rotherram-Borus, 2005), including transitional living programs and the use of recreational, art and music-based activities in working with young people experiencing homelessness, it is important to consider the impact of TLP's decision to adapt, develop, and successfully implement a strengths-based, PYD informed approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness and the outcomes of doing so. By listening to young people and incorporating their interests and voices in programming and supportive services development, the agency established the TLP music studio, a space key informants, young people, and other staff describe as important for young people's interests, voice, and creative self-expression.

In doing, the agency challenges the dominant risks and consequences narrative that highlights populations of young people that are at increased risk for experiencing homelessness and the risks and consequences they are exposed to while homeless, which is well represented in youth homelessness literature (Alvi, Scott, & Stanyon, 2010; Baron, 1999; Beharry, 2012; Bell, 2011; Clatts, Davis, Sotheran, & Atillasoy, 1998; Clements, Gleghorn, Garcia, Katz, & Marx, 1997; Coates & McKenzie-Mohr, 2010; Cochran, Stewart, Ginzler, & Cauce, 2002; Congressional Research Service, 2013; Edidin, Ganim, Hunter, & Karnik, 2012; Feinstein, Greenblat, Hass, Kohn, & Rana, 2001; Ferguson, Jun, Bender, Thompson, & Pollio, 2010; Ferguson & Xie, 2012; Gwadz, Nish, Leonard, & Strauss, 2007; Kennedy, Tucker, Green Jr., Golinelli, & Ewing, 2012; Kipke, Simon, Montgomery, Unger, & Iverson, 1997; Kral, Molnar, Booth, & Watters, 1997; Levin, Bax, McKean, & Schoggen, 2005; National Center for Homeless Education, 2005; National Coalition for the Homeless, 2008b; Nolan, 2006; Ober, Martino, Ewing, & Tucker, 2012; Pfeifer & Oliver, 1997; Ray, 2006, Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter

2012a, Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter 2012b; Tucker et al., 2011; Unger, Kipke, Simon, Montgomery, & Johnson, 1997; Van Leeuwen et al., 2006 Wagner, Carlin, Cauce, & Tenner, 2001; Walls & Whitbeck, Chen, Hoyt, Tyler, & Johnson, 2004). In addition, the agency adds to the small but growing body of literature exploring young people experiencing homelessness strengths (Bender, Thompson, McManus, Lantry, & Flynn, 2007; Karabanow, 2003; Karabanow, Hughes, Ticknor, Kidd, & Patterson, 2010; Kidd & Davidson, 2007; Kidd & Evans, 2011; Kurtz, Lindsey, Jarvis, & Nackerud, 2000; Lindsey, Kurtz, Jarvis, Williams, & Nackerud, 2000; Rew & Horner, 2003) and highlights the potential for the implementation of a strengths-based, PYD informed approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness as a form of resistance to the dominant risks and consequences narrative in youth homelessness literature.

One need only observe the imbalance in the above citations in order to gain a sense of the power and pull of the dominant risks and consequences narrative in youth homelessness research. As Kidd (2012) notes, the ongoing focus on the individual risk-oriented attributes of young people experiencing homelessness, which are most often framed from a deficits perspective, is failing to offer useful solutions. In designing and implementing a strengths-based, PYD informed approach, TLP provides a radical departure from the risks and consequences perspective as well as a template for how future youth homelessness services may be designed and implemented from a strengths-based, PYD informed approach, thereby adding to the growing literature exploring young people experiencing homelessness strengths and beginning to develop literature that explores how strengths-based, PYD informed services can be successfully implemented within a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness. In addition, these findings support the utilization of a strengths-based, PYD informed approach

to working with young people experiencing homelessness in successfully developing and implementing recreational, art, and music-based activities.

B. Experiences in the Studio and Their Attached Meaning

In terms of young people and staff experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences, I will begin by discussing young people's initial and ongoing relationship with music. Young people's early exposure to musical instruments, various forms of music, and their continued interest and involvement in music provides them with opportunities for skill development and enhancement, including increased proficiency in musicianship, rapping, and writing skills. Several young people discuss gaining recognition for their music related strengths and talents, recounting times when family members and friends recognized their compositional, performance, and production skills. In other words, young people have music related strengths. As Saleebey (2009) notes in outlining the guiding principles of the strengths perspective, every individual has strengths. Yet, as noted above the majority of youth homelessness literature frames young people experiencing homelessness from a risks and consequences perspective. While it is important to indentify youth populations at increased risk of experiencing homelessness and engage in research and prevention efforts to ameliorate the risks and consequences they experience while homeless, it also important to honor and recognize the strengths and talents young people have. Doing so challenges the dominant risks and consequences narrative in youth homelessness literature and adds to the growing empirical literature on homeless youths' strengths and accomplishments. The formerly homeless Belfort House residents who participated in this study explicitly indentified skills, strengths, and talents they have gained through their relationship with music.

In addition, young people's initial and ongoing interest and involvement in music suggests that music is important and ongoing part of young people' ecology and environment. By engaging in music composition, performance, and production throughout their lives, young people have developed important modes of communication, expression, and coping mechanisms. In discussing ecological resiliency theory, Fraser, Kirby, and Smokwoski (2004) note that environment plays a significant role in resiliency, arguing that environmental contexts may facilitate higher functioning through exposure to opportunities for growth, thereby engaging existing protective and promotive factors and developing new protective and promotive factors as well. In their framework, the symbiotic relationship between environmental assets (e.g., young people's early exposure to musical instruments and various forms of music) and individual attributes (e.g., young people's ongoing interest and involvement in music) produces an ecological resiliency, where these existing and newly developed protective and promotive factors may ameliorate risks (e.g., young people developing modes of communication, expression, and coping mechanisms through their interest and involvement in music). As several young people note, their interest and involvement in music, rapping, and writing provides them with an alterative to acting impulsively on their anger and hanging out in unsafe environments. This suggests that young people's early and ongoing relationship with music provides them with an important form of ecological resiliency.

This finding seems particularly relevant given the epidemic of young person on young person violence impacting African American youth and their neighborhoods on Chicago's south side. Two recent documentaries have explored the violence and its impact on young people. *Chiraq* (Vice, 2013), a video documentary explores young people's access to firearms, the high levels of gun violence and notably compares the impacted neighborhoods to a failed state within

a democracy, poignantly noting that the death toll in Chicago between 2003 to 2011 (*n* = 4,265) is just below the number of American deaths in Operation Iraqi Freedom (*n* = 4,422) and has surpassed the number of American deaths in Afghanistan (*n* = 2,116) during the same time period. In a recent audio documentary on William H. Harper High School, located on Chicago's south side, Chicago Public Radio's *This American Life* also explored the high level of young person on young person violence impacting the community (Glass, 2013a; Glass 2013b). In interviews, young people describe participation in after school extracurricular activities as a means of staying safe – off the streets and out of trouble. Given the findings in this study that some young people report their interest and involvement in music provides them with alternatives to acting out in anger, keeps them out of unsafe environments, and young people's overall positive experiences with music, increased access to music-based activities may be a useful tool in keeping young people safe and out of trouble and help decrease young person on young person violence.

Given less than anticipated staff participation and presence in the TLP music studio, findings and synthesis chapters focused primarily on young people's experiences in the studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Young people ultimately experience the TLP music studio as a space to collaboratively and independently engage in music production, education, and appreciation. Music production provides young people with opportunities to develop compositional, performance, and production related skills as well as important interpersonal, intrapersonal, and technical skills. In addition, they experience various compositional, production-oriented, relational, and technical challenges while engaged in music production in the studio, which provide them with additional opportunities to develop interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Music education provides young people with important

opportunities to build connections with staff and each other, enhance existing and develop new skills, strengths, and talents, and gain a sense of generosity and mastery in sharing their skills with others. Music appreciation provides young people with opportunities for positive use of recreational time as well as a sense of belonging and generosity by providing them with opportunities to share their interests and connection through the reflexive process of music appreciation, education, and recreation in the TLP music studio. In terms of the meaning young people attach to their experiences in the studio, young people describe their experiences as opportunities for connection with themselves, other young people, and staff, engagement, and expression of a myriad emotions. In addition, they discuss experiencing challenges and frustrations in the studio, but ultimately frame these challenges and frustrations as additional opportunities for growth and development.

These findings are congruent with and extend upon the existing literature on the use of music-based activities in social work and related fields as means to engage young people's strengths, talents, and interests as well as assisting young people with interpersonal and intrapersonal skill development (Baker & Homan, 2007; DeCarlo & Hockman, 2004; Delgado, 2000; Olson-McBride and Page, 2012; Travis Jr., 2013; Travis Jr. & Deepak, 2011; Tyson & Baffour, 2004, Wolf & Wolf, 2012). Study findings build on this literature by providing empirical, ethnographic data on the development and implementation of a music studio in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness and how such a space provides young people with opportunities to engage their talents, strengths and interests as well as assisting them in developing important interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Given the lack of empirical work exploring such a phenomenon, these findings provide important insight into

how youth homelessness services providers might develop strengths-based, PYD informed music-based activities for the young people they serve.

In considering the importance of the TLP music studio for the young people involved in this study, I am drawn back to Mattaini and Meyer's (2002) conceptualization of strengths from a systems perspective. In review, they posit that individuals are best served through collaboration and that through collaboration strengths are engaged; that strengths are actualized through active participation. Young people's talents, strengths, interests were engaged and their interpersonal and intrapersonal skills were developed in the TLP music studio through active participation and collaboration in music production, education and appreciation. Even when working independently in the studio, young people still actively participated in their work and sought collaboration by inviting other young people, staff, and/or me into their process. This suggests that young people seek connection in the studio – to share their important expressive work, to receive feedback and/or recognition for their work, etc. – and that through connection their music related strengths are recognized, which plays an important role in their ongoing development.

It is unclear whether or not young people engage in acts of resistance to oppression in the TLP music studio; that is if their music productions, whether or original work or covers of other artists songs, their efforts to educate themselves and each other, and the time they use to appreciate music are in themselves explicit acts of resistance to oppression. There seem to be tinges of resistance in their original music productions, particularly the lyrical content. For example, in *Never Give Up*, Smiley and Theo urge the listener, and perhaps themselves to "never give up" and that "everything is going to be alright." There also seem to be shades of resistance in young people's spoken word work. For example, in one of his freestyles Outlaw notes how

although he has a lot going on he also has a "lot of knowledge to see through the storm." In addition, there appear to be elements of resistance to dominant culture in some of the songs young people cover, for example Marcus and Outlaw's cover of Don Trip's (2009) *Letter to My Son* resists the dominant narrative of disengaged African American fathers, as well as the music they appreciate and recreate to in the studio, for example artists like Jay Z and Erykah Badu. That being said, young people did not explicitly define any of these activities as acts of resistance to oppression, which suggests the need for a broader understanding of what resistance might look like for young people, one that includes less explicit and more subtle forms of language and action.

The co-constructed audio documentary process proved particularly useful in picking up on these more subtle forms of resistive language and action. By providing young people with resources, a loose structure, and support they developed a story of their experiences in the TLP music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences that challenges the dominant, deficits-based, risks and consequences perspective in youth homelessness literature.[46] In listening to the audio documentary it is clear that Marcus, Outlaw, Smurf, and Theo demonstrate compositional and production related skills and strengths. Behind the scenes in developing the audio documentary they demonstrated interpersonal and intrapersonal skills in negotiating decisions around story development, recording, production, and editing. While some of these decisions ultimately affected the production quality of the final edit (e.g., less than optimal but young person preferred microphone placement, long fades instead of quick edits, etc.), in the end the product and the story were theirs and the young people responded positively to that prospect.

