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Final Technical Report

Cross-age Peer Mentoring to Enhance Resilience among Low-income Urban Youth

Living in High Violence Chicago Communities

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Abstract

The goal of this mixed-methods study was to evaluate the effectiveness of community based cross-age mentoring to reduce negative outcomes related to violence exposure/engagement and promote positive development among African-American and Latinx youth from multiple sites serving four low-income, high violence urban neighborhoods, using youth mentors from the same high-risk environment. The program was named by youth mentors, “Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth” (or SLIY henceforth, see savinglivesinspiringyouth.weebly.com). Cross-age peer mentoring programs promise to solve problems and ineffectiveness of other types of mentoring programs, but few have been systematically studied in high-poverty, high-crime communities. In collaboration with several community organizations, a prospective approach was implemented to follow cross-age mentors and mentees for up to one year of mentoring. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to examine possible changes in a number of relevant constructs, and to understand program impact in greater depth.

Mentoring sessions lasting one hour took place each week, with an hour debriefing session for mentors following each mentoring session. We recruited and trained 228 mentors to participate in the mentoring program, who were selected and screened from local agencies and high schools located in the same high-risk environments as the mentees. In addition, we recruited and engaged 302 mentees to attend weekly mentoring sessions for up to one year. A subsample of these mentors and mentees were able to complete data collection.

Quantitative data were collected pre, post and at a 9-12 month follow-up. At baseline, 249 mentors completed data collection in total, including 148 treatment and 101 control mentors. Also at baseline, 219 mentees completed data collection in total, including 132 treatment and 87 control mentees. Throughout the mentoring intervention, several forms of qualitative data were gathered to make it possible for youth voices to permeate understanding findings, to illuminate program processes that youth perceived as helpful and not helpful, and to provide multiple perspectives on youths’ resilience and their understanding of the risks they faced. Both mentors and community collaborators were trained and engaged as community researchers and contributed to many aspects of the project, including to the program website and co-leading community forums to discuss findings. School-based data were also collected.

Project results and recommendations have been communicated throughout the mentoring community through publications and presentations targeted at both academic as well as applied audiences. Youth co-presented project results at professional meetings and led discussions at two community forums. Achievement of project goals and objectives have been documented by carrying out the outlined research procedures, publishing results in peer-reviewed journals, and sharing findings with community-based groups and administrative/policy officials through lay-friendly summary reports, presentations, and suitable technological and media venues. Finally, throughout the project we emphasized our collaborative partnerships with the youth participants and community organizations, with the objectives of promoting positive development and reducing delinquency and negative outcomes in Chicago youth.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Cross-age peer mentoring programs (sustained relationships between an older peer and younger mentee) can be effective in promoting positive development and preventing problem behaviors among youth. Utilizing high school students to serve as mentors to middle school mentees from similar communities has been shown to improve school connectedness, academic achievement, and interpersonal skills. This is particularly relevant for youth exposed to chronic environmental stressors (e.g., poverty, community violence exposure, systemic oppression). For example, many high-poverty communities in the United States suffer from larger-system problems, such as racism, and community-level issues, including severely limited resources and investment. Understanding the impact of high-poverty and high-crime rates on youth in communities of color requires an ecological-systems perspective, namely, a dynamic framework that contextualizes how multiple elements at the individual, interpersonal, community, and societal levels interact with one another to predict violence exposure and engagement in services (Cicchetti & Lynch, 1993).

The Program: Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth

This project provided cross-age mentoring services (“Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth,” or SLIY) and studied the impact in comparison with control groups of mentees and mentors. SLIY implemented a participatory framework with youth residing in high-poverty, high-crime communities of color in Chicago. The youth mentors were high school age, and their mentees were older elementary and middle-school students, and at least two years younger than their mentors. The project occurred in four communities that suffered the direct impact of contemporaneous state and local cutbacks in school, social service, and mental health resources. The youth of color SLIY served - African American and Latinx youth – are disproportionately exposed to concentrated poverty (Murray, Byrne & Rieger, 2011), and exposed to multiple stressors, leading to enhanced negative outcomes and limits to the expression of prosocial behaviors within an individual’s life course trajectory. The communities’ poverty, associated deprivations, and community violence required profound and continual adjustments in

programming. Youth needed food, transportation, and sometimes clothing and hygiene supplies. Episodes of community violence disrupted scheduled programming and required that mentoring agendas be shifted to allow youth to express their reactive distress. Counseling had to be provided for those youth whose stress resulted in psychological symptoms and/or violence and suicidal ideation. Mentors and mentees who provided feedback wished that there had been “more” of SLIY: longer duration, and potentially a higher dosage per week.

Selection of sites, recruitment, and methods of data collection and analysis

This mixed-methods study utilized a quasi-experimental design. A convenience sample of mentors was recruited from community schools in four high-poverty, high-crime urban neighborhoods, three African-American and one Latinx. A total of nine mentoring sites were established, each with mentees. Control youth were recruited from community schools in the same neighborhoods as the treatment sites.

Data including standardized measures, demographics, and entry letters and eco-maps were collected at baseline. Qualitative data in the form of mentor debriefing forms were collected at most mentoring sessions, and field notes were completed by staff observing every mentoring session. Focus groups of mentees were held periodically to elicit their opinions about their experience of the mentoring program. Focus groups of mentors discussed both the program and evaluation procedures. Mentors and mentees were asked to complete a photo-documentary representing in pictures and a brief narrative “what mentoring means to me.” A subsample of youth completing the program at the end of the program completed exit letters, exit interviews with staff, and peer-to-peer interviews reporting their evaluation of the program and their community experiences. Additional quantitative measures were collected at Wave 3 (around 9-11 months after program inception) and finally at Wave 4 (9-12 months after program completion). The Chicago Public School system provided data about participants’ grades, attendance, and behavior.

For data analysis, a criterion power analysis was performed to determine the minimum acceptable type-1 error rate worth illuminating in linear multiple regression and moderation analyses. Given about 50% attrition rates in the mentor and mentee samples, there are smaller longitudinal sample sizes than expected, resulting in decreased power to detect significant

effects. Correlations were carried out between all variables and between treatment and control groups at Waves 1 and 3, as well as standard deviations. The variables of neighborhood and Child Protective Services Involvement (CPSI) were found to significantly relate to, and thus was included as a covariate for, our outcome variables for mentees, while neighborhood was a significant covariate for mentors

For analyzing mentee data, regression analyses were computed on the ten outcome variables with attendance as the independent variable and the baseline scores for each outcome along with neighborhood and protective services as covariates. The moderators of gender, social support, and stress were individually examined in regressions separately, with attendance and mentor strength of relationship predicting to each of the ten outcomes. The mentee sample was divided by a median split on the measure of stress, creating a high stress and low stress group of mentees. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was used so that the individual could be the cluster in which observations (Wave 1, 3 & 4) were grouped, and to increase the power by retaining more individuals in the analyses than traditional regression techniques. Three different moderators – gender, stress, and social support - were examined in HLM analyses of the ten different dependent variables.

With regard to analyzing mentor quantitative data, regression analyses were performed for the 19 outcome variables with attendance as the independent variable and the baseline scores for each outcome along with neighborhood as covariates. Moderators of gender, quality of perceived neighborhood, social support, and stress were individually examined in regressions separately with attendance and Mentor Strength of Relationship predicting to each of the 19 outcomes. Waves 1, 3 and 4 were examined in one model, with attendance and Mentor Strength of Relationship as predictors with HLM. Four separate moderators were examined in HLM: gender, stress level, social support, and neighborhood environment. An additional analysis was carried out based on a subsample of only the African American youth, to determine the impact of participants' attendance in SLIY on self-efficacy and grit.

For the qualitative analysis, three coding manuals were developed to code the field notes, using a grounded theory approach with construct validity provided by relevant theories. The manuals addressed **risk** (at micro, meso, and macro levels drawing from Bronfenbrenner's

systems theory and concepts from trauma-focused theories), **resilience** (using concepts from resilience theories such as grit, self-efficacy, social support in response to loss), and **program impact** (capturing specific program activities and youths' and staff's perceptions of program impact). Theoretical guidelines were used to develop a process evaluation of program implementation. Thematic and content analyses were used to analyze entry and exit letters, photo-documentary narratives, youths' community experience in peer-to-peer interviews, debriefing forms, and eco-maps.

Findings concerning best practices for program implementation

A number of elements were found to be important to program implementation:

- Community collaborators were essential to the success of the program, for examples as consultants, and liaisons with other staff at the sites.
- Mentor training and ongoing supervision were carefully planned and implemented;
- Debriefing sessions that addressed mentor needs took place every week following the mentoring sessions. They allowed both a time to process mentoring and to support mentors' goals for their own lives.
- The debilitating effects of chronic exposure to violence as well as community and family poverty created constant challenges that had to be addressed with additional resources.
- Internalized racial oppression, resource deprivation and secondary trauma of community-based staff required deeply supportive approaches to collaboration with site host staff.
- Multiple forms of trauma youth experienced had to be addressed as an ongoing clinical concern with individual counseling and alterations to session agendas to address trauma reactions and assist with stress management.
- Flexibility of program agendas and staff were essential for the youth to experience the program as responsive to their urgent needs.
- Family style mentoring (rather than a rigid mentor-mentee framework) made it possible to respond flexibly to variable attendance of mentors and mentees and to build a more impactful group identity.
- Sustainability required training staff to undertake mentoring at new sites

- Ensuring mentors were paid and would have leadership roles in programming and knowledge of development was vital to youth engagement.
- Finally, the youth guided much of the mentoring program, as mentors co-determined the mentoring activities and acted as co-researchers and co-leaders in several ways.

Findings from our Mentee and Mentor Data

Mentees:

- ∄ While no statistically significant results emerged from the statistical analysis of the whole group of mentees as a result of attendance, mentor strength of relationship predicted changes in the following Wave 3 mentee outcomes: higher self-esteem, future expectations, better beliefs about aggression, and less interest in gangs.
- ∄ Analyses of moderators showed program impact varied by gender, stress and social support.
- ∄ Among boys, more program attendance predicted better self-esteem, and better future expectations, and mentor strength of relationship predicted fewer disciplinary infractions.
- ∄ Among girls, stronger mentor relationships predicted improved attitudes towards gangs.
- ∄ Among the high stress group, program attendance predicted stronger positive ethnic identity, and better self-esteem (HLM)
- ∄ The high stress group showed the highest number of results for mentor strength of relationship; a stronger relationship with the mentor predicted better future expectations, more ethnic identity, less interest in gangs, and better school attendance by the end of the program as well as less interest in gangs and school attendance 9-12 months later (HLM).
- ∄ With more social support, both attendance and MSR predicted higher self-esteem (HLM).
- ∄ Mentees conveyed in focus groups and anecdotally that SLIY boosted their self-esteem; older mentees who became co-researchers emphasized that it importantly improved their connectedness, communication skills, and self-confidence.
- ∄ Mentees reported that the qualities of a good mentor included empathy, good listening, and being fun and having a good sense of humor.

Mentors:

- Mentors elaborated multiple, interacting patterns of risk including: deprivations of basic needs associated with poverty; exposure to violence that included witnessing murders, drive-by shootings on school grounds, and violence caused by non-familial adults such as police; lack of adequate educational resources and maltreatment by school staff; and lack of social services and mental health care.
- Attendance, as measured by number of sessions, did not contribute to mentor outcomes across different analyses, without moderators, except for internalizing. Attendance predicted more internalizing symptoms for all. With moderators, for males, it predicted poorer academic outcomes, while for low stress and support youth attendance predicted beliefs about non-violence. These may be explained by the possibility that mentors with high needs attended more sessions.
- Because multiple factors were involved in understanding the meaning of participation for older youth (such as obstacles to attendance posed by increased responsibilities for family support), the Mentor Strength of Relationship scale appeared to offer a better operationalization of engagement; MSR predicted improved empathy, self-efficacy, character, grit and GPA. It was not related to attendance.
- When Wave 4 was included (9-12 months after program completion), MSR predicted many improved outcomes including improved mentors' future expectations, and reduced mentors' beliefs about aggression, improved mentors' attitudes towards violence, self-efficacy, grit, character, contribution, empathy, leadership, ethnic identity, attitudes towards youth, and GPA.
- Within worse neighborhoods, males, and high stress youth, effects of the program were more negative. It seems likely that the spikes in violence and deprivation may have overwhelmed some program effects, especially since mentors were older and older youth seemed to be, overall, more sensitive to neighborhood stressors.
- Qualitative data indicated mentors believed the program to be deeply impactful. They believed it improved their communication abilities, their ability to form positive connections with others, their ability to manage anger and conflict without violence, their leadership skills, and developed more positive ethnic identity.
- Mentors described their inner experience of reducing their violence engagement, based on four key ingredients: 1) a sense of safety and pleasure in the mentoring program that enhanced their general well-being; 2) learning specific skills for managing anger and conflict, such as turning to others for support; 3) building their hope that they could bring about a positive future for themselves and; 4) improved communication skills.