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[46] Link to co-constructed audio documentary:
https://soundcloud.com/brianlkelly/tlp-audio-doc-mastered-1
In addition, a full transcription can be found in Appendix T.

While co-constructed audio documentary participants may not have demonstrated industry standard mastery of audio documentary production, they did develop a compelling strengths-based telling of what music and the TLP music studio means to them. In doing so the young people provide a useful template for how other young people and organizations serving young people might use audio documentary to engage in PYD.

C. Implications

1. Recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work

This study begins to establish a body of research that explores the use of music-based activities with young people experiencing homelessness as a way to successfully engage their strengths. It is important to note that this study builds on a rich and longstanding history of using recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work. Far from being a new intervention or service, the practice of providing young people, homeless or otherwise, with modes of connection, engagement, and creative expression though the arts lies at the origin of the social work profession. Over time, as the profession has moved away from this practice, initially relegating recreational, art, and music-based activities and services to some forms of group work and eventually moving to dismiss them all together as a form of non-important play irrelevant for the serious practice of social work, the profession has lost sight of the importance of play and fun for young people, the connection and engagement opportunities it offers, and the essential forms of creative expression vital to the healthy development of young people it offers. This study provides important insight into ways in which service providers and organizations working with young people can build on this tradition and provide young people with opportunities to build on existing strengths and develop new ones. Future research will continue to explore the use of music-based services in social work and related fields, with an eye toward

promotion of more music-based services, particularly for young people often defined from a deficits-based, risks and consequences perspective.

2. Youth homelessness research, policy and practice

As noted in the above sections of this chapter, the reported findings challenge the dominant risks and consequences narrative in youth homelessness research, which tends to construct young people experiencing homelessness from a deficits perspective and in need of rehabilitation and/or treatment. Findings from this study suggest otherwise. Young people describe existing music-related talents, strengths, and interests in addition to discussing how engagement in music production, education, and appreciation in the TLP music studio provides them with opportunities to develop new and engage existing talents, strengths, and interests. In addition, the TLP music studio provides young people with opportunities to develop music related compositional, production-oriented, and technical skills as well as important interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. These findings challenge prescriptive, deficits-based notions of who young people experiencing homelessness are, what they are capable of, and contribute to the growing body of strengths-based youth homelessness research and literature, which may in turn shape future strengths-based policies and increase strengths-based services for young people experiencing homelessness.

Ongoing strengths-based youth homelessness research provides advocates invested in prioritizing young people experiencing homelessness strengths with an opportunity to shape federal, state, and local polices that impact the lives of young people experiencing homelessness. Doing so may have important clinical implications in regards to program development and service provision for young people experiencing homelessness. As Karabanow (2003) and several key informants in this study note, young people experiencing homeless basic needs must

be met, including food, shelter, and healthcare. But, as this study demonstrates, youth homelessness services providers can develop additional strengths-based programming with positive outcomes for the young people they serve. Given how much we know about the risks that lead to young people experiencing homelessness and the consequences they experience as a result of being homeless, it is important to consider, design, develop, implement, and evaluate services that might engage young people experiencing homelessness strengths and provide them with opportunities for engagement, expression, and connection.

It is important to note that Teen Living Programs' successful adaptation and implementation of a strengths-based, PYD informed approach to working with young people experiencing homelessness facilitated the development of the music studio. The agency's strengths-based, PYD informed orientation to youth services and working with young people was pivotal in the development of a space that allows young people to engage, explore, and develop their strengths. This suggests that agencies seeking to successfully provide young people experiencing homelessness with strengths-based recreational, art, and/or music-based activities may best do so with a similar strengths-based, PYD informed approach.

3. <u>Social work education</u>

This study supports a strengths-based orientation to youth homelessness research, policy, and practice that may be used in social work education. Educators seeking examples of strengths-based research and practice with young people experiencing homelessness may use this study and subsequent related publications in their classes as examples of strengths-based research and practice that challenge deviant and delinquent conceptualizations and support more holistic representations of young people experiencing homelessness. Social work educators may also utilize this study and subsequent related publications in their classes as examples of the use

of art and music-based activities in social work practice. In doing so, social work educators provide future practitioners, as well as policy makers and researchers, with exposure to the usefulness of these services and the need to develop new and build on existing partnerships with arts communities, thereby deepening the professions historical relationship with arts communities. In addition, through the use of qualitative methods and the development of a co-constructed audio documentary, this study offers social work educators and students an opportunity to explore the use of participants' voices in social work research.

4. Audio documentary

The TLP music studio lent itself exceedingly well to an aural presentation of young people's experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. By combining young people's fieldwork, original music, and spoken word work, the co-constructed audio documentary provides a rich and compelling telling of their experiences in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences, one I do not believe to be accessible solely through written work. In addition, it engaged young people in the research process by providing them with opportunities to develop, produce, and edit their own aural story of their experiences in the music studio and the meanings they attach to their experiences while engaging their strengths (e.g., recording and editing skills developed in the music studio) and interests (i.e., working on audio-based projects in the music studio). The co-constructed audio documentary also brought an activist dimension to the study by creating opportunities for young people to expand their relationship with media production and play a larger role in the dissemination of research findings, which given the findings more accessible nature have a broader dissemination potential and impact.

The co-constructed audio documentary also facilitated the development of a youth-adult partnership in the TLP music studio between the young people and myself. This partnership provided us with an opportunity to work collaboratively and experience each other's strengths in the process of developing the audio documentary, where the young people demonstrated production-oriented strengths and I demonstrated organizational strengths. Young people commented on the importance of this partnership in completing the co-constructed audio documentary, noting that it was the first project any of them had ever completed in the studio, suggesting that both parties (i.e., the young people and me) were needed to realize the documentary. This is an important finding in relation to future research that will continue to explore the use of audio documentary with young people as a supplemental qualitative method. In future research I will pay close attention to the relational and process-oriented components of the co-constructed audio documentary project. In addition, in future research I will consider the potential relationship between youth-adult partnership and opportunities for PYD, with an eye toward broader community impact potential and community youth development.

D. Limitations

This study has several limitations in terms of data collection processes, and the interpretation of its findings. In regards to sampling, the selection of only one case may have limited the scope of the project. At the same time, the selection of one case allowed for an in-depth examination of the processes involved in promoting and developing the TLP music studio, young people's experiences in the studio, and the meaning they attach to their experiences, which may not have been possible with multiple cases. The uniqueness of the phenomena under study limited the number of cases and the scope of the project as well – to the best of my knowledge there are no other transitional living programs for young people that provide access to

a music studio for their residents in the area. In addition, the decision to use homogenous and intensity sampling methods limited variation in the sample. By only recruiting and consenting young people who engaged with the studio, I lost an opportunity to interview young people who chose not to engage with the studio, which may have provided important insight into their experience of the studio, the meaning they attach to their experience, and why the chose not to engage with the space. Future research will consider this important limitation.

In regards to data collection processes, the researcher-as-instrument phenomenon found in ethnographic fieldwork may have introduced bias into the study. In order to challenge any bias, I worked with a second coder who reviewed multiple fieldnotes and interview transcripts (see Appendix O for second coder guide) and conducted member checks with some young people and staff. In addition, throughout data collection, analysis, and write up, I have reflected upon and noted my presence and positionality within the data and have included important and relevant reflective content throughout the findings and discussion chapters. In addition, my presence in the TLP music studio space while engaging in participant observation with young people and Herman clearly had an impact on young people's experiences. Based on young people's demonstrated and stated positive response to my presence in the studio, I see my presence and its impact on young people's experiences in the studio and the meaning they attach their experiences as a strength of the study, not a limitation. I include it in the limitations though in order to be fully transparent and open to critical dialogue and feedback about my orientation to my presence and its impact on the data.

Given these limitations, findings from this study should be interpreted as contextually specific and lacking in generalizability. This ethnographic research is site and participant specific. It is unclear if a different population of young people living in a transitional living

program with a music studio in another region would have similar experiences and attach similar meanings to their experiences. Therefore, findings are not generalizable to all young people living in transitional living programs with access to a music studio.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: TLP Youth and Staff Study Introduction Script

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TLP Youth and Staff Study Introduction Script
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Hello, my name is Brian L. Kelly and I am a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Over the next 3 to 5 months I am conducting a study here at Teen Living Programs (TLP) that will explore the music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. I am specifically interested in the following research questions:

- What processes are involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth – why is this happening and what are the factors contributing to its existence?
- What are agency youth and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio space – are there benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio space?
- What are the meanings agency youth and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio space?

In order to answer these questions, I will engage in participant observation in the music studio space, I will conduct interviews with TLP youth and staff, and I will work with some TLP youth to co-construct an audio documentary. Participant observation is a qualitative research technique whereby the researcher immerses himself in an environment and observes and, to a limited degree, engages with the environment and its inhabitants. For the purposes of this study I will ask TLP youth and staff for their permission to observe them in the music studio space. Over time I will identify TLP youth and staff who appear to spend the most time in the music studio space, working on music and supporting the music production process, and ask them if they are willing to be interviewed about their experiences in the music studio space. During interviews with TLP youth, I will ask youth if they are interested in collaborating with me on an audio documentary that will sonically explore the music studio space and youths' experiences in the space. Finally, I will also interview some TLP staff about the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth.

Appendix A: TLP Youth and Staff Study Introduction Script (continued)

At this point you may be asking yourself, "Why would he want to do this?" I am invested in the project for several reasons. First, the majority of homeless youth research tends to construct homeless youth from a risks and consequences perspective, failing to incorporate homeless youths' strengths and accomplishments. Based on my own practice experience working with homeless youth and having personally witnessed their strengths and accomplishments, I find a sole focus on risks and consequences in homeless youth research problematic. It fails to capture what is working in homeless youths' lives and I feel it is important to conduct research that explores and reports homeless youths' strengths. Second, some research suggests that arts and music-based services assist youth in exploring their strengths, but very little research has explored the use of arts and music-based services with homeless youth. I see the TLP music studio space as a potential site for TLP youth to explore their strengths and I feel it is important to systematically explore the TLP music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice. Finally, social work has historically used recreational and arts and music-based programming and services, especially in more community-oriented types of work. Yet, there is very little research on why agencies choose to use these services, how they work, and what participants gain from them. I see an exploration of the TLP music studio as a unique opportunity to add to this small body of research.

Now, you may be saying, "Well, that's great for him, but how will this study impact my work or my job here at TLP?" I am not sure I can answer that question for you given varying tasks and assignments, but I can give you an idea of what kind of presence I will have around the house. I will be here 2 to 3 nights a week for the next 3 to 5 months. I will spend the majority of my time in the music studio space, observing the youth. At times you may see me in other areas of the building conducting interviews with youth or staff. If at any time you feel my presence is intrusive, please let me know and I will work with the appropriate staff to address the situation. Please feel free to approach me if you have any questions about the study or my presence.