Conclusions: Implications for practice and policy and Future directions

Implications for Program Practices:

1. Providing multiple ways for youth to feel leadership and “say-so” in their program is essential to ensure youth participation.
2. Encouraging youths’ contributions to knowledge in co-researcher roles makes it possible to accurately understand youths’ experiences for all components of the intervention.
3. Program elements that focus on relationship variables such as communication skills, healthy self-expression, empathy, and healthy conflict resolution are the most vital curriculum elements for ensuring positive impact on mentors and mentees.
4. Poverty will interfere in many ways in programming and needs to be addressed, with fundamental resources such as food, hygiene supplies, and transportation. When working with low income high school youth mentors, pay for time is essential to the success of engagement, with minimum wage as the floor. Job skills are another mandatory component of any programs for high school youth.
5. Tri-level mentoring was an essential part of the model of accumulation of care. Staff mentored the mentors, providing a positive role model and care that was essential to the program effectiveness.
6. Staff consistency and continuity beyond end of the program - In this prevention model, the relationship of staff with youth needs to be open-ended, and flexible about meeting and supports so youth can engage support when they need it and sustain support past program termination
7. Sustainability programming included the participation and leadership of the community partner organizations where the programs take place.
8. Leadership of the host site needs to have full buy-in so that stability is enhanced.
9. Program staff need to be highly flexible, able to rebound despite multiple obstacles.
10. The problem of vicarious trauma needs to be thought through and addressed with intensive support at all levels of programming, for community liaisons and program staff as well as participants.
11. Staff should have consistent, ongoing training in trauma-focused services, assessment of suicide and homicide risk, and effective group work processes, with case consultation around challenging individual situations.
12. A higher dosage was persistently requested by mentoring youth. They emphasized that more meetings per week and longer program commitment was strongly desired.

13. Gender identity and sexual orientation were not examined in a systematic way either in the research or in programming and should be, given that LGBTQIA youth can be at higher risk.
14. The location of mentors and mentees needs to be addressed from the beginning as moving mentors across gang boundaries is untenable without considerable staff assistance.
15. Community collaborators who are experienced with the local gang/cliqye situations and able to help defuse potentially violent conflicts are essential for programming and ongoing intervention.
16. Education and support around teenage participants' romantic and sexual choices is an essential component of programming as youth in high-poverty, high-crime communities of color face high levels of discrimination.
17. Our data suggest effects are more powerful for subgroups of youth and these need to be kept in mind for future planning.
18. Compared to quantity, quality of mentoring was more powerful for many positive effects.

Future Research:

1. Researchers should seriously consider participatory action methods throughout the research process processes in order to benefit host communities, and promote citizens' self-determination, and yield more culturally-relevant and accurate knowledge.
2. In high-poverty, high-crime communities, quasi-experimental designs need to be thoughtful about decisions such as where control groups are located and the viability of randomization.
3. High mobility of residents and lack of contact because of lack of consistent telephones in high-poverty communities make data collection very difficult.
4. Standardized measures are not always normed with youth of color in deep poverty communities and may not be sufficiently culturally relevant.
5. Effects may grow over time; we could not examine this beyond a year after programming ended
6. Involving youth as co-researchers in many activities seems to enhance program impact and ecological validity and was greatly valued by youth.
7. Measures capturing social relations, social skills, and social intentions are needed for future work to examine shifts in these areas as a result of mentoring.

8. To capture the quality of the mentoring program in a more nuanced way, better measures of program quality, closer to the qualities described by coding qualitative data from youth, need to be employed.

Policy Implications:

1. Providing positive networks: Social policies should focus on preventive programming that fosters such positive social networks in community schools and service contexts.
2. To reduce deep poverty, employment skills programming should begin early in high school, when many youth, whose families suffer from deep poverty, experience it as imperative to get work.
3. Prevention programs that provide interpersonal and employment skills are good foundations for culturally-relevant trauma-focused mental health care for at-risk youth.
4. To provide trauma-focused counseling services for youth in high-poverty, high-crime communities of color, traditional clinic settings need to be supplemented by in-school and after-school counselor availability, as many youth lack transportation and other resources [such as time] for attending clinic appointments.
5. Youths' engagement in criminal activities that are transitory and relatively low risk (e.g. theft, fighting in self-defense) should not exclude them from participating in programming as many of these youth can become committed, active and transformed community members
6. The pro-social qualities of youth need to be acknowledged, engaged and supported, even when they are veiled by behavioral difficulties.
7. The youth voice must be a consistent and strong presence in all components of programming policies for youth.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Background and Review of the Literature

This project provided cross-age mentoring services in a participatory framework with a sample of youth residing in high-poverty, high-crime communities of color in Chicago. The

youth mentors were high school age, and their mentees were older elementary and middle-school students. The project occurred in four communities that suffered the direct impact of the cutbacks in resources that precipitated their communities' crime waves. Since poverty and associated deprivations in educational, after-school, and social services was an overriding feature of the context for programming, we begin with a discussion of poverty and its impacts.

Poverty. Poverty is a major public health concern that has a critical impact on brain development, behavior and emotions, which in turn influences physical and mental health, quality of life, academic performance, and social adjustment, especially among vulnerable populations. Children and adolescents, for instance, are keenly aware of and able to report on the poverty-related distress experienced in their families (Raver, Roy, & Pressler, 2015). In addition to the normative stress of being an adolescent (e.g., family/ home intergenerational conflict, school and peer-related difficulties, autonomy, and identity development), the vulnerability created during that period is accentuated by poverty (Dashiff, DiMicco, Myers & Sheppard, 2009). Exposure to community violence, family conflict, economic challenges, peer and school stress, discrimination, and other stressors associated with growing up in chronic poverty have been shown to have disabling effects on the mental health, behavior, and academic achievement of many youth in America (Cooley-Quille, Boyd, Frantz & Walsh, 2001). African American and Latinx youth living in low-income, urban families and communities are most affected by these daily social and economic disadvantages (Fowler, Tompsett, Braciszewski, Jaques-Tiura & Baltes, 2009; Grant et al., 2000). Developing protective factors that foster resilience in disadvantaged youth is critical for blunting or buffering these negative effects.

Resource-scarce neighborhoods not only increase antisocial behaviors but also affect the positive aspects of youth development (Machell, Disabato, & Kashdan, 2016). Youth in poverty often feel hopeless about their future, and in turn, engage in deviant behaviors including violence, substance use, and early sexual activity. Research supports the idea that poverty is complexly intertwined and has associated factors that put youth at greater risks, especially for poor life outcomes (Chaudry & Wimer, 2016; Yoshikawa, Aber, & Beardslee, 2012). These factors include generational poverty, low school attainment, teen parenting, and distressed neighborhoods.

African American and Latinx youth are disproportionately exposed to concentrated poverty (Murray et al., 2011). In addition, adolescent poverty is associated with multiple stressors and an increase in negative outcomes and a decrease in prosocial behaviors within an individual's life course trajectory. These individual, relational, and institutional factors impact growth, development and adjustment in adolescence and in adulthood including academic performance and high school dropout, behavioral and emotional problems, gun violence, conflicts with the law, and a greater likelihood of living in poverty as adults (Beardslee, Docherty, Mulvey & Pardini, 2019; Machell, Disabato, Kashdan, 2016; Murray et al., 2011). Data indicate that early experiences of poverty, longer durations of poverty, and higher concentrations of poverty in the community worsen child outcomes (Chaudry & Wimer, 2016), as this challenging environment makes it more difficult to develop positive social relations and avoid engagement in risk-taking and antisocial behaviors (Machell et al., 2016).

Neighborhood and community-level risk factors for violence include chronic poverty and exposure to violence (ETV) (Robinson, Paxton, & Jonen, 2011). The increased exposure to community violence is often a function of socioeconomic status (Cooley-Quille et al., 2001). Understanding this context is essential to identifying risk and protective factors as well as informing prevention and intervention efforts.

Poverty and crime in Chicago. The city of Chicago has repeatedly made national and international news for its chronically high levels of violence (Swaine, 2014). Viewed as one of the most dangerous cities in the US and considered the murder capital of the nation (Wilson, 2013), its profound violence has earned it the nickname "Chiraq" which captures the war zone-like atmosphere that characterizes certain neighborhoods. Chicago has recently witnessed an outbreak of violent crime (Gorner, 2016). In fact, urban neighborhoods of Chicago experience some of the highest violent crime rates in the world ("Crime in Chicagoland," 2017), and human rights violations committed by police and courts recently provoked an investigation and consent degree citation by the U.S. Department of Justice (Fardon, 2017).

The community violence was partly related to fairly disorganized "cliques" fighting over respect and drug sales territory, rather than large gang drug wars (Papachristos & Kirk, 2015, p. 8). Youth growing up in such a context can be socialized into the negative groups from a

relatively early age. Social network findings show the power of negative peer groups in increasing the risk of violence engagement, as for Chicago citizens, having a shooting victim in one's network made it 900 percent more likely one would also be shot (Papachristos, Wildman, & Roberto, 2015).

In addition, cutbacks in several of Chicago's educational community services known to be essential to distal and proximal violence prevention occurred just prior to and during the surge in violent crime in specific communities. For the past several years, social services, vocational training, after-school and summer programs (Associated Press, 2015), and mental health care (Sun Times Staff, 2016; O'Shea, 2012) were reduced all over Chicago. Cuts in social services, including child protective services, hit a nadir as the Illinois budget crisis went unresolved for two years (Garcia & Bot, 2016). Moreover, for the last several years Chicago Public Schools experienced an extreme crisis, weakening morale for staff as their pensions were jeopardized, schools were closed precipitously, and schools lost resources, especially in racially segregated and impoverished communities (Belsha, 2017). Students' academic performance suffered: The majority of Chicago eighth graders were not proficient in reading (Jeffrey, 2012). Youth in the schools in extremely impoverished communities where our staff worked experienced lockdowns due to drive-by shootings. The budget cuts meant their schools lost after-school and health programs, textbooks, basic school supplies, and even drinkable water and toilet paper for bathrooms.

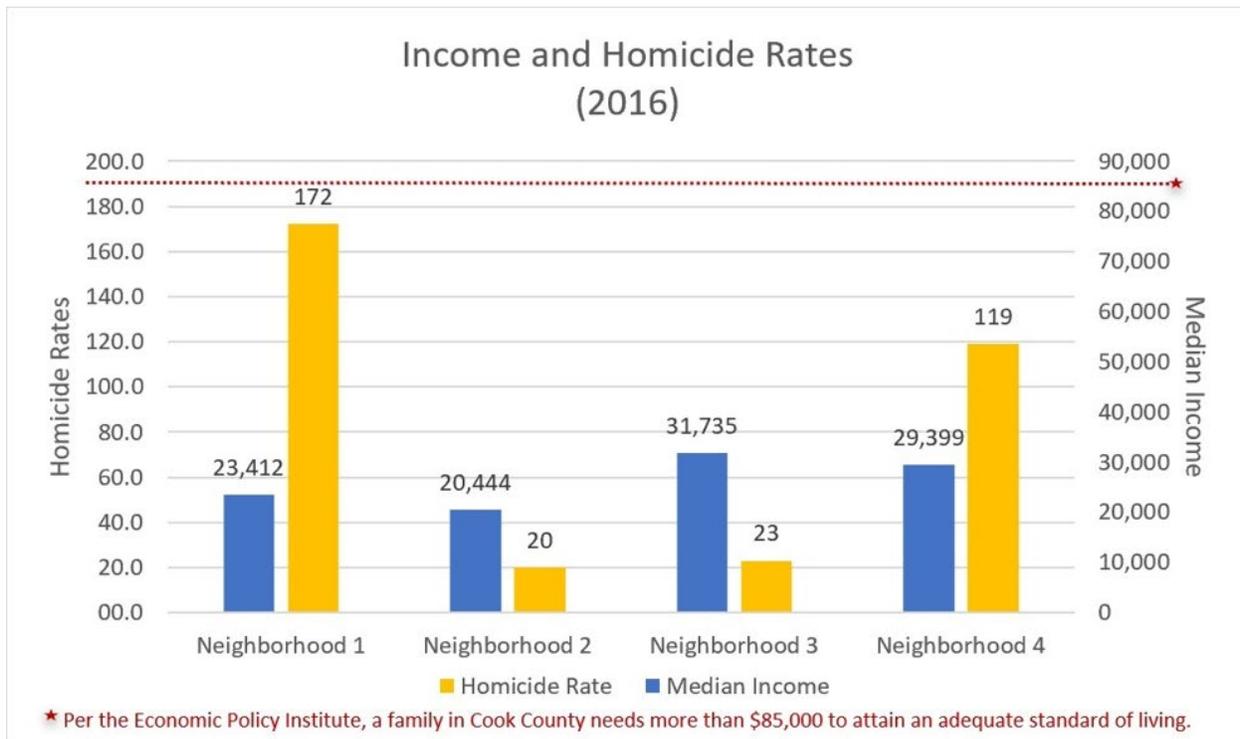
The Chicago case illustrates a principle recognized in global studies of community influences on violence prevention: As resources enhancing human capital such as education, mental health care, and social services erode in communities, violence escalates (Hoffman et al., 2011). Currently, nearly half of poor African American children in the U.S., compared with 12 percent of poor white children, live in communities of concentrated poverty (Austin, 2013). Chicago mirrors this pattern. It has long been known as one of the most segregated cities in the country (Henricks, Lewis, Arenas & Lewis, 2017).

Project Setting: High Crime, High Poverty Chicago Communities

Four high violence Chicago communities were the focus of our cross-age mentoring program and evaluation labeled Neighborhood 1 -- 4. The two poorest and highest crime communities in our project were Neighborhood 4 (on Chicago's west side) and Neighborhood 1 (on Chicago's south side). In these segregated African American communities, over half of the residents live below the poverty line, with 2016 median incomes as low as \$29,399 (Neighborhood 4) and \$23,412 (Neighborhood 1; Resch, Dhuse, & Legette, 2017). For context, a family of four in Cook County would require at least \$85,000 to achieve an adequate standard of living (Economic Policy Institute, 2018). A great number of residents in these neighborhoods were unemployed and unmarried, and about one quarter never graduated from high school. In Neighborhoods 1 and 4, the infant mortality rates were more than 14%, whereas in Chicago's middle to upper income Lincoln Park neighborhood, there was 0 infant mortality (Chapin Hall, 2017). Homicides in 2016 exceeded 170 per 100,000 in Neighborhood 1, and 119 per 100,000 in Neighborhood 4, which is over ten times the national rate (4.9 per 100,000).

The other communities used in this study were Neighborhood 2 (south side) and Neighborhood 3 (west side). Similar to the first two neighborhoods, a disproportionately high number of residents in these communities live in poverty, with 2016 median household incomes being \$20,444 (Neighborhood 2) or \$31,735 (Neighborhood 3; Resch et al., 2017). Residents in these communities also had low educational attainment, as roughly half of the residents in Neighborhood 3 and roughly a fifth in Neighborhood 2 did not graduate from high school (Diebel, Norda, & Kretchmer, 2018). Besides rampant poverty and low educational attainment, these neighborhoods faced high rates of violence. The 2016 homicide rates for these communities were 20 per 100,000 in Neighborhood 2 and 3 per 100,000 in Neighborhood 3 (Lucido, 2017).

Figure 1. Median Income and Homicide Rates of Project Neighborhoods in 2016



Mentoring

Mentoring programs are popular interventions for targeting disadvantaged youth. Recently, these programs have been empirically shown to promote positive development and well being in at-risk youth (Dubois, Portillo, Rhodes, Silverthorn & Valentine, 2011), and they have shown broader effects than other interventions by benefiting youth across multiple domains (e.g., social and academic) and stimulating positive development while preventing regressions in outcomes (Dubois et al., 2011; Karcher & Berger, 2017). Mentored youth show improvements in social-emotional functioning, prosocial behavior, and both peer and adult relationships (Ruzek et al., 2016; Cavell & Elledge, 2013; Kanchewa, 2016; Kuperminc, Chan, Hale, Joseph & Delbasso, 2019). The positive outcomes extend to academic domains as well, including both academic achievement and youth identification with school (Wheeler, Keller & DuBois, 2010; DuBois et al., 2011; Sanchez, Hurd, Neblett, & Vaclavik, 2018). These benefits are prominent across diverse populations, including low-income African and Latinx youth (Dubois et al., 2011).

However, the sustained successes of many mentoring programs are limited by the cultural and age differences between mentors and mentees.

Peer Influence

Although early-onset violence is most often related to child maltreatment and family violence, as children grow up, the influence of the mesosystem – interactions between the child’s surrounding systems such as police, schools, churches (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) – is essential. This is especially true regarding the impact of peers and extra-family community members on youths’ violence engagement (Hoffman et al., 2011). Peer group influence ramps up in late childhood and early adolescence as young people develop independent identities (Monahan & Booth-LaForce, 2016). Youth without positive supports are much more likely to bond with negative peers (Rimkus, 2011), and then are at greater risk for carrying out criminal activities themselves (Albert & Steinberg, 2011). As early as ages ten to twelve, criminal involvement can be predicted partially based on criminally involved peers (Dishion, Nelson, & Yasui, 2005; Howell, 2010).

Cross-Age Peer Mentoring.

Relative to other mentoring structures, cross-age peer mentoring has received less attention despite its potential for addressing the cultural and generational limitations of some traditional mentoring programs. Mentoring programs have traditionally focused on using adults as mentors rather than older adolescents (i.e., cross-age peers) who tend to be more available and more willing to serve and who may be more influential on younger children (Karcher, 2005a). However, adult-led mentoring programs can be limited by the dynamic between youth and an authority figure. Children with teen mentors have been found to demonstrate higher parent relationship quality and social acceptance than children with adult mentors (Karcher & Berger, 2017). Peers are also more influential role models and may be the first sources of support when a youth is struggling (Douglas, Jackson, & Usher, 2017). Thus, peer mentoring programs have become more prevalent in interventions. Peer mentoring relationships are founded on a relationship of mutuality and trust, allowing for outcomes like strengthened collaborative decision-making and interpersonal connectedness (Douglas, Jackson, & Usher, 2017; Karcher, 2005a; Karcher & Berger, 2017; Karcher, Davis & Powell, 2002; Westerman, 2002). The limited

research on cross-age mentoring indicates that it improves ratings of connectedness to school, teachers, and parents (Karcher, 2005b; Karcher et al., 2002; Westerman, 2002) and that it has positive effects on academic achievement (Karcher, Davis, & Powell, 2002; Westerman, 2002), graduation rates among Latinx males (Johnson, Simon, & Mun, 2014), social skills and social competence (Karcher, 2005a; Herrera, Kauh, Cooney, Grossman & McMaken, 2008), behavioral problems (Bowman & Myrick, 1987), classroom behaviors, and attitudes towards violence (Sheehan, DiCara, LeBailly & Christoffel, 1999). Cross-age mentoring has also been shown to have positive effects for the participating adolescent mentors. For example, data from the Big Brothers, Big Sisters programs demonstrate that high school mentors were more likely than adult mentors to report improvements in interpersonal skills; personal abilities (e.g., being responsible, reliable, and organized); knowledge of child development; and leadership abilities (Herrera et al., 2008).

Cross-age peer mentoring is driven by several theories that suggest its potential benefit. Positive Youth Development Theory (Larson, 2000; Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sems, 2006) states that youth who are empowered to connect with others in healthy, supportive relations and engage in meaningful pro-social activities with a sense of competence are more likely to achieve optimal mental and physical health outcomes (Holden, Messeri, Evans, Crankshaw & Ben-Davies, 2004; Wallerstein, 2002) and possess a committed sense of identity (Crocetti, Rubini, Luyckx & Meeus, 2008). The Social Development Model states that the process of bonding with a social unit (i.e. family, school, or peers) is a protective factor that leads to healthy development amidst the problems many adolescents face (O'Donnell, Michalak, & Ames, 1997; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992). The model suggests that consistent interactions and reinforcement by the prosocial unit begin to persuade the youth to adopt those values. Cross-age peer mentoring provides a context for this type of experience. As defined by Karcher (2005a), "Peer mentoring involves an interpersonal relationship between two youth of different ages that reflects a greater degree of hierarchical power imbalance than is typical of a friendship and in which the goal is for the older youth to promote one or more aspects of the younger youth's development" (p.267). Karcher further specifies peer mentoring as a sustained (long term) and developmental relationship. Within this approach, the developmental goal is for the older peer to guide the

younger mentee's development in interpersonal skills and self-esteem while creating a sense of connectedness and positive attitudes (e.g., school connection, academic focus; Karcher, 2005b).

Social Interest Theory suggests that selecting mentors who have high social interest (e.g., personality traits that enable them to be empathic and identify with others) are likely to have the greatest effect as guiding peers (Crandall, 1975). Mentors with high social interest appear to have the most successful mentor-mentee relationships (Karcher, 2005a). Rhodes (2005, 2008) and others, including Katherine Tyson McCrea, co-PI on this project, have shown the benefits of mentoring to extend from primary socialization, proximal development, and social interest. Rhodes has advanced a model (Rhodes, Reddy, Roffman & Grossman, 2005) in which the benefits of mentoring are dependent on trust and empathy as evidenced by the strength of the relationship between mentor and mentee.

Cross-age mentoring approaches address the value of these developmental theories by enlisting more experienced youth as mentors for younger peers, and capitalizing on the value of peer influence in adolescence. Studies of peer mentoring show that both mentor and mentee benefit, with the former showing improvements in empathy and communication skills and the latter having better life outcomes including increased school connectedness, pro-social behavior, and social skills (Karcher, 2005a; Karcher, 2008). In contrast to instrumental mentoring (assuming a directive or tutorial role) which has sometimes been associated with negative outcomes (Morrow & Styles 1995), cross-age mentoring is focused on the development of a relationship (Karcher, Kuperminc, Portwood, Sipe, Taylor, 2006).

The success of a mentoring program has been linked to dosage and organizational support (Karcher et al., 2006). Dosage is characterized as the amount of mentor-mentee contact, the intensity or depth of the interaction, and the duration of the relationship. Organizational considerations include screening, ongoing training, structured activities, explicit feedback, frequent check-ins, and other support for mentors (Dubois, Holloway, Valentine & Cooper, 2002; Jarjoura, Tanyu, Forbush, Herrera, & Keller, 2018). Higher levels of dosage and organizational support have been shown to lead to more positive youth outcomes (Karcher 2005a; Dubois et al., 2002). The importance of dosage has been cited to caution against the use

of college students as mentors since these students are less available and less consistent than either adults or cross-age peers (Whiting & Mallory, 2007).

Relatively few studies have examined the effects of using youth mentors from the same neighborhood and SES background as their mentees in high-poverty, high-crime communities. Since effective mentoring requires a relationship based on trust and empathy (Rhodes & DuBois, 2006), pairing mentors and mentees from the same environmental context may accelerate and strengthen the development of successful relationships. Similarly, the proximity and cultural connections between mentors and mentees allow mentors to maintain contact with their mentees. In addition, these pairings are expected to benefit the mentors who are themselves at risk due to the same environmental factors that our intervention is designed to address (Bulanda, Szarzynski, Siler & McCrea, 2013).

In both adult and peer mentoring relationships, the quality and strength of the relationship between mentor and mentee has been found to impact mentoring outcomes. Relationships reported as being highly satisfying are associated with more positive attitudes and work ethic. Notably, individuals in unsatisfying relationships report outcomes similar to those of individuals not involved in mentoring at all (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). The quality of a mentoring relationship has been linked to improved academic and social functioning on the part of the mentee in adult-led programs (Goldner & Mayseless, 2009). Further, the strength of a mentoring relationship correlates with the relationship's duration (Rhodes, Schwartz, Willis & Wu, 2017). Specifically for peer mentoring, individuals report that the strength of bonds that come with peer relationships help them to feel socially and emotionally connected (Sanchez, Pinkston, Cooper, Luna & Wyatt, 2018). These factors indicate that a strong, high-quality mentoring relationship may play a role in the significance of final outcomes.

Contributing Models

Our Civic Engagement Curriculum provided part of the structure for the Mentoring sessions. The Civic Engagement Curriculum with CeaseFire modifications (CEC-CF) was designed to enhance capacity to work with others, resolve conflicts more effectively, develop initiative, and become more empowered to bring about constructive change in the

community (CEC-CF manual). The CeaseFire additions (CEC-CF) focused on reducing gang interest and greater engagement in the community. Our research suggests positive change for middle school students (Thomas et al., 2012; Richards, et al., 2013).

Community based cross age peer mentoring implemented at the StandUp!HelpOut! (SUHO) site provided the second model. Bulanda & McCrea (2013) found that an empathic and trusting connection facilitated positive youth outcomes, especially connected to positive relatedness. Specifically, they demonstrated that cross-age mentoring interactions benefited mentors as well as mentees, providing them with an esteem-building relationship that strengthened their communication, empathy, and other relationship skills. This was important in part because previous research had demonstrated that after school programs are most effective in helping youth pursue positive life trajectories when they build health relationship capacities. Working with younger mentees, this project will take their highly successful model and adapt it for middle school students.