In an effort to be fully transparent with you, I would like to briefly outline how this study will benefit me. It will provide me with the necessary tools to complete my dissertation, graduate with a PhD, publish several articles, and secure employment. Given the many ways that I will benefit from this study, I would like to know how this study might benefit TLP. I have some ideas, but I would like to hear your thoughts. With that in mind let's have a discussion about how TLP might benefit from this study. I can also answer any other questions you may have about the study at this time as well.

(Break for discussion)

I want to thank you for your time today. I have noted your ideas and will meet with the appropriate staff here at TLP and my dissertation committee at UIC to determine what is feasible within the scope of the study and report back to you in the coming months. Please feel free to approach me with any additional ideas about how TLP might benefit from this study and or questions about the study.

Appendix B: TLP Youth and Staff Permission to Observe Script

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TLP Youth and Staff Permission to Observe Script
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Hello, my name is Brian Kelly and I am a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I would like to ask for your permission to observe you in the TLP music studio space as a part of my dissertation research project. This study will explore the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. I am asking for your permission to observe you because you are a TLP youth or staff member who spends time in the music studio space, either working on music, supporting the music production process, or just hanging out in the music studio space. Please do not volunteer to participate if you are a TLP youth or staff member who does not spend time in the music studio space either working on music, supporting the music production process, or just hanging out in the music studio space.

As a participant, I will ask you to allow me to observe you while you are working and or hanging out in the music studio space. At times I may also ask you questions or engage you in a brief discussion about what you are working on and or what is going on in the music studio space. The participant observation period for this study is 2 to 4 hours a night for 2 to 3 nights a week for 3 to 5 months. You are not required to be in the studio space during all of this time. Rather, if you happen to be in the space while I am present, I would ask that you allow me to observe you. Should you choose to participate I would ask for your permission to observe you for the entire study period.

This study involves minimal risks. Your participation in the study will be confidential. There is no compensation or direct benefits for participating in the participant observation component of the study, but you will be participating in research that seeks to prioritize strengths-based and art and music-based services in social work practice with youth. There are no costs to participate and participation will have no impact on your services with TLP.

Appendix B: TLP Youth and Staff Permission to Observe Script (continued)

If you would like to participate in this study you may inform me after this meeting, later this afternoon/evening, by phone at (773) 474-0567, or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu. We will then set up a time to discuss the study more in-depth and to go over the informed consent process. Do you have any questions now? If you have questions later, please contact me by phone at (773) 474-0567, by email at bkelly7@uic.edu, or you may contact my advisor Dr. Mark Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

Appendix C: TLP Youth and Staff Participant Observation Consent Form

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TLP Youth and Staff Participant Observation Consent Form
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Why am I being asked?

You are being asked to participate in a research study that will that will explore the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. This study is being conducted by Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini from the Jane Adams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). You have been asked to participate in this research because you spend time in TLP music studio space, working on music, supporting the music production process, or just hanging out. Based on that, you may be eligible to participate. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the research.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with UIC or TLP. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

Why is this research being done?

This research is being done in an effort to develop and support strengths-based research with homeless youth, strengths-based services for homeless youth, and recreational and art and music-based services in social work and related fields. The TLP music studio space is a unique site to learn about the use of art and music-based services in a transitional living program for homeless youth. It provides an opportunity to explore a music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth.

Appendix C: TLP Youth and Staff Participant Observation Consent Form (continued)

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is threefold: (1) To explore the processes that are involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth. I want to know why is this happening and what factors are contributing to its existence. (2) To explore TLP youth and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio space. I want to know if there are benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio space. And, (3) to explore the meanings TLP youth and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio space.

What procedures are involved?

If you agree to be in this research, you will be asked to do the following things:

→ Give the researcher permission to be observe you in the TLP music studio space. This entails you allowing the researcher to observe you while spending time in the music studio space working on music, supporting the music production process, or just hanging out. At times he may also ask you questions or attempt to engage you in a brief discussion about what you are working on (e. g., tell me about this song) or what is going on in the music studio space (e. g., what are you working on today, what brings you to the music studio today). The participant observation period for this study is 2 to 4 hours a night for 2 to 3 nights a week for 3 to 5 months. You are not required to be in the studio space during all of this time. Rather, if you happen to be in the space while the researcher is present, he would ask that you allow him to observe you. Should you choose to participate he would ask for your permission to observe you when you are both in the music studio space for the duration of the study period.

→ You may also be asked to participate in an interview or two about your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences. If so, the researcher will describe that part of the study to you at another time and get your consent separately.

Approximately 13 to 20 participants (3 to 5 staff and 10 to 15 youth) may be involved in this research at TLP and UIC.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

The research involves minimal risks:

→ The researcher does not expect participant observation to cause you distress. If this occurs, you may choose not to be observed, not to respond to questions or engage in brief discussions, to take a break from the study, or end your participation in the study.

Appendix C: TLP Youth and Staff Participant Observation Consent Form (continued)

→ Loss of confidentiality may be a concern. Observations and information you share will only be seen and used by the researcher. He will not report what he observes and what you tell him to TLP staff unless you indicate that you plan to harm yourself or others. You will not be identified by name in fieldnotes. Instead we will create and the researcher will assign a pseudonym (a fake name). A list connecting your name and pseudonym will be stored in a secure, locked file cabinet, separate from the study data. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will have access to the data only identified by pseudonym.

Are there benefits to taking part in the research?

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, you will be participating in research that supports and promotes strengths-based and music-based services in social work practice with youth. This may help promote additional spaces like the TLP music studio space.

What other options are there?

You may choose not to participate in this study. Your decision to participate or not to participate will in no way affect your services at TLP or your relationship with the University of Illinois at Chicago.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

The only person who will know that you are a research subject is the researcher. Information you provide will not be shared with TLP staff unless you indicate plans to harm yourself or others.

No information about you or provided by you during the research will be disclosed to others without your written permission, except:

→ If necessary to protect your rights or welfare (for example, if you are injured and need emergency care or when the UIC Institutional Review Board monitors the research or consent process); or

→ If required by law.

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Only the researcher will have access to the fieldnotes and computer data files. In order to protect your confidentiality, he will not use your name to identify your data. Instead, we will create and then he will assign a pseudonym (a fake name). All data will be stored in locked file cabinets

Appendix C: TLP Youth and Staff Participant Observation Consent Form (continued)

separate from any papers that have your name on them. Computer data files will be stored on password protected computers and will not contain names or other identifying information. In order for the researcher to link your data over time, he will store a list connecting your name and pseudonym in a secure, locked file cabinet, separate from the study data. This list will be destroyed once data collection is completed. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will have access to the data only identified by pseudonym.

What are the costs for participating in this research?

There are no costs to you for participation in this research.

Will I be reimbursed for any of my expenses or paid for my participation in this research?

There is no payment for participating in the participant observation component of the research.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The researcher conducting this study is Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Brian by phone at (773) 474-0567 or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu or you may contact Dr. Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

What are my rights as a research subject?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office for Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at (312) 996-1711 (local) or 1-866-789-6215 or by email at uicirb@uic.edu.

Remember: Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Teen Living Programs or UIC. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

You will be given a copy of this form for your information and to keep for your records.

Appendix C: TLP Youth and Staff Participant Observation Consent Form (continued)

Signature of Subject

I have read (or someone has read to me) the above information. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Appendix D: TLP Youth and Staff Participant Observation Log

Date:

Start time:

End time:

Setting:

Type of Activity and Description:

Participants (pseudonyms):

Observations:

Appendix E: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Recruitment Script

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TLP Youth and Staff Interview Recruitment Script
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Hello, my name is Brian Kelly and I am a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. You are currently participating in the participant observation component of my dissertation research project, a study exploring the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. I would like to invite you to participate in research interviews for the study. I have identified you as a potential interview candidate due to the amount of time you spend in the music studio space working on music and supporting the music production process. If you have not been indentified as an interview candidate you are not eligible to participate in an interview.

If you agree to participate, I will ask you to allow me to interview you 1 to 2 times over the next 2 to 3 months. Interviews will explore your experiences in the TLP music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences. Examples of the types of questions I will ask include tell me about your involvement in the music studio space and talk to me about what happens in the music studio space. Interviews will be audio recorded using a digital recording device and microphones. If you do not give me permission to record the interview, I would still like to interview you. If you do give me permission to record the interview, I will also ask for your permission to potentially use pieces of your recorded interview in audio documentary work in a subsequent study. This work will aurally explore youth and staff experiences in the music studio space and the meaning they attach to their experiences. If you do not want to give me permission to use portions of your recorded interview in future audio documentary work I would still like to interview you.

Study interviews involve minimal risks. You may skip any questions or topics you choose. Your participation in the study interviews will be confidential. You will receive a $15 gift certificate for Itunes as compensation for your time. There are no costs to participate and participation will have no impact on your services with TLP.

Appendix E: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Recruitment Script (continued)

If you would like to participate in study interviews you may inform me now, later by phone at (773) 474-0567, or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu. We will then set up a time to discuss the study interviews more in-depth and to go over the informed consent process. Do you have any questions now? If you have questions later, please contact me by phone at (773) 474-0567, by email at bkelly7@uic.edu, or you may contact my advisor Dr. Mark Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

Appendix F: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form

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TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Why am I being asked?

You are currently participating in a research study exploring the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. This study is being conducted by Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini from the Jane Adams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). When you enrolled in the study you gave consent for the researcher to observe you in the TLP music studio space when you were both present over the course of a 3 to 5 month period, 2 to 3 nights a week, for 2 to 4 hours a night. The researcher would like your permission to interview you about your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences. You are being asked to participate in interviews due to the amount of time you spend in the music studio space working on music and supporting the music production process.
Based on that, you may be eligible to participate in interviews. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in research interviews.

Your participation in the research interviews is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with UIC or TLP. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

Why is this research being done?

This research is being done in an effort to develop and support strengths-based research with homeless youth, strengths-based services for homeless youth, and recreational and art and music-based services in social work and related fields. The TLP music studio space is a unique site to learn about the use of art and music-based services in a transitional living program for homeless

Appendix F: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form (continued)

youth. It provides an opportunity to explore a music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is threefold: (1) To explore the processes that are involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth. I want to know why is this happening and what factors are contributing to its existence. (2) To explore TLP youth and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio space. I want to know if there are benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio space. And, (3) to explore the meanings TLP youth and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio space.

What procedures are involved?

If you agree to be in this research, you will be asked to do the following things:

→ Agree to participate in one to two 60 to 90 minute interviews. You will be asked to describe how you become involved in/interested in music and to talk about the role music has played in your life. You will also be asked to talk about your involvement in the music studio space and to describe what happens in the music studio space. Finally, you will be asked to discuss your experiences in the music studio space. Interviews will be audio recorded using a digital recording device and microphones. If you do not give the researcher permission to record the interview, he would still like to interview you.

→ If you give the researcher permission to record the interview, immediately following the interview he will also ask for your additional permission to potentially use pieces of your recorded interview in audio documentary work in a subsequent study. This work will aurally explore youth and staff experiences in the music studio space and the meaning they attach to their experiences. If you do not want to give permission to use portions of your recorded interview in future audio documentary work the researcher would still like to interview you and record the interview.

→ If you are a TLP youth, the researcher may also ask you to participate in the development of a co-constructed audio documentary exploring your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences. If so, he will describe that part of the study to you at another time and get your consent separately.