Mixed-methods approaches. Mixed-methods are well suited to research that examines mentoring interventions in applied (rather than clinical or experimental) settings. Thus, we used quantitative, qualitative, and ethnographic methods to evaluate our cross-age mentoring intervention (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Ethnographic and qualitative methods are especially useful for characterizing meaning-making, processes, and developmental contexts and describing how they relate to cognition, emotion, and behavior (Maxwell, 1996; Jessor, Colby & Shweder, 1996). We will use ethnographic data to capture the meaning that participants make of their neighborhood, community violence, and the mentoring experience. It will also document how the intervention related to subsequent changes in attitudes and behavior around violence.

Participatory Action Research. In addition to using mixed-methods to evaluate interventions and their contexts, many studies find success by engaging community members as part of the research team to ensure community buy-in and relevance as community based participatory research (Balcazar, Keys, Kaplan & Suarez-Balcazar, 1998; Fine, 2012; Ginwright, 2010b; Goldenberg, 2004; Gonzalez, Ramasubramanian, Ali & Eichelkraut, 2005). Community based participatory action research can elicit nuanced insights from insiders about the context

and process of the intervention. Administrators, practitioners, and even youth participants can provide important knowledge about the intervention when chosen carefully and trained properly (Bulanda & McCrea, 2013; Delgado, 2006). Thus, we utilized a participatory action-research approach where those mentoring served as researchers in the study: mentors became part of the research team. Community collaborators were invited to join the research team, and some did as co-authors primarily. Mentors received relevant training during the 6-hour training at the start of the intervention. The participatory action approach appeared to increase buy-in and retention among mentors and community staff, and provided essential data for examining the factors that influenced the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.

Early adolescence. Early adolescence represents a crucial stage in identity development. In this stage, youth begin to discover and construct their identity by “trying on” goals, values, and beliefs (Waterman, 1984). As early as ages 10 -12, researchers have been able to predict gang involvement through lack of success and peer rejection, leading middle school students to look for a source of acceptance and respect (Dishion, Nelson, & Yasui, 2005; Hill, Howell, Hawkins, & Battin-Pearson, 1999). Youth who join gangs typically start associating with a gang at age 12 or 13, and join the gang at age 13 to 15 (National Crime Prevention Council, 2012) and are attracted to its benefits including respect, protection and enhancement of friendships (Howell, 2011). Thus, it may be critical to establish positive social influences and develop individual skills for preventing violence and other harmful behaviors at this stage, particularly for disrupting gang recruitment. For this reason as well as the relatively strong impact of peer influence during this developmental stage, we focused the mentoring on fourth through ninth grade students. To increase the value of social credibility, peer influence, and contextual empathy in this intervention, we engaged high school students from the same neighborhood as mentors.

Potential Moderators

Previous research has found mentoring outcomes to be moderated by three characteristics: gender, age, and baseline stress level. Males have repeatedly been shown to have stronger positive outcomes in a number of domains, including likelihood of graduation, relationship satisfaction and strength, and perceptions of emotional support from peers and family (Raposa et al., 2019; Dubois & Karcher, 2014; Spencer, Drew, Walsh, & Kanchewa,

2018; DeWit, DuBois, Erdem, Larose, & Lipman, 2016). Male mentees have reported enrolling in mentoring programs for the chance to get a role model, and this has resulted in improved relationships with other boys and men, a greater sense of brotherhood, and the establishment of trust, all of which could lead to the stronger outcomes (Rhodes, Lowe, Litchfield & Walsh-Samp, 2008; Sanchez et al., 2018). Elementary-age children have been shown to experience a greater effect from mentoring (Kupersmidt, Stump, Stelter & Rhodes, 2017a). Youth with greater baseline risk show greater benefits from mentoring, and youth from low socioeconomic backgrounds have also shown to benefit more than their well-off peers (DuBois et al., 2011; DuBois et al., 2002; Thompson, Corsello, McReynolds & Conklin-Powers, 2013).

In addition to these three moderators, neighborhood environment was examined as a potential resilience factor for mentors. A number of social problems are often experienced at the neighborhood level (e.g., child maltreatment, youth delinquency, exposure to violence), making the neighborhood an important context to examine (Murray, et al, 2011; Sampson & Bartusch, 1998). Social-ecological literature has long considered the importance of neighborhood effects on youth development and psychological outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1997; Cicchetti & Lynch, 1993; Elliot, Wilson, Huizinga, Sampson, & Ranakin, 1996). When neighborhoods have lower crime rates or more cohesion, they can serve as buffers for the development of behavioral and internalizing difficulties (Sharkey & Sampson, 2015; Riina, Martin, Gardner, & Brooks-Gunn, 2013; DiClemente et al., 2018). Some research on neighborhood context suggests that residing in neighborhoods where residents have strong social ties is related to better physical and mental health among adults, as well as lower incidence of problem behaviors among youth (Gephart, 1997; Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002; Sampson, 2012). For these reasons, perceived neighborhood problems, such as the presence of gangs and drugs, were examined as a potential moderator of program effects for mentors.

Constructs of Interest

For both mentors and mentees the following constructs were measured and examined in relation to the peer mentoring program:

School sense of community. An individual's perception of one's school environment can have substantial impact on feelings of school membership and overall academic performance (Reynolds, Lee, Turner, Bromhead, & Subasic, 2017). Cross-age peer mentoring programs have been found to positively impact school connectedness in both mentors and mentees (Karcher et al., 2002).

Stress. Youth with greater baseline risk show greater benefits from mentoring, and youth from low socioeconomic backgrounds have also shown to benefit more than their well-off peers (DuBois et al., 2011; DuBois et al., 2002; Thompson et al., 2013).

Future expectations. With mentors serving as role models, their support can foster motivation and hope for future plans in at-risk youth (Morales, 2009). The length of mentoring time has been found to associate with predictions of hope (Sulimani-Aidan, Melkman & Hellman, 2019).

Endorsement of aggression and non-violent strategies. Beliefs about aggression correlate with exposure to violence, which participants in this program are at high risk of experiencing (Wright, Fagan & Pinchevsky, 2013; Fowler et al., 2009; Jain, Buka, Subramanian & Molnar, 2012). Beliefs about aggression also correlate with self-reported physically and verbally aggressive behaviors (Archer & Haigh, 1997). A cross-age peer mentoring program for inner-city adolescents has been found to decrease violence-supporting attitudes in both mentees and mentors, as well as aid in the avoidance of increased violence behavior in mentees (Sheehan et al., 1999).

Ethnic identity Membership. Black male youth have demonstrated improved racial identity as a result of mentoring relationships (Sanchez et al., 2018). In addition, having relationships with same-race individuals is often referenced as an important method of strengthening ethnic identity (Tatum, 2004; Phinney, 1992). In a cross-age peer mentoring program where mentors are paired with same-race mentees, ethnic identity will be examined as a possible outcome.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem, or an individual's view of self, is frequently studied in terms of development. It has been linked with social connectedness and lowered depressive symptoms (Kohut, 1977; Sowislo & Orth, 2013). Limited research on cross-age peer mentoring has

indicated a positive impact on mentee self-esteem and mentor academic self-esteem (Karcher, 2005a; Karcher, 2009).

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as one's confidence in their ability to successfully manage challenging situations (Tipton & Worthington, 1984). Adults mentoring others in self-efficacy has been suggested to build the efficacy and leadership abilities of mentors (Rhodes & Fletcher, 2013). While efficacy has not been studied in the context of a cross-age peer mentoring program, strong peer relationships have been positively correlated with self-efficacy (McFarlane, Bellissimo, & Norman, 1995), leading to the prediction that a program based in strengthened peer relationships may also impact efficacy.

Social support. Mentoring has repeatedly been associated with a number of positive social outcomes in both peer and adult mentor programs (Cavell & Elledge, 2013; Kanchewa, 2016; Karcher et. al 2002). Participants report stronger connections to peers and mutual support between mentors and mentees (Sanchez et al., 2018; Karcher & Berger, 2017). Mentoring relationships have been found to provide social support in the form of emotional support, positive feedback, assistance, and teaching important skills (Barrera & Bonds, 2005). Social support has frequently been associated with positive well-being for adolescents, with moderations by different outcomes of well-being like academic achievement and psychological adjustment (Chu, Saucier & Hafner, 2010). Social support is also an important protective factor in the face of violence exposure (Hammack, Richards, Luo, Edlynn & Roy, 2004).

Strength of relationship with mentor/mentee. In both adult and peer mentoring relationships, the quality and strength of the relationship between mentor and mentee has been found to impact mentoring outcomes. Relationships reported as being highly satisfying are associated with more positive attitudes and work ethic. Notably, individuals in unsatisfying relationships report outcomes similar to those of individuals not involved in mentoring at all (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). The quality of a mentoring relationship has been linked to improved academic and social functioning on the part of the mentee in adult-led programs (Goldner & Maysless, 2009). Further, the strength of a mentoring relationship correlates with the relationship's duration (Rhodes, Schwartz, Willis & Wu, 2017). Specifically for peer mentoring, individuals report that the strength of bonds that come with peer relationships help

them to feel socially and emotionally connected (Sanchez et al., 2018). These factors indicate that a strong, high-quality mentoring relationship may play a role in the significance of final outcomes.

Internalizing and externalizing symptoms. Adolescents with high levels of exposure to violence show greater amounts of externalizing problems, such as alcohol and drug use, delinquency, aggression, and violence, as well as internalizing difficulties (Fowler, et al, 2009). Protective factors include prosocial characteristics such as empathy, autonomy, and self-efficacy (Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998; Margolin & Elana, 2004; Finkelhor, Turner, Omrod & Hamby, 2009; Wright et al., 2013).

The following constructs were of interest for mentors only:

Perceptions of neighborhood environment. Growing up in a harsh environment can foster reduced sense of self-efficacy if the youth are unable to solve problems associated with their neighborhoods (Dupéré, Leventhal, & Vitaro, 2012). Negative neighborhood perceptions are often linked to poor mental health outcomes, including depression, anxiety and somatic symptoms (Snedker & Hooven, 2013; Evans-Polce, Hulbert & Latkin, 2012; McMahon, Coker & Parnes, 2013; Hart, Atkins & Matsuba, 2008).

Character and contribution. An individual's character is an important aspect of being a good leader (Sankar, 2003). Development of character is found in mutually positive and influential relationships (Lerner & Callina, 2014). In a peer mentoring program designed to promote mutually beneficial relationships between mentor and mentee, we might predict an increase in character development for mentors and mentees. Karcher (2009) found that increases in academic success are associated with participation in programs like peer mentoring which promote contribution. Opportunities to hold leadership roles in one's community, i.e. through acting as a mentor to younger community members, have been related to positive youth development in contribution (Lerner, Napolitano, Boyd, Mueller, & Callina, 2014).

Grit. Grit, an ability to put passion and determination toward a goal, is associated with student success (Duckworth & Duckworth, 2016). For students in poverty, social support is a key component noted to associate with strengthened grit (Kundu, 2017). The cross-age peer

mentoring program includes staff mentors guiding youth mentors and fostering feelings of mutual support between staff mentors, youth mentors, and mentees.

Social interest. This construct was initially included in order to isolate mentors with high social interest to maximize successful mentoring outcomes (Crandall, 1975). Those youth with high social interest (e.g., personality traits that enable them to be empathic and identify with others) are more likely to have stronger mentor-mentee relationships (Karcher, 2005a).

Leadership. Mentoring has been found to help mentors develop skills in leadership. In particular, mentoring allows them to improve problem solving abilities and social awareness (Rekha & Ganesh, 2012).

Empathy. Empathy has been found to relate to prosocial and socially competent behavior (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). Peer mentoring has shown mentors reporting a need to display empathy toward their mentees, and the additional understanding that results from having shared life experiences can further feelings of empathy (Creaney, 2018; Sanchez et al., 2018).

Attitudes toward violence. A cross-age peer mentoring program for inner-city adolescents has been found to decrease violence-supporting attitudes in both mentees and mentors, as well as aide in the avoidance of increased violence behavior in mentees (Sheehan et al., 1999).

The following constructs were of interest for mentees only:

Attitudes toward gangs. Gang members are more likely to demonstrate pro-gang attitudes than non-gang members (Winfrey, Backstrom, & Mays, 1994). Youth with peers promoting or engaging in delinquency are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior themselves (Brownfield & Thompson, 1991). This indicates a potential influence of peer gang involvement on youth gang involvement and positive attitudes toward gangs. Antisocial tendencies in peers and poor school performance also predict maintained participation in gangs (Hill, Lui & Hawkins, 2001). The cross-age peer mentoring program involved prosocial mentors providing support and guidance to younger mentees. It was predicted that mentors promoting prosocial behavior and anti-gang attitudes may aide in altering mentee attitudes toward gangs.

Research Questions and Objectives

Cross-age peer mentoring programs in which trained high school students serve as mentors for middle-grade students from the same community have been suggested as a possible solution to the challenges addressed above. A prospective evaluation of a community based cross-age mentoring program in low-income, urban, African-American and Latinx communities was implemented to study the effectiveness of the approach and the ethnographic factors that influence effectiveness in four different Chicago communities. The following questions and hypotheses were addressed with the project:

Overall research question. What are the effects of a cross-age peer mentoring program on youth empowerment and positive mental health outcomes and on reduced risk for violence?

Quantitative mentee questions. Do African-American and Latinx adolescent mentees (11-14 year-olds) who reside in the high risk environments of very high poverty, high crime Chicago neighborhoods demonstrate significant improvements in youth empowerment such as enhanced sense of self-esteem, ethnic identity, self-efficacy, and future orientation, as well as positive mental health outcomes such as, less internalizing and externalizing symptoms, better academic engagement, and beliefs about aggression, and a significant reduction in pro-aggression attitudes such as gang engagement/interest, beliefs about aggression, and more interest in non-violent approaches compared to adolescents receiving no intervention at two posttest periods: immediately following the intervention, and about 9-12 months later.

- Hypothesis 1. Relative to controls, adolescent mentees will demonstrate high levels of the youth empowerment constructs, better mental health and lower levels of behavioral difficulties both at post-test and at 9-12 month follow-up.
- Hypothesis 2. Higher numbers of mentoring meetings will predict higher levels of youth empowerment constructs, better mental health, and lower levels of behavioral difficulties both at post-test and at 9-12 month follow-up.
- Hypothesis 3. Higher quality of mentoring meetings will predict higher levels of youth empowerment constructs, better mental health, and lower levels of behavioral difficulties both at post-test and at 9-12 month follow-up.

- Hypothesis 4. Gender, stress and social support will moderate these relations with boys demonstrating stronger effects than those found among girls and with higher stress and higher social support mentees demonstrating stronger effects than those found among lower stress mentees.

Quantitative mentor questions. Do African-American and Latinx adolescent mentors (15-19 year-olds), who reside in high risk environments, who are trained and engage in mentoring activities, demonstrate significant improvements in Youth Empowerment such as enhanced sense of self-esteem, leadership, empathy, self-efficacy, future orientation, grit, character, and ethnic identity, compared to adolescents who engage in no mentoring, at two posttest periods: immediately following the intervention, and at 9-12 months after the completion of the program.

- Hypothesis 5. Relative to controls, mentors will demonstrate high levels of the youth empowerment constructs both at post-test and at 9-12 month follow-up.
- Hypothesis 6. Higher numbers of mentoring meetings will predict higher levels of youth empowerment constructs at posttest and at 9- 12 month follow-up.
- Hypothesis 7. Stronger mentor relationships will predict higher levels of youth empowerment at post-test and at 9-12 months follow-up.
- Hypothesis 8. Gender, stress, and neighborhood will moderate these relations with boys demonstrating stronger effects than those found among girls and with higher stress mentors demonstrating stronger effects than those found among lower stress mentors. Relative to mentors residing in better neighborhoods, mentors residing in worse neighborhoods will see weaker effects of the program on outcomes.

Qualitative data. The Qualitative data aimed to address two key questions:

- 1) From youths' perspectives, what makes a cross-age mentoring program meaningful and valuable?
- 2) How does the process of implementation affect outcomes?

Qualitative and ethnographic data gathered by the community researchers, including the mentors themselves, will allow an understanding of 1) best practices program designs for cross-

age mentoring with participants who are from diverse cultural sub-groups, and 2) including participant's perspectives about the impact of the SLIY program in particular for themselves and their mentees. Qualitative data also allow us to understand whether SLIY affects youths' responses to the community violence in their neighborhoods, and if so, how. Qualitative data collection and analysis makes it possible for youths' perspectives to contribute to our understanding for replication, theory generation, and model building purposes.

Chapter 2. Program Implementation

Intervention Design

The Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth (SLIY) project involved a collaborative partnership between the research team and staff at Loyola University Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, and several community organizations that were identified as key community assets in their respective high-violence neighborhoods. The study utilized a prospective cohort design in which peer mentoring relationships based in after-school programs were monitored from their initiation to 9-12 months afterwards. Community agencies providing services in Neighborhoods 1 and 2 initially selected to aid in mentor and mentee recruitment, supervise mentoring, and conduct community-based research (Cohort 1). As the project progressed, additional agencies and schools were selected to facilitate mentoring recruitment and services in Neighborhoods 3 and 4 neighborhoods (Cohort 2). To assess the effectiveness of the mentoring program, control students were selected from the schools in the same neighborhoods as the intervention group. Protocol was approved by the Chicago Public School Research Review Board and the Institutional Review Board at Loyola University Chicago.

Selection of Sites and Recruitment

Selection of sites. Mentoring sites were selected through collaborations with community agencies and Chicago Public Schools from the target neighborhoods. The research team contacted community collaborators from the community organizations, selected elementary and high schools, and after-school programs and invited them to participate in the study. Upon agreement, community collaborators and staff from mentoring sites in Cohort 1 completed a multi-hour training prior to the start of the intervention to help facilitate the recruitment, training, and supervision of mentoring. The second cohort of mentoring sites were also recruited and trained in mentoring and intervention procedures.

Schools, after-school programs, and community centers served as the main locations for mentoring to occur. SLIY staff worked with these organizations to address the feasibility of using a consistent space at their site for one day per week over one year. Due to the presence of

mentees at schools during the day and the difficulty of transporting mentees to other locations after school, school settings tended to be the most successful locations for consistent attendance. One mentoring site in Neighborhood 4 exhibited an exception to this pattern, presenting a record of high attendance in their after school programs (this was located in a school, but students in SLIY came from surrounding schools to this site). Schools with after-school programs were even more accessible due to the structure already in place, to which SLIY could then adapt. Sites with dual goals, such as churches and community centers with other functions, experienced the most challenges to carve out time solely for mentoring programming.

Optimally, sites included food and transportation home for mentees who were not independent enough to travel on their own. SLIY provided van transportation for mentors who feared crossing gang lines, as well as bus fare to a number of mentors to facilitate their attendance. On occasion committed mentors picked up their mentees at their homes after school and walked them to the program, underscoring the value of mentors coming from the same community as mentees. If food was not available onsite, staff provided snacks, which were essential given the hunger of the children and youth.

Recruitment. Community collaborators (e.g., school faculty and staff, community organization coordinators) and staff at each mentoring site helped recruit high school students to participate as mentors in the intervention. Research staff contacted community collaborators at selected sites to explain the study and invite them to participate. Mentors were recruited with the help of community collaborators that have a longstanding history of working with high school-aged youth in the community. Community collaborators at each site helped select prosocial high school students to participate in the mentoring intervention as potential mentors. Formal recruitment procedures included screening students based on inclusion criteria, collecting program permission slips, audio/visual recording permission slips, and informed assent and consent (for youth under the age of 18). While the Social Interest Scale (Crandall, 1975) was initially intended to be used for isolating youth with higher potential for fostering positive mentoring relationships, youth had significantly difficulty responding to this measure, therefore resulting in very poor reliability ($\alpha = .192$). For this reason, this measure was removed from the

recruitment process. After following recruitment procedures, staff invited potential mentors to mentor training. The mentoring position was presented as a job opportunity.

Relatedly, community collaborators and staff also helped to select elementary and middle school students from neighborhood schools serving in the same communities to participate as mentees. Control students were selected through collaborations with area elementary schools and high schools. 139 high school students were recruited as mentors and 78 students as controls in the first cohort of data collection. Additionally, 211 elementary and middle school students were recruited as mentees and 78 students as controls in the first cohort. In the second cohort, 89 mentors were recruited for the intervention with an additional 24 control students. Furthermore, 91 mentees and 23 control mentees were recruited within the second cohort. A portion of these students recruited participated in data collection, including 249 mentors/controls and 219 mentees/controls.

Intervention Procedures

The current SLIY project is a modified version of the StandUp!HelpOut! (SUHO) program developed by the Empowering Counseling Program at Loyola University Chicago (Bulanda et al., 2013) and the Civic Engagement Curriculum developed by Richards and colleagues, modified to include community-based elements through a collaboration with Chicago CeaseFire (Richards et al., 2016). Research staff from the University served as coordinators at each mentoring site. Each staff member underwent training in research ethics (CITI Training) and background checks through Chicago Public Schools, as per IRB-approved procedures. Staff conducted mentor training, implemented curricula, facilitated programming, supervised mentoring relationships, and collected quantitative surveys and qualitative data. Each mentoring site consisted of a Site Director, Intervention Coordinator(s), and Research Coordinator(s).

Mentor training. Following recruitment, mentors were trained for 6 hours using a curriculum that was modeled after nationally recognized mentoring organizations trainings utilized by local non-profit partners and building on a previously-studied civic engagement curriculum (Big Brothers Big Sisters, 2012; Richards, et al., 2016). The curriculum also includes modules authored specifically for SLIY, addressing coping with trauma and loss, vocational and

academic supports, and training in youth researcher skills. Topics included the definition of mentoring, how to be an effective mentor, and how to notice verbal and nonverbal communicative signs from their mentees. To thoroughly prepare mentors, youth were encouraged to ask questions about life, describe their relationship history with their caregivers or other adults, and role-play effective mentor interactions. Allowing students to reflect and role play with their peers helped them to prepare for challenging interactions and support each other by giving advice and tips on ways to improve. Since mentors were likely to learn about serious concerns of their mentees, they are taught to notice signs of trauma, harm, and distress from their mentees. The training helped them to understand the importance of addressing the concerns as quickly as possible by engaging staff. The concept of confidentiality and procedures of immediately informing staff were highlighted for mentors. Finally, the youth wrote a letter that stated how they intended to better themselves through participation in the program. Youth who successfully engaged with the training and signed a contract committing to the responsibilities of their position (one year commitment, weekly attendance, building a positive relationship with their mentee, etc.) were invited back to serve as mentors in the program.

Mentoring sessions. Mentoring sites from both cohorts met after-school within the context of already existing after-school programming or as standalone programs. The peer mentoring occurred during a one-hour session each week with the mentors and mentees. During this time, the matched pairs interacted and fostered mentoring relationships while participating in activities planned by the after school program attended by the mentees. In this hour, the programming covered an array of topics focusing on building skills (e.g., adaptive, relationship, and communication capacities), all while maintaining a trauma-informed approach to interacting with the youth. Due to the nature of the high-violence, low-income neighborhoods in which the program operated, a trauma-informed approach was utilized, based on an understanding of the impact trauma has on the youth developmentally. This approach employed strategies to create a sense of safety and empowerment for all the youth, especially for those who have been exposed to traumas.

Conflict management and communication skills were frequently used in the curriculum in order to promote nonviolent ways for youth to solve problems. The crux of programming was

focused on internal controls for anger and healthy ways to express it through communication. The *Relationship Skills Building* curriculum was developed to reinforce these communication skills to facilitate more open relationships and effective conflict resolution. Both of these outcomes relate to a cornerstone of programming: relationship building. The relationship cycle remains at the forefront of programming because the essence of mentoring lies in the strength of the mentor-mentee relationship. Because of this, programming was planned around facilitating a bond between the mentors and mentees.

Finally, positive racial and ethnic identity are a crucial part of mentoring sessions. Given the intense marginalization that both groups experience in society, it was important to promote a personal definition of identity and reinforce the idea that all identities are important and valued, thus promoting youth self-worth. Mentoring sessions included discussions about what it means to be African American and/or Latinx, and how it permeates throughout daily life.

While in the program, research staff members supervised mentors weekly. Staff provided mentors weekly reminders to attend programming and also check in about their experiences to assess for case management or emotional support. Supervision continued throughout the mentoring session to observe and troubleshoot issues when needed. Though the staff are responsible for facilitating sessions, many of the ideas for programming come from the mentors. Staff asked for mentor observations and input as to what would most benefit the mentees. These suggestions provided the basis for programming with the mentees and empowered youth to be leaders in the program and in their communities.

Debriefing sessions. After the hour with the mentees, the mentors participated in an hour-long debriefing session designed to process thoughts, emotions, and concerns about the session as well as provide additional training as mentors navigate the obstacles working with highly marginalized children can create. During weekly debriefing, mentors complete a debriefing form that summarizes their mentoring experience. The second portion of the debriefing hour allowed them to verbally express their thoughts as they are asked to share a high moment and low moment for their week, as well as how their mentoring experience went. Their fellow mentors and LUC staff members provided feedback and insight regarding ways to improve themselves and their approach to mentoring. This debriefing time additionally gives the

staff the opportunity to have in-depth discussions with the mentors about an array of relevant topics including future goals, police brutality, why they chose mentoring, and how young people can make a difference in their communities. In total, 3,579 individual mentoring sessions occurred for mentors and mentees in Cohorts 1 and 2.

Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth Mentoring Manual:

https://riskandresiliencelab.weebly.com/uploads/2/5/9/1/25913819/full_sliy_manual_12.14.19.pdf

Chapter 3. Study Methods

In order to assess the variables of interest, the study utilized both quantitative and qualitative measures. First, the quantitative sample, methods and measures will be described for the mentee followed by the mentor samples. Second, the qualitative procedures will be described. Mentees were recruited from six mentoring sites across three different neighborhoods, as well as four control sites spanning the same three neighborhoods. Mentors were recruited from seven total mentoring sites across four different neighborhoods, as well as four control sites.