Approximately 8 to 10 participants may be involved in research interviews at TLP and UIC.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

The research involves minimal risks:

Appendix F: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form (continued)

→ The researcher does not expect interviews to cause you distress. If this occurs, you may choose not to answer a question or discuss specific issues. You may also take a break or end the interview at any time.

→ Loss of confidentiality may be a concern. Your responses will not be shared with TLP staff or anyone else. The only time the researcher would share what you tell him with others is if you indicate that you are planning to harm yourself or others. The researcher will be the only person who will have access to the audio files, transcripts, and computer data files. In order to protect your confidentiality, he will ask you to not state your name while recording. Any identifying information that is inadvertently stated on the tape will be removed or replaced with a pseudonym (a fake name) during transcription. A list connecting your name and pseudonym will be stored in a secure, locked file cabinet, separate from the study data. The researcher will store audio files and transcripts in locked file cabinets separate from any papers that have your name on them. All computer files will be password protected. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will have access to the data only identified by pseudonym.

Are there benefits to taking part in the research?

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, you will be participating in research that supports and promotes strengths-based and music-based services in social work practice with youth. This may help promote additional spaces like the TLP music studio space.

What other options are there?

You may choose not to participate in this study. Your decision to participate or not to participate will in no way affect your services at TLP or your relationship with the University of Illinois at Chicago.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

The only person who will know that you are a research subject is the researcher. Information you provide will not be shared with TLP staff unless you indicate plans to harm yourself or others.

No information about you or provided by you during the research will be disclosed to others without your written permission, except:

→ If necessary to protect your rights or welfare (for example, if you are injured and need emergency care or when the UIC Institutional Review Board monitors the research or consent process); or

→ If required by law.

Appendix F: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form (continued)

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Only the researcher will have access to the audio files, transcripts, and computer data files. In order to protect your confidentiality, he will not use your name to identify your data. Instead, we will create and he will assign a pseudonym (a fake name). All data will be stored in locked file cabinets separate from any papers that have your name on them. Computer data files will be stored on password protected computers and will not contain names or other identifying information. In order for the researcher to link your data over time, he will store a list connecting your name and pseudonym in a secure, locked file cabinet, separate from the study data. This list will be destroyed once data collection is completed. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will have access to the data only identified by pseudonym.

What are the costs for participating in this research?

There are no costs to you for participation in this research.

Will I be reimbursed for any of my expenses or paid for my participation in this research?

You will receive a $15 gift certificate for Itunes as compensation for your time. This will be given to you at your first interview.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

You can choose whether or not to be interviewed for this study. If you volunteer to be interviewed, you may choose not to answer a question or discuss specific issues. You may also take a break or end the interview at any time. The researcher may end the research interview if circumstances arise which warrant doing so. If you or the researcher choose to end the interview you may still participate in the participant observation component of the study.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The researcher conducting this study is Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Brian by phone at (773) 474-0567 or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu or you may contact Dr. Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

Appendix F: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form (continued)

What are my rights as a research subject?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office for Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at (312) 996-1711 (local) or 1-866-789-6215 or by email at uicirb@uic.edu.

Remember: Your participation in the research interviews is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Teen Living Programs or UIC. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

You will be given a copy of this form for your information and to keep for your records.

Signature of Subject

I have read (or someone has read to me) the above information. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Appendix F: TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form (continued)

Permission to Record Interview

☐ Yes, I give my permission for the researcher to record this interview.

☐ No, I do not give my permission for the researcher to record this interview.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Permission to Potentially Use Portions of Recorded Interview in Future Audio Documentary Work in a Subsequent Study

☐ Yes, I give my permission for the researcher to use portions of my recorded interview in future audio documentary work in a subsequent study.

☐ No, I do not give my permission for the researcher to use portions of my recorded interview in future audio documentary work in a subsequent study.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Appendix G: TLP Youth Interview Guide

[After completing TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form proceed to the interview. Note that the qualitative interview format is flexible. Use language that participants use to refer to their experiences in the music studio space and the meaning they attach to their experiences. The order of the questions is flexible as well.]

First, I am going to ask you some basic questions about yourself. Then, I will ask you to describe how you become interested/involved in music and to talk about the role music has played in your life. After that I will ask you to tell me about your involvement in the music studio space and to describe what happens in the music studio space. Finally, I will ask you to discuss your experiences in the music studio space.

Remember, if you do not want to answer a question you can ask to skip it. You may also take a break or end the interview at anytime.

[If the young person has consented to audio-recording the interview, read the following. If not, skip to asking the young person if he/she has any questions.]

As we discussed, I am going to audio-record the interview. Once I turn the digital recorder on, I will identify you with a pseudonym, another word for a fake name. What would you like that pseudonym to be? Try not to state your name while the tape is running. If you do accidentally say your name or give other information that identifies you, I will remove that information when we make written copies of the tapes. Also, you may ask me to stop the audio recorder at any time during the interview.

Do you have any questions? Are you ready to start?

[Turn on digital recorder. State (Pseudonym) Interview #XX, Date, & Time]

General Demographic questions.

- How old are you?
- How would your categorize yourself in terms of race/ethnicity?
- How would your categorize yourself in terms of gender?
- How long have you been a resident at TLP?
- How would you describe your living situation prior to entering TLP?

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I would like you to tell me about how you became interested/involved in music. Go back as far as you can remember and begin there.

- Describe your first memories of music as a child.
- Describe your relationship with music as child. What was it like?
- Describe what was going on in your life when you became interested/involved in music.
- Talk to me about any instruments you played as a child, including singing.
- Describe what you got out of your interest/involvement in music as a child. (Here, get a sense of any benefits and or consequences)

Appendix G: TLP Youth Interview Guide (continued)

Thank you for sharing that. Now, talk to me about the role music has played and continues to play in your life today.

- Tell me about the role music played in your childhood.
- Talk to me about the role music played as you were growing up.
- Describe your relationship with music today.
- Describe instances or situations when music has been important to you.
- Describe instances or situations when music has not been important to you.
- Talk to me about what you have gotten from your interest/involvement in music. (Here, get a sense of any benefits and or consequences)

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like to move our focus onto the TLP music studio space. Tell me about your involvement in the music studio.

- Describe how you became involved in the music studio space.
- Describe what was going on in your life when you became involved in the music studio.
- Talk to me about your first experiences in the music studio space. What were they like?
- Tell me about what you thought the music studio space was going to be like before you became involved.
- Describe what the studio space was like when you got involved.

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like you to talk to me about what happens in the music studio space.

- Walk me through a session in the music studio space.
- Describe what you do during the session. (Here, get a sense of what role or roles they play in the studio)
- Describe what others do during the session. (Here, get a sense if they collaborate in the studio and if they do what role or roles others play in the collaboration)
- Describe any other types of activities that occur in the studio space.

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I'd like to listen to a piece of music you've worked on in the music studio. Is that okay? (If yes, play the piece and ask the following questions. If no, skip to next set of questions).

- Describe what's going on in this piece. What is it about?
- Talk to me about what role you played in developing this piece.
- Tell me about what was going when you wrote this piece. (If applicable)
- Describe what was going on the in the studio when you recorded this piece. (Here, get a sense of what role or roles they played and their perception of others' roles if applicable)

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like you to tell me about your overall experiences in the music studio space.

- Tell me about how you feel when you are in the music studio space.
- Do you think about the music studio when you are not there?
- If yes, how so?
- Describe how you feel about the work you do in the music studio.

Appendix G: TLP Youth Interview Guide (continued)

- Talk to me about what you get out of or gain from working on music in the studio. (Here, get a sense of any benefits and or consequences)

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like you to tell me about your perceptions of others' overall experiences in the music studio space.

- Tell me about how you think others feel when they are in the music studio space.
- Do you think they think about the music studio when they are not there?
- If yes, how so?
- Describe how you think others feel about their work in the music studio.
- Talk to me about what you think others get out of or gain from working on music in the studio. (Here, get a sense of any benefits and or consequences)

Thank you for sharing that. Now, talk to me about the extent to which TLP supports the use of the music studio space.

- Do you feel supported by TLP to work in the music studio space?
- If yes, describe how TLP supports you.
- If no, describe how TLP does not support you.
- Talk to me about why you think TLP has a music studio space for young people.

Thank you for sharing that. That is all of the questions that I have for you. Is there anything else you would like to add as this time? Thank you very much for your time.

[State time and turn off tape.]

Appendix H: TLP Staff Interview Guide

[After completing TLP Youth and Staff Interview Consent Form proceed to the interview. Note that the qualitative interview format is flexible. Use language that participants use to refer to their experiences in the music studio space and the meaning they attach to their experiences. The order of the questions is flexible as well.]

First, I am going to ask you some basic questions about yourself. Then, I will ask you to describe how you become interested/involved in music and to talk about the role music has played in your life. After that I will ask you to tell me about your involvement in the music studio space and to describe what happens in the music studio space. Finally, I will ask you to discuss your perceptions of youths' experiences in the music studio space.

Remember, if you do not want to answer a question you can ask to skip it. You may also take a break or end the interview at anytime.

[If the staff member has consented to audio-recording the interview, read the following. If not, skip to asking the staff member if he/she has any questions.]

As we discussed, I am going to audio-record the interview. Once I turn the digital recorder on, I will identify you with a pseudonym, another word for a fake name. What would you like that pseudonym to be? Try not to state your name while the tape is running. If you do accidentally say your name or give other information that identifies you, I will remove that information when we make written copies of the tapes. Also, you may ask me to stop the audio recorder at any time during the interview.

Do you have any questions? Are you ready to start?

[Turn on digital recorder. State (Pseudonym) Interview #XX, Date, & Time]

General Demographic questions.

- How old are you?
- How would your categorize yourself in terms of race/ethnicity?
- How would your categorize yourself in terms of gender?
- How long have you been on staff at TLP?

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I would like you to describe your role as a staff member at TLP.

- Tell me about your duties as a staff member.
- Describe how much time you spend at Belfort House.
- Tell me about how much time you spend with the residents.
- Talk to me about how much time you spend in the music studio space.
- Talk to me about how much time you spend with the young people who use the music studio space.
- Describe how you think the young people perceive you.

Appendix H: TLP Staff Interview Guide (continued)

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I would like you to tell me about how you became interested/involved in music. Go back as far as you can remember and begin there.

- Describe your first memories of music as a child.
- Describe your relationship with music as a child. What was it like?
- Describe what was going on in your life when you became interested/involved in music.
- Talk to me about any instruments you played as a child, including singing.
- Describe what you got out of your interest/involvement in music as a child. (Here, get a sense of any benefits and or consequences)

Thank you for sharing that. Now, talk to me about the role music has played and continues to play in your life today.

- Tell me about the role music played in your childhood.
- Talk to me about the role music played as you were growing up.
- Describe your relationship with music today.
- Describe instances or situations when music has been important to you.
- Describe instances or situations when music has not been important to you.
- Talk to me about what you have gotten from your interest/involvement in music. (Here, get a sense of any benefits and or consequences)

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like to move our focus onto the TLP music studio space. Tell me about your involvement in the music studio.

- Describe how you became involved in the music studio space.
- Describe what was going on in your life when you became involved in the music studio.
- Talk to me about your first experiences in the music studio space. What were they like?
- Tell me about what you thought the music studio space was going to be like before you became involved.
- Describe what the studio space was like when you got involved.

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like you to talk to me about what happens in the music studio space.