Mentee Sample

Baseline sample. Baseline survey data were collected from 219 mentees (132 treatment and 87 control) at the beginning of the mentoring intervention (Wave 1). The majority of mentees identified as female (56.6%). The median age was 11 years old ($M = 11.32$ years), ranging from 9 to 16. Similarly, the median grade in school was 5th grade ($M = 5.60$) ranging from 4th grade to 11th grade. Regarding racial and ethnic representation, 72.6% of mentees identified as Black or African American, 19.6% of mentees identified as Hispanic or Latinx, 0.9% identified as White, 0.5% identified as Native American, and 6.4% identified as Other or Multiracial. In examining risk level of the baseline sample (Figure 2), 19.0% of the mentees reported family involvement with child protective services, with 4.6% reporting having less than enough money available to their family, and 1.4% endorsing having much less than enough. Regarding parent employment, 23.4% of the sample reported their mother was not employed, and 21.5% of the sample reported their father was not employed. The median number of negatively-valenced stressful events was four ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 2.75$), with reports ranging from zero to 11 out of 17 possible negative stressful events.

At baseline, there were minimal significant differences between treatment and control participants. Control mentees were significantly higher in self-reported self-efficacy ($M = 5.18$) than treatment mentees ($M = 4.84$; $p = .011$). Additionally, treatment mentees were significantly older ($M = 11.53$ years) than control mentees ($M = 11$ years; $p < .001$). Lastly, control participant families were significantly more likely to be involved with child protective services (33%) compared to the treatment group (10%) ($p < .001$). No other significant differences were found.

Of these 219 mentees, parent measures were collected for 58 mentees at Wave 1. Of these 58 parents, 51.7% of the sample identified as single and 94.4% received at least a high school diploma or GED. Regarding employment, 14% endorsed being unemployed and 8.8% were unable to work due to disability. Median parent monthly income was \$1,200.00, and the median number of people supported by this income was four. Those youth receiving any form of special education services constituted 16.3% of this sample. Of parents, 8.6% were only able to speak and read in Spanish.

Longitudinal sample - Wave 3. Survey data were again collected between 9 to 12 months later from 137 mentees at Wave 3, representing a 62.6% retention rate over the course of the intervention from baseline to post-treatment data collection. Of the 137 mentees retained, there were 76 treatment and 61 control youth. This longitudinal sample was 56.5% female and ranged in school grade from 4th– 11th (median = 5th grade), with ages ranging from 9 to 16 (median = 11 years). Race and ethnicity divided between 68.5% Black or African American, 20.2% Hispanic or Latinx, 1.6% White, and 9.7% Other or Multiracial. Child protective service involvement was reported by 21.7% of the youth and 4.9% reported having less than enough money, 56.6% reported just about the right amount, and 38.5% reported more than enough. Attrition analyses suggested few differences between those who remained in the study and those who dropped out. At Wave 3, those youth in the retained sample presented with significantly higher proportion of child protective services involvement (23.1%) compared to those lost to attrition (11.7%) ($p < .001$). Overall, those youth in the intervention condition were nearly significantly more likely to be lost to attrition (40.9%) compared to the control group (29.9%) ($p = .064$).

Due to several logistical barriers, only 19 parents completed both Wave 1 and Wave 3 surveys, including 16 treatment and 3 control. Youth participants were given parent surveys to bring home after they returned consent forms, as parents were not frequently present before or after mentoring sessions. Several attempts were made to follow-up with parents, such as completing surveys over the phone and mailing surveys to the address indicated on the child's consent form. Given constant changes to family phone numbers and addresses, it became very difficult to obtain parent data, especially at longitudinal waves of data collection.

Longitudinal sample - Wave 4. After an additional 9 to 12 months following post-treatment data collection at Wave 4, 103 mentees were retained over time, including 56 treatment and 47 control mentees. These youth retained represented 75.2% of the Wave 3 sample and 47.0% of the baseline sample at the final follow-up data collection. At this wave of data collection, those retained were significantly higher in their endorsement of positive school community ($M = 3.46$) compared to those lost to attrition ($M = 3.15$; $p = .011$). The retained sample was also nearly significantly older ($M = 11.57$) than those who dropped out ($M = 11.13$; $p = .053$). Similar to Wave 3, those retained were significantly higher in child protective service involvement (25.3%) compared to those who dropped out (14.2%; $p = .032$), and the treatment group was more likely to drop out (62.1%) than the control group (49.4%; $p = .043$). The highest retention rates were present in Neighborhood 1 (55.8%), followed by Neighborhood 4 (47.8%), then Neighborhood 2 (24.6%; $p < .001$).

Mentor Sample

Baseline sample. Baseline survey data were collected from 249 mentors and controls (148 treatment and 101 control) at the beginning of the mentoring intervention at Wave 1. The majority of mentors identified as female (60.6%). The median age was 17 years old ($M = 16.72$ years), ranging from 14 to 21 years. Similarly, the median grade in school was 11th grade ($M = 10.79$) ranging from 9th grade to college. Regarding racial and ethnic representation, 81.4% of mentors identified as Black or African American, 15.4% identified as Hispanic or Latino, 0.4% identified as Native American, and 2.8% identified as Other or Multiracial. In examining risk level of the baseline sample (Figure 3), 17.1% of the mentors reported family involvement with child protective services, with 27.2% reporting having less than enough money available to their family, and 6.6% endorsing having much less than enough. Regarding parent employment, 35.2% of the sample reported their mother is not employed, and 33.8% of the sample reported their father is not employed. The median number of negatively-valenced stressful events was five ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 3.77$), with reports ranging from zero to 13 out of 17 possible stressful events.

In examining baseline differences between the treatment and control groups, there are several important differences that suggest the treatment group began the program with higher

levels of prosocial qualities. Of note, the treatment group was significantly higher in self-efficacy ($M = 5.23$) compared to control mentors ($M = 4.94$; $p = .033$), ethnic identity ($M = 2.97$) compared to control mentors ($M = 2.67$; $p < .001$), beliefs in support of non-violent strategies ($M = 3.03$) compared to control mentors ($M = 2.76$; $p = .002$), adaptive attitudes towards violence ($M = 3.70$) compared to control mentors ($M = 3.38$; $p < .001$), character ($M = 3.41$) compared to control mentors ($M = 3.08$; $p = .001$), contribution ($M = 3.11$) compared to control mentors ($M = 2.85$; $p = .003$), and empathy ($M = 3.55$) compared to control mentors ($M = 3.30$; $p = .002$). The treatment group was significantly lower in beliefs supporting aggressive strategies ($M = 1.98$) compared to control mentors ($M = 2.28$; $p < .001$), as well as nearly significantly lower in withdrawn symptoms ($M = .84$) compared to control mentors ($M = .75$; $p = .070$), and somatization symptoms ($M = .44$) compared to control mentors ($M = .54$, $p = .099$).

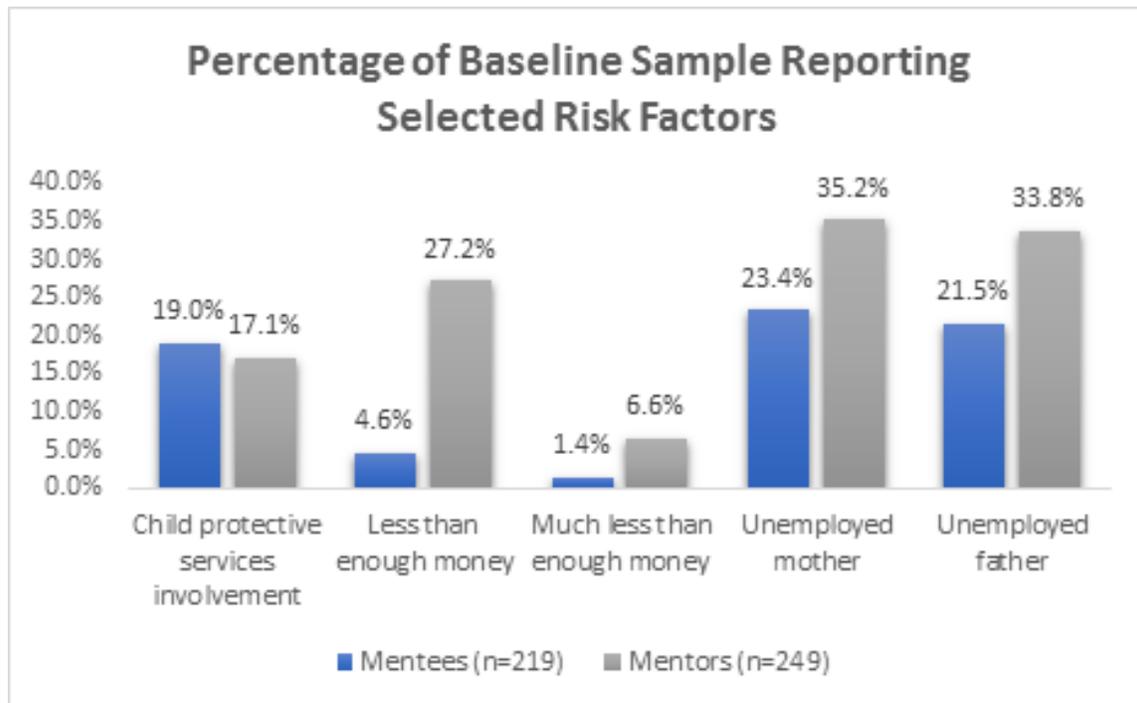
Longitudinal sample - Wave 3. Survey data were again collected between 9 to 12 months later from 157 mentors at Wave 3, representing a 63.1% retention rate over the course of the intervention from baseline to post-treatment data collection. Of these 153 mentors retained, there were 103 treatment and 50 control youth. This longitudinal sample was 62.7% female and ranged in school grade from 9th– 12th (median = 11th grade), with ages ranging from 14 to 20 (median = 17 years). Race and ethnicity divided between 79.6% Black or African American, 18.4% Hispanic or Latinx, and 2.0% Other or Multiracial. Child protective service involvement was reported by 18.0% of the youth and 35.1% reported less than enough money, 52.7% reported just about the right amount, and 12.2% reported more than enough. Regarding significant differences between treatment and control mentors within the longitudinal sample, treatment mentors were significantly older ($M = 16.82$) than control mentors ($M = 16.28$; $p = .008$). Only three of the significant differences in prosocial qualities from baseline were present longitudinally, such that treatment mentors were still significantly higher in ethnic identity ($M = 2.99$) compared to control mentors ($M = 2.70$, $p = .022$) and character ($M = 3.39$) compared to control mentors ($M = 3.10$; $p = .029$). The treatment group was also significantly lower in beliefs supporting aggressive strategies ($M = 2.00$) compared to control mentors ($M = 2.31$; $p = .004$).

Attrition analyses suggested some differences between those who remained in the study and those who dropped out. At Wave 3, those youth in the intervention condition were more

likely to be retained (67.8%) compared to the control group (49.0%; $p = .002$). There were significant differences in retention based on the neighborhood where the mentoring intervention took place, such that participants in Neighborhood 4 had the highest retention rate (75.7%), followed by Neighborhood 1 (69.1%), Neighborhood 2 (52%), then Neighborhood 3 (33.3%). There were trending significance differences between the retained and attrition samples in that the retention group presented with more adaptive attitudes towards violence ($M = 3.62$) compared to those lost to attrition ($M = 3.48$; $p = .086$), as well as higher anxious/depressed symptomatology ($M = .50$) compared to those lost to attrition ($M = .40$; $p = .054$).

Longitudinal sample - Wave 4. After an additional 9 to 12 months following post-treatment data collection, 69 mentors were surveyed, representing 43.9% of the Wave 3 longitudinal sample, and 27.7% of the original baseline sample at the final follow-up data collection. Of these 69 mentors, 48 were treatment and 21 were control mentors. At this wave of data collection, those retained were significantly younger ($M = 16.25$) than those lost to attrition ($M = 16.90$; $p = .001$). The treatment group retention rate was nearly significantly higher (30.4%) than the control retention rate (21.8%; $p = .086$). Additionally, retention rate differed significantly by neighborhood, such that Neighborhood 4 had the highest Wave 4 retention (40.5%), followed by 36.8% in Neighborhood 1, 14.6% in Neighborhood 2, and 0% in Neighborhood 3. At Wave 4, the retention group was nearly significantly lower in self-esteem ($M = 2.99$) than those who dropped out ($M = 3.13$; $p = .091$), as well as stressful event exposure ($M = 6.05$) than those who dropped out ($M = 7.84$; $p = .100$). No other differences emerged for the retention versus dropout samples.