- Walk me through what happens when you are in the music studio space with the young people.
- Describe what types of activities happen in the studio space.
- Describe what you do in the music studio space with the young people. (Here, get a sense of what role or roles they play in the studio)
- Tell me about what the young people do in the studio. (Here, get a sense of his/her perceptions of what role or roles the young people play in the studio)

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like you to tell me about your overall experiences in the music studio space.

- Tell me about how you feel when you are in the music studio space.
- Do you think about the music studio when you are not there? If yes, how so?
- Describe how you feel about the work you do in the music studio.
- Talk to me about what you get out of or gain from working in the studio.

Appendix H: TLP Staff Interview Guide (continued)

Thank you for sharing that. Now, talk to me about your perceptions of young people's experiences in the music studio space.

- Tell me about how you think the young people feel when they are in the music studio space.
- Do you think they think about the music studio when they are not there?
- If yes, how so?
- Describe how you think they feel about their work in the music studio.
- Talk to me about what you think they get out of or gain from working on music in the studio. (Here, get a sense of any benefits and or consequences)

Thank you for sharing that. Now, talk to me about the extent to which TLP supports the use of the music studio space.

- Do you feel TLP supports the music studio space?
- If yes, describe how TLP supports the music studio.
- If no, describe how TLP does not support the music studio.
- Talk to me about why you think TLP has a music studio space for young people.

Thank you for sharing that. That is all of the questions that I have for you. Is there anything else you would like to add as this time? Thank you very much for your time.

[State time and turn off tape.]

Appendix I: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Recruitment Script

Leave box empty - For office use only

TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Recruitment Script
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Hello, my name is Brian Kelly and I am a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I would like to invite you to participate in interviews for my dissertation research project. This study will explore the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. TLP's clinical director and supportive services manager and myself have identified you as a potential candidate for key informant interviews. We feel you may be best able to answer questions regarding the development and sustainment of the music studio space. If you have not been asked to participate in an interview you are not eligible to participate in an interview.

If you agree to participate, I will ask you to allow me to interview you 1 to 2 times over the next month. Interviews with key informants will explore the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth. Examples of the types of questions I will ask include describe the history of TLP and tell me about how the music studio space came to be. Interviews will be audio recorded using a digital recording device and microphones. If you do not give me permission to record the interview, I would still like to interview you. If you do give me permission to record the interview, I will also ask for your permission to potentially use pieces of your recorded interview in audio documentary work in a subsequent study. This work will aurally explore agency background and historical information and provide an opportunity to explore the processes that facilitate the construction of the TLP music studio. If you do not want to give me permission to use portions of your recorded interview in future audio documentary work I would still like to interview you.

Appendix I: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Recruitment Script (continued)

Study interviews involve minimal risks. Your participation in the study interviews will be confidential. You will receive a $15 gift certificate for Itunes as compensation for your time. There are no costs to participate and participation will have no impact on your services with TLP.

If you would like to participate in study interviews you may inform me now, later by phone at (773) 474-0567, or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu. We will then set up a time to discuss the study interviews more in-depth and to go over the informed consent process. Do you have any questions now? If you have questions later, please contact me by phone at (773) 474-0567, by email at bkelly7@uic.edu, or you may contact my advisor Dr. Mark Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

Appendix J: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Consent Form

Leave box empty - For office use only

TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Consent Form
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Why am I being asked?

You are being asked to participate in a research study that will that will explore the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. This study is being conducted by Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini from the Jane Adams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). You have been asked to participate in this research because TLP's clinical director and supportive services manager and the researcher have identified you as a potential candidate for key informant interviews. We feel you may be best able to answer questions regarding the processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth. Based on that, you may be eligible to participate. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the research.

Your participation in the research interviews is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with UIC or TLP. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

Why is this research being done?

This research is being done in an effort to develop and support strengths-based research with homeless youth, strengths-based services for homeless youth, and recreational and art and music-based services in social work and related fields. The TLP music studio space is a unique site to learn about the use of art and music-based services in a transitional living program for homeless youth. It provides an opportunity to explore a music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth.

Appendix J: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Consent Form (continued)

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is threefold: (1) To explore the processes that are involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth. I want to know why is this happening and what factors are contributing to its existence. (2) To explore TLP youth and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio space. I want to know if there are benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio space. And, (3) to explore the meanings TLP youth and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio space.

What procedures are involved?

If you agree to be in this research, you will be asked to do the following things:

→ Agree to participate in one to two 60 to 90 minute interviews. You will be asked to describe the history of TLP, the agency's philosophy, and the use of a positive youth development (PYD) model. You will also be asked to talk about how the music studio space came to be and the factors and processes that continue to contribute to the sustained existence of the music studio space. Interviews will be audio recorded using a digital recording device and microphones. If you do not give the researcher permission to record the interview, he would still like to interview you.

→ If you give the researcher permission to record the interview, immediately following the interview he will also ask for your additional permission to potentially use pieces of your recorded interview in audio documentary work in a subsequent study. This work will aurally explore agency background and historical information and provide an opportunity to explore the processes that facilitate the construction of the TLP music studio. If you do not want to give permission to use portions of your recorded interview in future audio documentary work the researcher would still like to interview you and record the interview.

Approximately 2 to 4 participants may be involved in research interviews at TLP and UIC.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

The research involves minimal risks:

→ The researcher does not expect interviews to cause you to distress. If this occurs, you may choose not to answer a question or discuss specific issues. You may also take a break or end the interview at any time.

→ Loss of confidentiality may be a concern. Your responses will not be shared with TLP youth, staff, or anyone else. The only time the researcher would share what you tell him with others is if you indicate that you are planning to harm yourself or others. The

Appendix J: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Consent Form (continued)

researcher will be the only person who will have access to the audio files, transcripts, and computer data files. In order to protect your confidentiality, he will ask you to not state your name while recording. Any identifying information that is inadvertently stated on the tape will be removed or replaced with a pseudonym (a fake name) during transcription. A list connecting your name and pseudonym will be stored in a secure, locked file cabinet, separate from the study data. The researcher will store audio files and transcripts in locked file cabinets separate from any papers that have your name on them. All computer files will be password protected. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will have access to the data only identified by pseudonym.

Are there benefits to taking part in the research?

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, you will be participating in research that supports and promotes strengths-based and music-based services in social work practice with youth. This may help promote additional spaces like the TLP music studio space.

What other options are there?

You may choose not to participate in this study. Your decision to participate or not to participate will in no way affect your services at TLP or your relationship with the University of Illinois at Chicago.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

The only person who will know that you are a research subject is the researcher. Information you provide will not be shared with TLP staff unless you indicate plans to harm yourself or others.

No information about you or provided by you during the research will be disclosed to others without your written permission, except:

→ If necessary to protect your rights or welfare (for example, if you are injured and need emergency care or when the UIC Institutional Review Board monitors the research or consent process); or

→ If required by law.

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Appendix J: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Consent Form (continued)

Only the researcher will have access to the audio files, transcripts, and computer data files. In order to protect your confidentiality, he will not use your name to identify your data. Instead, we will create and he will assign a pseudonym (a fake name). All data will be stored in locked file cabinets separate from any papers that have your name on them. Computer data files will be stored on password protected computers and will not contain names or other identifying information. In order for the researcher to link your data over time, he will store a list connecting your name and pseudonym in a secure, locked file cabinet, separate from the study data. This list will be destroyed once data collection is completed. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will have access to the data only identified by pseudonym.

What are the costs for participating in this research?

There are no costs to you for participation in this research.

Will I be reimbursed for any of my expenses or paid for my participation in this research?

You will receive a $15 gift certificate for Itunes as compensation for your time. This will be given to you at your first interview.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

You can choose whether or not to be interviewed for this study. If you volunteer to be interviewed, you may choose not to answer a question or discuss specific issues. You may also take a break or end the interview at any time. The investigator may end the research interview if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The researcher conducting this study is Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Brian by phone at (773) 474-0567 or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu or you may contact Dr. Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

What are my rights as a research subject?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office for Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at (312) 996-1711 (local) or 1-866-789-6215 or by email at uicirb@uic.edu.

Appendix J: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Consent Form (continued)

Remember: Your participation in the research interviews is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Teen Living Programs or UIC. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

You will be given a copy of this form for your information and to keep for your records.

Signature of Subject

I have read (or someone has read to me) the above information. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Permission to Record Interview

☐ Yes, I give my permission for the researcher to record this interview.

☐ No, I do not give my permission for the researcher to record this interview.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Appendix J: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Consent Form (continued)

Permission to Potentially Use Portions of Recorded Interview in Future Audio Documentary Work in a Subsequent Study

☐ Yes, I give my permission for the researcher to use portions of my recorded interview in future audio documentary work in a subsequent study.

☐ No, I do not give my permission for the researcher to use portions of my recorded interview in future audio documentary work in a subsequent study.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Appendix K: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Guide

[After completing Key Informant Interview Consent Form proceed to the interview. Note that the qualitative interview format is flexible. Use language that participants use to refer to processes involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth. The order of the questions is flexible as well.]

First, I am going to ask you some basic questions about yourself. Then, I will ask you to describe the history of TLP, the agency's philosophy, and the use of a positive youth development (PYD) model. Finally, I will ask you to tell me about how the music studio space came to be and the factors and processes that continue to contribute to the sustained existence of the music studio space.

Remember, if you do not want to answer a question you can ask to skip it. You may also take a break or end the interview at anytime.

[If the staff member has consented to audio-recording the interview, read the following. If not, skip to asking the staff member if he/she has any questions.]

As we discussed, I am going to audio-record the interview. Once I turn the digital recorder on, I will identify you with a pseudonym, another word for a fake name. What would you like that pseudonym to be? Try not to state your name while the tape is running. If you do accidentally say your name or give other information that identifies you, I will remove that information when we make written copies of the tapes. Also, you may ask me to stop the audio recorder at any time during the interview.

Do you have any questions? Are you ready to start?

[Turn on digital recorder. State (Pseudonym) Interview #XX, Date, & Time]

General Demographic questions.

- How old are you?
- How would you categorize yourself in terms of race/ethnicity?
- How would you categorize yourself in terms of gender?
- How long have you worked at TLP?

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I would like you to describe your role as a staff member at TLP.

- Tell me about your duties as a staff member.
- Describe how much time you spend at Belfort House.
- Tell me about how much time you spend with the residents.
- Talk to me about how much time you spend in the music studio space.
- Talk to me about how much time you spend with the young people who use the music studio space.
- Describe how you think the young people perceive you.

Appendix K: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Guide (continued)

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I would like you to describe the history of TLP going as far back as you remember.

- Talk to me about how the agency came about.
- Describe how the agency has developed over the years.
- Describe the mission of TLP.

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I would like you to tell me about TLP's philosophy and its use of a positive youth development (PYD) model.

- Describe TLP's PYD model.
- Talk to me about how TLP came to adopt a PYD model.
- Describe how PYD is implemented at the various levels of the agency: administrative, clinical, and front line staff.
- Describe how PYD influences the way TLP works with young people.
- Describe how PYD influences the services TLP offers young people.
- Talk to me about the benefits of implementing a PYD model at TLP.
- Tell me about any problems with implementing a PYD model at TLP.

Thank you for sharing that. Now, I would like you to tell me the story of how the TLP music studio space came to be. Go back as far as you can remember and begin there.