Figure 2. Baseline Risk Factors



Quantitative Measures

Data collection procedures. Self-report questionnaires were administered at several different time points during the study: at baseline (Wave 1), six months into the intervention (Wave 2; only for a subsample of the mentors), nine to twelve months from the baseline date (Wave 3), and twenty to twenty-four months from the baseline date (Wave 4). Time points for data collection coincided with the course of the cross-age peer mentoring intervention, with baseline occurring at the start of the intervention, Wave 3 occurring nine to twelve months into the intervention and Wave 4 taking place 9-12 months post intervention. Data used in the present study were collected at Wave 3, controlling for Wave 1. Additionally, HLM analyses engaged the Wave 4 participants. Youth were compensated with \$20 to \$30 gift cards for their completion of the questionnaires, based on the wave of data collection. Self-reported measures utilized in the study are detailed in the table below. The research assistants were available to give assistance during the survey administration.

In addition to the self-report surveys, parent report of mentee demographic information and emotional and behavioral functioning was also assessed. Parent surveys were sent home with mentees at Wave 1, Wave 3, and Wave 4 for parents to complete. Upon completion, parents were compensated with a \$10 to \$20 gift card, dependent on the Wave of data. Academic record data were also requested from the school district for each participant, including their proportion of school days attended, the number of disciplinary offenses recorded, and their GPA for the most recent school year.

Table 1. Quantitative Measures – Mentors

MENTORS	
<i>Constructs</i>	<i>Measures & Reliability Coefficients at Wave 1</i>
Internalizing and externalizing symptoms	Youth Self-Report (Achenbach, 1991) Internalizing: $\alpha = .905$ (14 items) Externalizing: $\alpha = .889$ (30 items) Post-traumatic stress symptoms: $\alpha = .814$ (14 items)
Perceptions of neighborhood environment	Neighborhood Environment Scale (Elliot, Huizinga & Ageton, 1982) $\alpha = .686$ (15 items)
Perceptions of neighborhood cohesion	Neighborhood Youth Inventory (Chipeur et al., 1999) $\alpha = .851$ (15 items)
Character and contribution	Positive Youth Development Inventory (Arnold, Nott & Meinhold, 2012) Character: $\alpha = .921$ (9 items) Contribution: $\alpha = .869$ (7 items)
Stress	*Multicultural Events Schedule for Adolescents (Gonzales, Gunnoe, Samaniego & Jackson, 1995) and Stress Index (Attar, Guerra & Tolan, 1994) $\alpha = .795$ (17 items) *Only negative stressors like violence and loss were included. Items addressing neutral stress (e.g., moving houses) were removed.
Expectations about the future	Future Expectation Scale (Wyman, Cowen, Work & Kerley, 1993) $\alpha = .800$ (6 items)

Endorsement of aggression and non-violent strategies	Beliefs about Aggression and Alternatives (Henry, Farrell & Project, 2004) Beliefs about aggression: $\alpha = .723$ (7 items) Non-violent alternatives: $\alpha = .700$ (5 items)
Ethnic identity membership	Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992) $\alpha = .882$ (12 items)
Strength of relationship with mentee	Mentor Strength of Relationship (Rhodes, Schwartz, Willis & Wu, 2017) $\alpha = .702$ (10 items)
Attitudes toward violence	Attitudes Towards Violence Scale (Funk, Elliott, Urman, Flores & Mock, 1999) $\alpha = .728$ (15 items)
Attitudes toward youth	Attitudes Toward Youth (Herrera et al., 2007) $\alpha = .624$ (6 items)
Grit	Grit (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009) $\alpha = .670$ (8 items)
Social Support	Social Support Scale for Children – Revised (Dubow & Ullman, 1989) $\alpha = .909$ (15 items)
Leadership	Leadership (Richards et al., 2013) $\alpha = .827$ (8 items)
Self-esteem	Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) $\alpha = .821$ (10 items)
Self-efficacy	Brief Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (Tipton & Worthington, 1984) $\alpha = .820$ (9 items)
Empathy	Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980) $\alpha = .747$ (14 items)
Social Interest	Social Interest Scale (Crandall, 1975) $\alpha = .192$ (14 items) *This scale was removed from analyses due to poor reliability.

Table 2. Quantitative Measures - Mentees

MENTEES	
<i>Constructs</i>	<i>Measures & Reliability Coefficients at Wave 1</i>
Parent report of child's behavior	Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach, 1991) Internalizing: $\alpha = .851$ (32 items) Externalizing: $\alpha = .948$ (35 items) Post-traumatic stress: $\alpha = .829$ (14 items)
Sense of school as a community	School Sense of Community (Battistich & Hom, 1997) $\alpha = .825$ (10 items)
Stress	*Multicultural Events Schedule for Adolescents (Gonzales et al., 1995) and Stress Index (Attar et al., 1994) $\alpha = .670$ (17 items) *Only negative stressors like violence and loss were included. Items addressing neutral stress (e.g., moving houses), were removed.
Expectations about the future	Future Expectation Scale (Wyman et al., 1993) $\alpha = .753$ (6 items)
Endorsement of aggression and non-violent strategies	Beliefs about Aggression and Alternatives (Henry, Farrell & Project, 2004). Beliefs about aggression: $\alpha = .703$ (7 items) Non-violent alternatives: $\alpha = .763$ (5 items)
Ethnic identity membership	Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992) $\alpha = .856$ (12 items)
Strength of relationship with mentor	Youth Strength of Relationship (Rhodes et al., 2005) $\alpha = .837$ (10 items)
Social Support	Social Support Scale for Children – Revised (Dubow & Ullman, 1989) $\alpha = .897$ (15 items)
Self-esteem	Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

	$\alpha = .779$ (10 items)
Self-efficacy	Brief Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (Tipton & Worthington, 1984) $\alpha = .645$ (10 items)
Attitudes towards gangs	National Youth Survey and Ebenson's (2001) gang definitions (2001) $\alpha = .484$ (13 items)

A final note about data for mentees, after the project began, concern about participant fatigue led Chicago Public Schools to limit the number of measures we were able to engage in our project. We had to eliminate several surveys from our protocol and drastically limited the number of outcomes available for studying the effects of mentoring for the mentees.

Qualitative Measures

Data collection procedures. To better understand the experiences of the youth mentoring relationships while conducting program evaluation, qualitative data were also collected. Several qualitative data collection protocols were derived from previous work (such as peer-to-peer interviews, eco-maps, and mentor letters), and some were developed specifically for this project (such as debriefing forms and exit interviews). The qualitative data utilized were participatory, largely drawing from relevant theories. The purpose of participatory action dimensions of the project was to give youth the opportunity to experience themselves as partners in the research process, by contributing to problem formulations, data collection, data analysis, and dissemination of findings (Fine, 2012; Ginwright, 2010b). The impact of the participatory action process aims to be that the research experience is constructively meaningful for subjects and empowers the subjects and their community. The participatory action dimensions of the project addressed two priorities:

- 1) The need to develop best practices program designs for cross-age mentoring with clients who are from diverse cultural sub-groups, especially given the historical social exclusion of these groups from similar social and mental health services;
- 2) Including participants' perspectives about the impact of the SLIY program in particular for themselves and their mentees, and even more specifically, understanding whether

they believe SLIY affects how they feel about responding to the community violence in their neighborhoods, and if it does, how it does.

From a standpoint protecting human subjects, qualitative and participatory action-based data from our project fall into two primary categories:

- 1) Data gathered from material generated in the normal process of service provision, such as field notes (so there is no alteration in the service process for research purposes), and
- 2) Data gathered with the subjects specifically for the purpose of program evaluation and service improvement.

Data about how the program was carried out provides researchers with a clear picture of the independent variable (the intervention method) used in the research process.

For the B. category of data, youth are trained to be co-researchers and play a vital role in gathering the data, analyzing it, checking the findings, and co-authoring research products.

The qualitative data collection and analysis aimed to allow the youths' voices to dominate the discourse about the services they co-created and co-evaluated. The qualitative data helped include mentor perspectives about the impact of the SLIY program (in particular, for themselves and their mentees) in addition to surveying youth understandings of whether they believe SLIY affects how they feel about responding to the community violence in their neighborhoods. The questions addressed and methods used are summarized in the following list:

Table 3. Questions addressed by participatory/qualitative data

Participatory/ Qualitative Evaluation Questions	Qualitative Data Source									
	Field notes	Mentor debriefing forms	Mentee debriefing focus groups	Entry letters	Exit Letters	Peer-Led Evaluation Interviews	Exit Interviews	Photo-documentary	Eco maps	Youth-led Website
What can mentors tell us about their experience of mentoring on an ongoing basis?	✓	✓						✓		✓
What can mentees tell us about their experience of being mentored on an ongoing basis?	✓		✓					✓		
What do mentors want to let others know about their experiences, their communities, and about mentoring?	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
What hopes and concerns do mentors bring to the cross-age peer mentoring program?	✓	✓		✓					✓	
How do youth experience community supports?	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
What can youth share with other youth and staff about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program impact • Ways of improving the program • Experiences of community violence • The impact of the website • Whether the program helped them manage anger and choose non-violent modes of coping and, if so, how 	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
What does an observer see happening in the mentoring and debriefing sessions?	✓						✓			
How can we involve youth as co-researchers?	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓

In order to regulate bias, triangulation was used in three predominant ways:

1) Positionality or perspective (who is the observer/interviewer and whose opinions are elicited?); diversity of perspectives contributes to a more complete picture of the meaning of the program and its implementation;

2) Epistemological frames used for data gathering (verbal unstructured interview, verbal survey, non-verbal, focus group, etc.);

3) Diversity of theoretical assumptions used for understanding the meaning of data.

Some data were gathered over the entire length of the program (field notes and debriefing forms), using triangulation to look for findings across multiple types of interviewers and using multiple different forms of interviews, as is summarized in Table 4 below.

It was not possible to gather qualitative data comprehensively from all mentors and mentees who participated. Almost all completed entry-level qualitative data collection instruments of eco-maps and letters. Every mentee who attended the mentoring sessions participated in mentee debriefings. For some mentor debriefing sessions, youth priorities such as reactions to recent violence took precedence over completing debriefing forms. Similarly, exit procedures were more complicated as youths' needs as the program ended took priority, so some youth were unable to complete exit interviews, letters, and peer-to-peer interviews. Moreover, some youth were able to complete the qualitative data but not the standardized measures, and so they had to be dropped from the Wave 3 data set. Consequently, several qualitative data instruments were completed by subsamples of youth. We examined the representativeness of these subsamples, using t tests to test for differences between the subsample who completed the data and those who did not. Most subsamples were representative of the entire group of mentors; when differences occurred they would not impact the meaning of the qualitative results.

Table 4. Qualitative Interviewers

Mentors self-report	Mentor with peers	Staff
Entry letters	Peer-led evaluation interview	Field notes
Ecomaps		Focus groups
Debriefing forms		Exit interviews
Exit letters		Mentee debriefing
Photodocumentary		

Types of Qualitative Data

Entry letters. At the start of the mentoring program, mentors completed entry letters for staff to describe the hopes and concerns they brought to the mentoring program. The entry letter asked three specific questions: “What is life for you right now in your family, your school and your community?” “What would you like help with?” “What would you like to get out of the mentoring program?”

Ecomaps. Ecomaps have long been utilized as visual depictions of social networks and social support (Crawford, Grant, & Crews, 2014), but there has been limited research on the use of ecomaps in research and practice with youth from high crime, high poverty communities of color. Ecomaps are heavily grounded in ecological and family systems theories, and are made especially meaningful for the researcher when they are created together with service staff, resulting in a visual representation of the individuals’ perception of the surrounding communities’ support systems and the quality of the connection between them (Nguyen, H., Grafsky, E., & Munoz, M., 2016). Upon starting the program, mentors and mentees completed ecomaps to examine the quality of youths’ social supports. Because they are pictorial, youth may experience them as more user-friendly and less intrusive than other forms of data gathering.

Mentor debriefing. The mentor debriefing session was created to allow mentors the time and space to reflect on their experiences during a particular session or activity. They were directly asked about their experiences with mentoring, namely:

1. What they liked and valued about the program?
2. What they did not like about the program?
3. What areas of the program they felt could be improved?

The debriefing forms consisted of several Likert-style ratings covering various aspects of the relationship with the mentee, such as their impression of the mentee’s availability to communicate and the mentor’s satisfaction with her/his communications with the mentee. There were also open-ended questions eliciting other comments mentors might have and the goals they framed for helping their mentees. It was designed as a touchstone for debriefing sessions, to help staff troubleshoot in case mentors were shy about sharing difficulties in the group, and also to

give the research team access to the evolving nature of the mentor-mentee relationships, from within the subjective experience of the mentors.