- Talk to me about the factors and processes that contributed to the development of the music studio.
- Describe what was happening within Belfort House during the development of the music studio.
- Tell me about what was happening within the larger agency outside of Belfort House during the development of the music studio.
- Talk to me about what you thought the music studio space was going to be like before it was developed.
- Tell me about what it was really like once it was developed.
- Describe how young people and staff have responded to the music studio over time.

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like you to talk to me about the factors and processes that contribute to the sustained existence of the music studio space.

- Talk to me about why you think the music studio space continues to exist.
- Describe how TLP does and or does not support the music studio space.
- Describe how sustaining the music studio does or does not support the mission of TLP.

Thank you for sharing that. Now I would like you to describe the role the music studio plays at TLP.

- Describe what the music studio offers the young people.
- Talk to me about any unique benefits it offers the young people.
- Tell me about whether or not the music studio creates any unique challenges for the agency? The staff? The young people?

Appendix K: TLP Staff Key Informant Interview Guide (continued)

Thank you for sharing that. That is all of the questions that I have for you. Is there anything else you would like to add as this time? Thank you very much for your time.

[State time and turn off tape.]

Appendix L: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Recruitment Script

Leave box empty - For office use only

Co-constructed Audio Documentary Recruitment Script
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Hello, my name is Brian Kelly and I am a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. You are currently participating in participant observation and interviews for my dissertation research project, a study exploring the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. I would like to invite you to participate in the development of a co-constructed audio documentary. The documentary will sonically explore your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences. If you are a TLP youth currently participating in participant observation and I have interviewed you about your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences, you are eligible to participate. If you are a TLP staff member or a TLP youth who has not participated in participant observation and I have not interviewed you about your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences, you are not eligible to participate.

If you agree to participate, I will provide with you a digital audio recording device and train you on how to use the equipment and interface it with Logic Studio. After this initial training I will ask you to conduct recordings that capture your experiences in the music studio space. These recording scenarios may include music production sessions in the music studio space or any other environments or situations that you feel are relative to your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences. I will ask you to bring these recordings to a weekly meeting where we will meet with other TLP youth and co-construct the audio documentary together using everyone's recordings. I will also encourage you to incorporate your own music in the audio documentary. I anticipate this process taking about two months.

Appendix L: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Recruitment Script (continued)

Participation in the co-constructed audio documentary involves minimal risks. There is no compensation for participating in the audio documentary component of the study, but you will receive valuable training in conducting audio-based fieldwork. You will also be developing an audio documentary that I hope may at some point be broadcast to a larger audience. There are no costs to participate and your participation will have no impact on your services with TLP.

If you would like to participate in the co-constructed audio documentary you may inform me now, later by phone at (773) 474-0567, or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu. We will then set up a time to discuss the project more in-depth and go over the informed consent process. Do you have any questions now? If you have questions later, please contact me by phone at (773) 474-0567, by email at bkelly7@uic.edu, or you may contact my advisor Dr. Mark Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

Appendix M: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Consent Form

Leave box empty - For office use only

Co-constructed Audio Documentary Consent Form
University of Illinois at Chicago
Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Why am I being asked?

You are currently participating in a research study exploring the Teen Living Program (TLP) music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth. This study is being conducted by Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini from the Jane Adams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). When you enrolled in the study you gave consent for the researcher to observe you in the TLP music studio space when you were both present over the course of a 3 to 5 month period, 2 to 3 nights a week, for 2 to 4 hours a night. You also gave the researcher permission to interview you 1 to 2 times about your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences. The researcher would like to invite you to participate in the co-construction of an audio documentary that will sonically explore your experiences in the music studio space. You are being asked to participate in the co-constructed audio documentary due to being a TLP youth and the amount of time you spend in the music studio space working on music and supporting the music production process. Based on that, you may be eligible to participate in audio documentary project. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the audio documentary component of this research.

Your participation in the audio documentary component of this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with UIC or TLP. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

Appendix M: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Consent Form (continued)

Why is this research being done?

This research is being done in an effort to develop and support strengths-based research with homeless youth, strengths-based services for homeless youth, and recreational and art and music-based services in social work and related fields. The TLP music studio space is a unique site to learn about the use of art and music-based services in a transitional living program for homeless youth. It provides an opportunity to explore a music studio space as a potential site for strengths-based social work practice with homeless youth.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is threefold: (1) To explore the processes that are involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth. I want to know why is this happening and what factors are contributing to its existence. (2) To explore TLP youth and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio space. I want to know if there are benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio space. And, (3) to explore the meanings TLP youth and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio space.

What procedures are involved?

If you agree to be in this research, you will be asked to do the following things:

→ Agree to join a team of 2 to 4 TLP youth and the researcher that will work together to develop a co-constructed audio documentary that will explore TLP youth experiences in the music studio space and the meaning they attach to their experiences. This process will involve several components.

→ Attend an initial training and planning meeting where the researcher will provide team members with a digital audio recording device. He will train you on how to use this equipment and interface it Logic Studio. He will assist you in setting up a password protected online storage folder for future recordings. At this meeting you will also collaboratively develop a plan of action for co-constructing the audio documentary. The researcher anticipates the team meeting on a weekly basis over the course of 2 months.

→ Conduct recordings that capture your experiences in the music studio space. These recording scenarios may include music production sessions in the music studio space or any other environments or situations that you feel are relative to your experiences in the music studio space and the meaning you attach to your experiences.

→ Review recordings during weekly team meetings and begin to use them to develop an audio documentary with other team members. During this time you will be encouraged to incorporate your own original music recordings in the audio documentary. Any recordings that incorporate youth who do not consent to be part of the co-constructed

Appendix M: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Consent Form (continued)

audio documentary are unable to be part of the audio documentary due to issues of confidentiality.

→ Once the co-constructed audio documentary is developed, we explore options for how to release if to the public.

→ If you agree to participate, you must adhere to a "What is said here stays here" confidentiality norm that applies to our team meetings and others team members' recordings.

→ Finally, if required to do so by the University, the researcher will assist you in completing human subjects training.

Approximately 2 to 4 participants may be involved in the co-constructed audio documentary component of this research at TLP and UIC.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

The research involves minimal risks:

→ The researcher does not anticipate participation in the development of a co-constructed audio documentary to cause you distress. If this occurs, you may take a break from recording or meeting. You may also choose not to participate in developing a co-constructed audio documentary.

→ Loss of confidentiality may be a concern. Your recordings and our discussions will not be shared with TLP staff or anyone else while we are developing the audio documentary. The only time the researcher would share what you record or discuss with others is if you indicate that you are planning to harm yourself or others. Audio documentary team members will be required to adhere to a "What is said here stays here" norm in order to participate. The audio documentary team, consisting of you, other TLP youth on the team, and the researcher will be the only people who have access to the audio files during the developmental process. During this process, you are free to share your own recordings with whomever you please. But in order to protect the confidentiality of other team members, you are not to share others' recordings with anyone outside of the team. We will work together to determine the level of confidentiality we wish to maintain within the final audio documentary. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will only have access to de-identified data.

Appendix M: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Consent Form (continued)

Are there benefits to taking part in the research?

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study. However, you will receive valuable training in conducting audio-based fieldwork and you will be developing an audio documentary of professional quality. In addition you will be participating in research that supports and promotes strengths-based and music-based services in social work practice with youth. This may help promote additional spaces like the TLP music studio space.

What other options are there?

You may choose not to participate in this study. Your decision to participate or not to participate will in no way affect your services at TLP or your relationship with the University of Illinois at Chicago.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

The only people who will know that you are a participant in the co-constructed audio documentary component of the research are the researcher and the audio documentary team. Information you provide will not be shared with TLP staff unless you indicate plans to harm yourself or others and other team members are asked to adhere to a "What is said here stays here" norm.

No information about you or provided by you during the research will be disclosed to others without your written permission, except:

→ If necessary to protect your rights or welfare (for example, if you are injured and need emergency care or when the UIC Institutional Review Board monitors the research or consent process); or

→ If required by law.

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Only the audio documentary team will have access to the audio files and computer data files related to the audio documentary component of the study. All data will be stored in locked file cabinets separate from any papers that have your name on them. Computer data files will be stored on password protected computers. The researcher's dissertation committee, comprised of faculty supervising the study, will only have access to de-identified data.

Appendix M: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Consent Form (continued)

What are the costs for participating in this research?

There are no costs to you for participation in this research.

Will I be reimbursed for any of my expenses or paid for my participation in this research?

There is no payment for participating in the co-constructed audio documentary component of the research.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

You can choose whether or not to participate in the co-constructed audio documentary component of this study. If you volunteer to participate, you may take a break from recording or meeting at any time. You may also choose not to participate in developing a co-constructed audio documentary. The researcher may end the audio documentary if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The researcher conducting this study is Brian L. Kelly, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Mark Mattaini at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Brian by phone at (773) 474-0567 or by email at bkelly7@uic.edu or you may contact Dr. Mattaini by phone at (312) 996-0040 or by email at mattaini@uic.edu.

What are my rights as a research subject?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office for Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at (312) 996-1711 (local) or 1-866-789-6215 or by email at uicirb@uic.edu.

Remember: Your participation in the co-constructed audio documentary component of this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Teen Living Programs or UIC. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

You will be given a copy of this form for your information and to keep for your records.

Appendix M: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Consent Form (continued)

Signature of Subject

I have read (or someone has read to me) the above information. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date (must be same as subject's)

Appendix N: TLP Youth and Staff Study Eligibility Form

Leave box empty - For office use only

Participant (Pseudonym):

Eligibility Criteria:

- ☐ Participant speaks English
- ☐ Participant is engaged in the music studio space

Exclusion criteria:

- ☐ Participant does not speak English
- ☐ Participant is a minor residing in TLP's minors program
- ☐ Participant is not a resident or staff member of TLP

Appendix O: Second Coder Guide

Review:

Conceptual framework, specifically:
- Strengths perspective
- Ecological resiliency
- Positive youth development

Theoretical sensitivity, including:
- My previous professional experience with TLP
- My personal experiences with music
- A firm belief in strengths-based work with homeless youth and support for programs that offer homeless youth opportunities to explore music composition and production
- A desire to develop a study with TLP youth and staff that incorporates full transparency of the benefits of the project to me (e. g., a dissertation, potential publications, potential employment) and a thorough assessment of how TLP youth and staff might benefit from the project.

Research questions:
(1) What processes are involved in promoting and developing a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth – why is this happening and what are the factors contributing to its existence?
(2) What are youth and staff experiences while engaging in the music studio space – are there benefits and or consequences to working in the music studio space?
(3) What are the meanings youth and staff attach to their experiences in the music studio space?
(4) Does the studio promote personal strengths, and if so, how?

For initial open coding, we will use the above sensitizing elements to guide the analysis. Code 2-3 fieldnotes and 2-3 interviews using Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw's (1995) analytic approach, focusing on Phase I, which entails:
- Closely reading fieldnotes and interview transcripts
- Asking questions of the data
- Openly coding the data
- Writing any initial memos

Then, we'll meet, compare, and discuss our initial codes. As I note in the proposal, I'm looking for "corroboration or confirmation" (Padgett, 2008). If discrepancies arise, we'll enter a dialogical process in an effort to reach a consensual understanding. If consensus cannot be reached, discrepancies will be noted in the results chapters and detailed in the discussion chapter.

Appendix P: Approval From Institutional Review Board

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT CHICAGO

Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS)
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (MC 672)
203 Administrative Office Building
1737 West Polk Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612-7227

Approval Notice
Initial Review (Response to Modifications)

May 20, 2011

Brian Kelly, MSW
Jane Addams School of Social Work
1040 W Harrison Street
M/C 309
Chicago, IL 60612
Phone: (773) 474-0567 / Fax: (312) 996-2770

RE: Protocol # 2011-0305
"Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth"

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Your Initial Review (Response to Modifications) was reviewed and approved by the Expedited review process on May 19, 2011. You may now begin your research

Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

Protocol Approval Period: May 19, 2011 - May 17, 2012
Approved Subject Enrollment #: 24
Additional Determinations for Research Involving Minors: These determinations have not been made for this study since it has not been approved for enrollment of minors.
Performance Sites: UIC, Teen Living Programs
Sponsor: None
PAF#: Not Applicable
Research Protocol(s):

a) Exploring a Music Studio Space in a Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

Recruitment Material(s):

a) TLP Music Studio Eligibility Form; Version 1; 04/08/2011
b) TLP Music Studio Permission to Observe Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
c) TLP Music Studio Study Introduction Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
d) TLP Music Studio Audio Documentary Recruitment Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
e) TLP Music Studio Key Informant Interview Recruitment Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
f) TLP Music Studio Interview Recruitment Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011

Appendix P: Approval From Institutional Review Board (continued)

Informed Consent(s):

a) TLP Music Studio Participant Observation Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011
b) TLP Music Studio Interview Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011
c) TLP Music Studio Audio Documentary Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011
d) TLP Music Studio Key Informant Interview Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011

Your research meets the criteria for expedited review as defined in 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) under the following specific categories:
(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.
(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including but not limited to research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Please note the Review History of this submission:

Receipt Date	Submission Type	Review Process	Review Date	Review Action
04/11/2011	Initial Review	Expedited	04/13/2011	Modifications Required
05/02/2011	Response to Modifications	Expedited	05/05/2011	Modifications Required
05/18/2011	Response to Modifications	Expedited	05/19/2011	Approved

Please remember to:

→ Use your **research protocol number** (2011-0305) on any documents or correspondence with the IRB concerning your research protocol.

→ Review and comply with all requirements on the enclosure,
"UIC Investigator Responsibilities, Protection of Human Research Subjects"

Please note that the UIC IRB has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Please be aware that if the scope of work in the grant/project changes, the protocol must be amended and approved by the UIC IRB before the initiation of the change.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research. If you have any questions or need further help, please contact OPRS at (312) 996-1711 or me at (312) 996-9299. Please send any correspondence about this protocol to OPRS at 203 AOB, M/C 672.

Sincerely,
Marissa Benni-Weis
Marissa Benni-Weis, M.S.
IRB Coordinator, IRB # 2
Office for the Protection of Research Subjects

Appendix P: Approval From Institutional Review Board (continued)

Enclosure(s):

1. **UIC Investigator Responsibilities, Protection of Human Research Subjects**
2. **Informed Consent Document(s):**
   a) TLP Music Studio Participant Observation Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011
   b) TLP Music Studio Interview Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011
   c) TLP Music Studio Audio Documentary Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011
   d) TLP Music Studio Key Informant Interview Consent Form; Version 2; 04/28/2011
3. **Recruiting Material(s):**
   a) TLP Music Studio Eligibility Form; Version 1; 04/08/2011
   b) TLP Music Studio Permission to Observe Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
   c) TLP Music Studio Study Introduction Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
   d) TLP Music Studio Audio Documentary Recruitment Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
   e) TLP Music Studio Key Informant Interview Recruitment Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011
   f) TLP Music Studio Interview Recruitment Script; Version 1; 04/08/2011

cc: Creasie Finney Hairston, Jane Addams School of Social Work, M/C 309
Mark A. Mattaini, Jane Addams School of Social Work, M/C 309

Appendix Q: Music Studio Test

1. What is a “DAW” in music production?

2. Who makes Pro Logic 9?

3. What is the major difference between Pro Tools and Pro Logic 9?

4. What does “Decibel” mean? Why is it important?

5. What is an “Input”? How many does the studio have?

6. What is the purpose of the M-Audio box?

7. What does “MIDI” mean and what does it do?

8. What two components in the studio utilize “MIDI” technology?

9. What does “Mastering” mean?

10. What does “Mixing” mean?

11. What is a “Plug-in” and what does it do?

12. What does an “Equalizer” do?

13. Why is “Compression” important?

14. What is the difference between .MP3, .AIFF and .WAV files?

Appendix Q: Music Studio Test (continued)

15. What kind of microphone is in the studio?

16. How many people can be in the studio at the same time?

17. What is “Speaker Modeling”?

18. What is the difference between “Software” and “Hardware”?

19. What does “Quantize” mean to studio engineers?

20. What is the difference between “Stereo” and “Mono”?

21. What is “Panning”?

22. What does “Cross-Fade” mean? What does it do?

23. What does “Bouncing” mean to studio engineers?

24. What does “Dithering” mean to studio engineers?

25. What does “XLR” mean?

26. What is “Feedback”? Why does it happen? How do you prevent it?

27. What does “Peaking” mean? Why is this dangerous to your recording?

28. How do you import an existing music file from I-Tunes into Pro Logic 9?

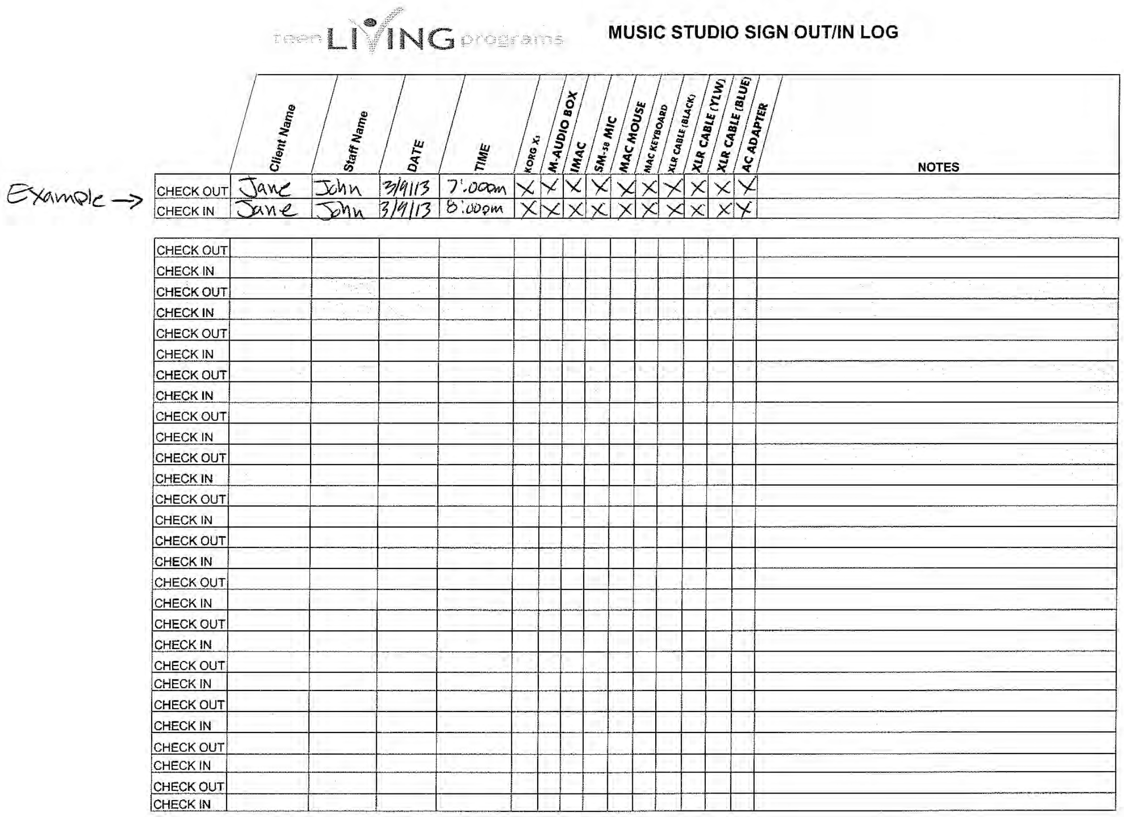
Appendix Q: Music Studio Test (continued)

29. What time is the studio currently open?

30. How do you sign up for the studio?

31. What would you do if a meeting was taking place in the conference room during your designated sign up time?

Appendix R: Music Studio Sign Out/In Log



teen LIVING programs

MUSIC STUDIO SIGN OUT/IN LOG

Example →

	Client Name	Staff Name	DATE	TIME	KORG X3	M-AUDIO BOX	IMAC	SM-58 MIC	MAC MOUSE	MAC KEYBOARD	XLR CABLE (BLACK)	XLR CABLE (YLW)	XLR CABLE (BLUE)	AC ADAPTER	NOTES
CHECK OUT	Jane	John	3/9/13	7:00pm	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
CHECK IN	Jane	John	3/9/13	8:00pm	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

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Appendix S: Music Studio Equipment List

Studio Equipment List

KORG X5 SYNTHESIZER

M-AUDIO FAST TRACK PRO

iMAC COMPUTER

SM—58 STUDIO MICROPHONE

MAC MAGIC MOUSE

APPLE WIRELESS KEYBOARD

XLR CABLE YELLOW

XLR CABLE BLUE

XLR CABLE BLACK

ENERCEL AC ADAPTER

Appendix T: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Transcript

(00:00:00 - 00:00:42)
Music: *Track 1,* by Theo

(00:00:43 - 00:01:05)
Smurf: This audio documentary explores a music studio space in a transitional living program for young people experiencing homelessness and other forms of unstable housing. Located in the Bronzeville neighborhood on Chicago's south side, Teen Living Program Belfort House has provided a music studio space for its youth residents since 2006. The studio has been a hub of activity and creativity since that time.

(00:01:06 - 00:0 1:32)
Brian: In the spring of 2012, a researcher from a local university and four youth residents engaged in collaborative, audio-based fieldwork exploring young peoples' experiences while working in the music studio and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Following fieldwork we met as a team to co-construct an audio documentary that aurally explores these questions and incorporates young peoples' music compositions and spoken word work. Check it out.

(00:01:33 - 00:01:44)
Smurf: I mean, music is the majority part of my day, like seriously you will not catch me without headphones on, unless I don't have them. It's just like – it's a part of my daily living.

(00:01:45 - 00:0 3:02)
Music: *Never Give Up*, music by Theo, Vocals by Smiley
You better never ever, ever give up, never
Never give up, no
You better never ever, ever give up, never
Never give up, no
You better never ever, ever give up, ever
Never give up, no
You better never ever, ever give up, never
Never give up, no
I turned them papers in
They say they ain't hiring
I need some airs
And pop's retiring
My block is poor
But we should stop the violence
All I hear is sirens
(Music fades out)

Appendix T: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Transcript (continued)

(00:03:03 - 00:03:32)
Outlaw: What the studio means to me is… freedom. It's like I can go many places in the world and have to worry about rules and regulations and I have to worry about how my actions affects the next man. It's like when I'm in the studio it's just like I can, I can be me, I can be free and I can really let loose and you know and say the things and be the things and create the things I like to create, create. So the studio for me is a place of creativity and freedom.

(00:03:33 - 00:03:53)
Outlaw: Initiation to Juliet is basically about Juliet's initiation into a higher learning. So the poem is just about her comin' into that higher consciousness. When I'm in the studio it's like a higher learning for me because it's learnin' how my words affect others. You know it's basically I know that my actions has a a immediately effect on my surroundings.

Music: *Bring Me to Life,* by Marcus

(00:04:07 - 00:04:27)
Outlaw: *Initiation of Juliet,* by Outlaw
Come here Juliet
I have the secret to tell you.
Deeper than the abyss itself.
Wise is the soul that remembers thy self.
Lies are the lies of those drunk on the material wealth.
From the assemblies above to the utterance below.
What is the love so deep that it should be feared?
And what is the fear so essential that it should be loved?

(Music fades out)

(00:04:28 - 00:05:41)
Smurf: When I am in the studio, to me it's like being in a parallel world or a different world. And I say this because (sighs) when you are in the studio you can be as free as you want to be. There's nobody else around you unless you're recording with a friend or something like that, but most of the time you are in there by yourself making beats or laying down a track, spittn' spoken word. It's just a whole different place to be. You don't gotta put on for nobody. You just in there doing you, being creative. You don't have nobody telling you, "Don't put that there" or "this don't sound right." You get to figure it out on your own. You not being stifled by anybody else, you're just going with the flow, you know. And just in the studio

Appendix T: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Transcript (continued)

it's – it's like being at peace with yourself. Your mind is totally at ease. It's a whole nother place.

Music: *Raw Beat,* by Marcus

(00:06:10 - 00:06:17)
Brian: That's good. I like that a lot. I would definitely like to that have be in the audio documentary.

(00:06:18 - 00:07:17)
Smurf: *Untitled,* by Smurf
She loves me
She love me not
Perp got me seein' flashing lights and polka dots
I'm hot like an oven pre-heated to 350
I think I'm kind of cool
I think I'm kind of nifty
But tricky
It's gets a little sticky walking around in my mind
So many lights you will come out blinded
By knowledge
This journey is epic
A onetime adventure
I'm polygripped to the roof of your thoughts just call me dentures
Chewing you all up in this game
Won three awards now I'm ready for my name to be in the hall of fame
Big dreamin'
My mind is like a locomotive
Cause this thing is always steamin'
I'm beamin'
Up toward the sky sittin' high on my paper plane
Kite surfin' with clouds as my waves
I'm hangin' ten
I'm a half-pint so I'm not trying to go off the deep end
Again
What a spin that was
I had a little magic
Now I'm feeling kind of buzzed
She loves me
She loves me not
Let's just hope my heart didn't just get got
Again

Appendix T: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Transcript (continued)

(00:07:18 - 00:07:20)
Brian: So, what is this piece about?

(00:07:21 - 00:08:24)
Smurf: Well this piece was, I was sittin' outside one day and I was playing with the flower. And then I was doing the, "She loves me, she loves me not," playin' with the flower. And like, I've been going through some stuff with my girlfriend lately. And it's like, I just been thinkin' about a lot of stuff, so my head just been really clouded, but through the cloud it's like I see a lot of good stuff. I'm like, "I'm hot like an oven preheated to 350," 'cause right not my name is kind of everywhere. So, it's like, I'm really on and it's like I won three awards so I'm ready for some 'mo. I wanna be big time. See, and it's like, and at the end when I say, "I hope my heart didn't just get got again," it's like with relationships and they're not my thing. And it's always the other person who be the problem (laughs). So it's like, ok, let's just hope I'm not going through a repeat of what I've been through already.

(00:008:25 - 00:08:31)
Brian: Can I ask you one more question?

Smurf: Yeah.

Brian: Does the studio, play any role in any of that? The TLP music studio.

(00:08:32 - 00:08:45)
Smurf: Actually the studio is where I filmed the documentary (laughs). The studio space is where I filmed the documentary that won me these awards. Cause it was based around TLP. And we recorded here in this studio.

(00:08:46 - 00:09:34)
Outlaw: If I could place, any feelings of how I feel of when I am in the studio it'd probably be excitement because before I walk in and when I leave out, I'm just like, "Whoooo baby! Oh my god, thank the lord for this opportunity for putting me in this situation." Because it's kind a like I can do everything I wanna do. I mean I can make music. I can make you move. I can make you sad. I mean, man, I can make you wanna move on in life you know I can get you through those struggles. You know and relate my everyday struggles to you. And that's that's exciting because it's

Appendix T: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Transcript (continued)

multiple ways that it can end up, you know. So hey I place excitement with it.

(00:09:35 - 00:10:34)
Outlaw: *Freestyle*, by Outlaw

He gonna let it run and I'm gonna make your lighters burn
I'm gonna face the east cuz –

Nah. Nah I just. Alright, alright just let it run, just let it run. Let me just get a good topic on my head and try to go off of it…Ok, Law gonna do this free style. First time. It feel like I'm in a real studio. We got the good mic, you know. Feel good. It's a beautiful day out. I'm gonna go like this:

Today I got a lot going on
I'm something like the prince just lookin' for the thorn
Yeah I got a lot of knowledge to see through the storm
An' I'm like unique, way outta your norm
Way I perform
It's somethin' like a boss
Somthin' how you walk away from chances is just your loss
Yeah I'm something like Jesus sacrificin' but no nail to the cross
Yeah
And when I'm in the studio spittin' these bars
That's just the way that I release my energy
Dodgin' my enemies
These niggers is frenemies
How black everything?
(laughs)

Like nah…

(00:10:35 - 00:11:05)
Outlaw: The most challenges I have with the studio is learning how to deal with the equipment I have no knowledge of. I mean I'm more of a lyricist. I'm, I'm more, I mostly deal with words you know and poetry, rappin' you know, laying 16ths, you know 32s, whole songs, things of that nature. So when it comes to certain equipment like mastering, and mixing and cutting and fading you know all that type of stuff…

(Outlaw fades out, Music fades in)

Appendix T: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Transcript (continued)

Music: *Untitled piano improvisation,* by Theo

(00:11:53 - 00:11:57)
Brian: And so what lessons if any have you learned in the studio?

(00:11:58 - 00:12:37)
Theo: One of the most valuable things that I have learned working in the studio space that teamwork is key. When you're doing a, a collaboration project you can't always be the, the frontrunner you have to you have to work together to get it accomplished or else it won't be the best product that it can be.

(Music fades in)

Music: *R.I.P. Granddad,* by Marcus

Theo: Um for me the greatest thing is, is being able to form so many positive relationships. It's not always a power struggle. It's, you know, when I can come and collaborate with others to produce a high quality product that many people will enjoy, that's the greatest thing for me 'cause I'm about pleasing my audience.

(00:12:38 - 00:13:21)
Smurf: It, it really gives me a place to go and be at peace with myself, you know. It's pretty much like my oasis. It's a place just for me. Even when I am working with somebody else I still feel like I have control over everything that goes on. Really, it's like the studio gives me power. It's like I'm superman in the smallest space. It's a small space, but it feels big. So, and by me being a small person and I have control over a big place in my mind, it pretty much makes me feel good. The studio makes me happy.

(00:13:22 - 00:13:49)
Outlaw: The greatest thing about the studio is the finished product. After spending all that time workin' on, brainstormin', critical thinkin' about what to lay down next, what to add, what type of synthesis, what type of audios, you gonna use mono… I just feel like when you when you get done with all that and you've got the final product and you look at what you've been workin' on and it's done that's the greatest thing about the studio.

(00:13:50 - 00:13:53)
Brian: How do you feel about this finished product? We're getting pretty close, what do you think?

Appendix T: Co-constructed Audio Documentary Transcript (continued)

(00:13:54 - 00:14:06)
Outlaw: Um, I think it's um, I feel pretty good about it, you know um, we've been workin', you know, it's been intense, you know. Um, just to see it finally done, now it's kind of like, yeah actually like we made this.

(Music fades out)

(00:14:20)
Outlaw: Livin' in a premature place. (laughs) Nah.

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FACT: Re-entry Evaluation, Amy C. Watson, Principal Investigator, 2008-2010.

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Chancellor's Supplemental Research Fellowship, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2011-2012.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS:

Gates, T. G., & **Kelly, B. L.** (2013). LGB cultural phenomena and the social work research enterprise: Towards a strengths-based, culturally anchored methodology. *Journal of Homosexuality, 60*(1), 1-14. doi: 10.1080/00918369.2013.735939

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PRESENTATIONS:

Kelly, B. L. (2013, January). *Exploring homeless youths' strengths: The potential for music-based services.* Paper presented at the Society for Social Work Research Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA.

Kelly, B. L. (2012, November). *Interdisciplinary research: Exploring a music studio for young people experiencing homelessness.* Paper presented at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Kelly, B. L. (2012, June). *Locating historical relationships, identifying current practices, and prioritizing recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields.* Paper presented at the 34th International Symposium on Social Work with Groups, Long Island, NY.

Kelly, B. L. (2012, June). *Listening in/emitting out: Audio documentaries exploring a music studio space in a transitional living program for homeless youth.* Paper and audio documentary presented at Public Ethnography: Connecting New Genres, New Media, New Audiences, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Kelly, B. L., & Wodda, A. (2012, May). *Respite: An encounter with meditative space in an academic conference.* Audio and video-based performance ethnography presented at the 8th International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, IL.

Kelly, B. L. (2012, April). Engaging the strengths perspective to promote socially just research with young people experiencing homelessness. Paper presented at the Human Rights, Social Justice and Qualitative Methods Conference, New York City, NY.

Wodda, A., & **Kelly, B. L.** (April, 2012). *Revision: Music and video-based performance texts in reshaping academic spaces.* Audio and video-based performance ethnography presented at the 14th Annual Chicago Ethnography Conference, Chicago, IL.

Kelly, B. L. (2011, October). *Recreational, art, and music-based activities in social work and related fields.* Paper presented at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Atlanta, GA.

Watson, A. C., & **Kelly, B. L.** (2011, October). *Forensic assertive community treatment: Preliminary outcomes and the role of housing.* Paper presented at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Atlanta, GA.

Kelly, B. L. (2011, May). *60 days: Considering the potential for music-based texts in reshaping the college classroom.* Audio-based performance ethnography presented at the 7th International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, IL.

Kelly, B. L. (March, 2010). *Music makes you: Reflections on a music studio space for homeless youth.* Paper presented at the 12th Annual Chicago Ethnography Conference, Chicago, IL.

Kelly, B. L. (2009, November). *Prioritizing homelessness education in the social work classroom.* Paper presented at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, San Antonio, TX.

Bendixen, A.V., & **Kelly, B. L.** (2008, June). *Cost benefits to permanent supportive housing for homeless persons living HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses.* Paper presented at the National Health Care for the Homeless Conference and Policy Symposium, Phoenix, AZ.

Bendixen, A.V., & **Kelly, B. L.** (2008, May). *How the homeless living with a chronic medical illness access housing and health care.* Paper presented at the Health Disparities and Social Justice Conference, Chicago, IL.

Bendixen, A. V., Soto, T., Miller, A., & **Kelly, B. L.** (2008, March). *The Chicago Housing for Health Partnership (CHHP): A housing first and harm reduction model for homeless adults with chronic medical conditions.* Paper presented at the Third Annual National Housing and HIV/AIDS Research Summit, Baltimore, MD.

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