Exit letters. Upon completion of the mentoring program, mentors were asked to write an exit letter as a method to collect qualitative data, and to determine to what extent did the cross-age peer mentoring program have an impact on them. The mentors were asked three questions: “Could you put into writing what you feel you have learned from this program?” “Are there any skills you learned from this program that you can apply in your daily life?” “Are there any problems you still would like to solve?”

Photodocumentary. Photodocumentary has been used around the world to enable persons to participate in research, self-expression, and social services who otherwise tend to be marginalized in society and scientific knowledge development (Hergenrather, Rhodes, Cowan, Bardhoshi & Pula, 2009). It is also used by practitioners developing services to assess community needs, for example, in a rural, largely illiterate community in Kenya (Kingery, Naanyu, Allen & Patel, 2016). It is a promising strategy for promoting community change and positive identities in youth, enabling marginalized youth to express their concerns and strengths (Wang, 2006).

SLIY staff posed the question: “What does mentoring mean to me?” Youth were asked to answer that question by taking a photo that represents mentoring to them, and write a narrative explaining the connection between the question and photo. Photo-documentary pictures and narratives were gathered during the final phase of the program, with 132 total photo-narrative projects. 55 were completed by mentors, 62 by mentees, and 15 completed by mentor/mentee pairs. The data are youths’ responses to the question, “What does mentoring mean to me?” and the corresponding photos, which are images from around their neighborhoods, providing visuals of how youth conceptualize about community strengths.

Mentors and mentees were engaged in a highly participatory process as youth co-researchers to help staff organize, analyze, and develop a book intended to challenge dominant social narratives about youth of color living on the south and west sides of Chicago. Specifically, they were engaged in an open-coding process with staff to identify preliminary themes found in

the narratives. Youth co-researchers are also helping staff plan an art show at the Loyola University Museum of Art to share their experiences with the general public.

Peer-led program evaluation protocol. The Peer-Led Program Evaluation Protocol (Peer to Peer Interview) was a youth participatory evaluation (YPE) designed as a component of the termination procedures for mentors completing SLIY. The aim of the Peer to Peer Interviews were to give mentor participants an opportunity to evaluate their experiences in the intervention, present feedback about the mentoring program, and comment on their community concerns. The measure was developed as a participatory evaluation tool to give youth an opportunity to serve as program evaluators and be recognized as important contributors to the assessment of the program.

Mentors were divided into pairs to conduct the evaluation as a peer-led interview. In each mentor dyad, one mentor (the interviewer) was tasked to ask the other mentor (the interviewee) questions on the protocol in a semi-structured interview format, probing for additional information when necessary. Once finished, the interviewer and interviewee are instructed to switch roles to give each mentor an opportunity to be interviewed by their peer. The Peer to Peer Interviews were administered approximately 9-12 months after the beginning of each mentoring site.

Field notes. The process of recording field notes was designed to model techniques from Emerson and colleagues (2011). Field notes were collected during each mentoring session and included as qualitative data to document:

1. Attendance of mentors, mentees, and staff at each weekly mentoring session
2. The agenda for each session and what specific activities occurred as part of programming
3. Pertinent issues/concerns/quotes that represent what occurred during the session and any reminders to note for the following week
4. Direct quotes from each mentor during the mentor debriefing portion of the session to capture their highs and lows of the week, their perceptions of how the mentoring program is going, suggestions they may have for future activities or improvements to the program, and concerns/ problems they may want help addressing as a group

Staff members either typed notes as they observed the session, or jotted down notes by hand that are then typed up immediately following. The Research Coordinator was designated to record field notes given that the Site Director and Intervention Coordinator are typically more busy attending to programming implementation. Staff were encouraged to use shorthand to help record as much as possible during the session. Field notes vary in length depending on the session location (e.g., time for debriefing, number of mentors, number of staff members present and able to record notes). Voice recorders were utilized for parts of session that needed to be transcribed word for word (e.g., focus groups).

Mentor focus groups. The final mentor focus group was designed to occur within the last month of each of the mentoring sites for the purpose of engaging the mentors in discussion surrounding the impact mentoring has had on them, as well as process the discontinuation of the mentoring program and provide emotional support to each other. Ideally, the final focus group for mentors occurred at the same time as the focus group for mentees in separate rooms, so that participants feel they can speak freely and understand that their responses will be kept confidential and only associated with their ID number.

Mentors were separated into small groups, if enough staff members are available with enough recording devices. Staff members used tape recorders to record the mentors' verbal responses, with probes for elaboration when needed from the staff member. Staff members were also trained in appropriate focus group techniques, such as asking open-ended follow-up questions such as "Tell me more about that" without being leading or disapproving.

Mentee focus group. Similar to mentor focus group, the final mentee focus group was also designed to occur within the last month of each of the mentoring sites for the purpose of engaging the mentees in discussion surrounding the impact mentoring has had on them, recommendations for improvement of the program, as well as process the discontinuation of the mentoring program and provide emotional support to each other. Procedures were similar to the mentor focus group, where research staff members recorded youth responses to questions designed to assess the mentees' knowledge gained through the program and what components of their mentorship are related to these positive developments and changes. Staff members are also

trained in how to make sure questions are explained in developmentally-appropriate ways if needed.

Exit interviews. Exit interviews were conducted approximately 9-12 months after the beginning of each mentoring site, as a program evaluation for mentors and mentees. The interviews were specifically used to capture the youths' reflections about their involvement in the program as well as their feelings and thoughts about termination. Moreover, exit interviews were designed to elucidate nuanced information about the mentor experience that would otherwise not be captured, specifically the mentors' experience of violence engagement before, during and at the end of SLIY. The interviews were individually administered by one person from the research team. Like the debriefing forms, the exit interviews were designed specifically for SLIY. The exit interview structure was largely drawn from Co-Principal Investigator Katherine Tyson McCrea's prior experience with a similar effort that collected consumers' evaluation of residential program services for homeless mentally ill adults, using an interview and survey administered at discharge. This particular format was based on the consumer evaluation tradition in mental health care, which has yielded valuable information for service providers and researchers (Tyson McCrea & Spravka, 2008).

Mentee debriefings. The mentee debriefing session was designed to occur monthly for about 30 minutes at each of the mentoring sites for the purpose of engaging the mentees in program evaluation discussion of the process of mentoring, what parts of the program they like, and what parts of the program they think should be improved. This session was also designed to be fit in between activities with their mentors so that they still receive time for programming that day. The monthly debriefing session occurred without mentors present so that mentees were assured their opinions were kept confidential and were free to speak of their experiences. Groups of one staff member per up to 5 mentees were chosen to maximize discussion from each mentee in small groups.

During the mentee debriefing session, research staff conducted a focus group with mentees, asking questions that assessed whether key aspects of the mentoring process have been fulfilled: general approval of the mentoring program, activities done in programming, the specific mentoring match, and positive qualities of a good mentor (e.g., feeling comfortable

sharing with them, feeling listened to). Mentees then received a chance to expand upon why they felt these components were met or not. Such questions provided avenues for mentees to critique the program and offer guidance for future sessions while highlighting the parts that have been most beneficial to them. Staff members were trained in appropriate focus group techniques, such as asking open-ended follow-up questions such as “Tell me more about that” without being leading or disapproving. Finally, staff members were encouraged to take field notes while recording, so that the comments can be reviewed by staff members at each site to improve programming for the following month.

Analytic Plan

Quantitative. A criterion power analysis (G*Power v3; Faul, Erdfelder, Lang & Buchner, 2007) was performed to determine the minimum acceptable type-1 error rate worth illuminating in the following linear multiple regression and moderation analyses. Given high attrition rates in the mentor and mentee samples, there are smaller longitudinal sample sizes than expected, resulting in decreased power to detect significant effects. With analyses incorporating as low as 40 participants, up to 12% type-1 error ($p = .12$) is necessary to report with 80% power to detect medium-sized effects ($f^2 = .15$) (Cohen, 1992).

Mentee. As discussed previously, only 19 parents completed both Wave 1 and Wave 3 surveys, including 16 treatment and 3 control. This low sample size indicates greatly reduced power to detect statistically significant differences between groups, even when effect sizes are large. For this reason, longitudinal analyses of parent data were not performed and are not reported in the results below. The variables of neighborhood and Child Protective Services Involvement (CPSI) were found to significantly relate to most of our outcome variables, thus they were included as covariates in all our analyses. School sense of community was not included in the below analyses due to limited sampling (see Data Set Irregularities for additional information). Correlations of all waves of variables, as well as means and standard deviations, are presented in Table 18 for Wave 1 and Table 19 for Wave 3.

Qualitative. The qualitative analysis proceeded as follows: Three coding manuals were developed to code the field notes, using a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), with

construct validity provided by relevant theories. The manuals addressed **risk** (at micro, meso, and macro levels drawing from Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) systems theory and including concepts from trauma-focused theories, such as Courtois & Ford, 2009; Gil, 2011; Ludy-Dobson & Perry, 2010), **resilience** (using concepts from resilience theories such as grit, self-efficacy, social support in response to loss); and **program impact** (capturing specific program activities and youths’ and staff’s perceptions of program impact). Dominant themes were identified for Risk, Resilience, and Program Impact coding manuals from a subsample of field notes, and from those axial codes were developed (between 12-16 for each manual). Then, field notes were coded. Coding categories were added as needed to code the peer-to-peer interviews, exit interviews, and focus groups. An inter-rater reliability standard of 90% or better was required in developing the coding manual before systematically coding the entirety of data. Copies of coding manuals are included in the Appendices. Thematic analysis is used below to describe most of the findings; for some findings (such as youths’ entry and exit letters), content analysis is used to summarize coding quantitatively.

Youths’ letters upon starting and ending the program, mentoring session debriefing forms, eco-maps, the community concerns questionnaires from the peer-to-peer interviews, and the free response question from the Future Expectations measure from the self-report questionnaires (Wyman et al., 1993) were coded and entered into SPSS for content analysis. The debriefing forms, community experiences questionnaires, and eco-maps results are still being analyzed. We expect those analyses will be completed by Spring 2020.

Photodocumentary narratives were analyzed with a team of mentor co-researchers. Three co-researchers compiled a preliminary list of themes, which were distilled into axial codes that then can be used to code all 132 narratives. The coding process is still underway; preliminary codes are included below:

Table 5. Preliminary Photodocumentary Codes

Axial Codes	Representative Data Excerpts
<p>Code 1: “Being true to yourself”: Self acceptance, feelings of being free, and self-liberation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes mentions of inner-peace 	<p>“Going through life, we have so many opportunities to grow and flourish. In school, in our communities, in the way that we step up to the plate to execute our roles as leaders in the groups that we’re in, we</p>

	become something. If we don't use those opportunities to build character and explore our identities or reflect on ourselves as we are...we miss out on becoming something beautiful and strong" (Mentor).
Code 2: Forming committed, lasting relationships & bonding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including any mention of investing significant time in relationships 	"When having a relationship with your mentee it's important to create some type of bond with them. If you want to be a good mentor not only do you have to establish a bond, but it needs to be a strong bond. A bond as strong as a lock and chain. When you have that bond, you and your mentee become closer and you build trust with one another" (Mentor).
Code 3: "Saving Lives" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Preventing Youth "From Going Down the Wrong Path"</i> • Includes preventing violence engagement, other criminal activities • Includes mentoring as an alleviation of social problems (i.e. poverty, racism) • Includes redirection of behavior by mentors, showing mentees a different way to be 	"Growing up in the Neighborhood 1 section of Chicago, you are often depicted with negative stereotypes. Some seem to fall into the stereotype because they did not have someone there to help guide them to be different. That's when a mentor is needed; mentors help show the mentee that they can be a shining image of their true self without letting the "hood" define them. The mentor is the water to help stimulate the seed to grow into their own (Mentor).
Code 4: Helping youth develop/helping others/mutual growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes finding purpose, inspiration 	"My picture was a tree. It relates to mentoring because the tree needs help growing and it needs help growing the right way. This relates to mentoring because the mentee needs help growing the right way" (Mentor).
Code 5: Safety	"I feel safe when I'm up in here [safe sign shown in picture]. My mentor makes me feel safe. It is important because you have to be safe in the environment where you are. How it is important is because you have to be safe from danger" (Mentee).
Code 6: Happiness and fun	"To me this photo speaks that your mentor does not take everything seriously.... But both of you could also have fun together.... And the reasons I picked this photo is

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes short term happiness, feeling positive as an immediate feeling 	<p>because that mentors could also be fun..." (Mentee).</p>
<p>Code 7: Providing love and care for others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excludes growth (coded as Code 4) 	<p>"...These flowers represents time, love, and care. In order to grow anything you must be able to provide these things. This relates to mentoring because I want to help my mentee grow into a better person" (Mentor).</p> <p>*The first sentence of this example would also be coded with Code 2 because time is mentioned in the context of forming relationships.</p>
<p>Code 8: Future preparation/working towards better future; hope, hopeful about future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes mentions of specific goals Includes general hope about future in life outlook Excludes short term happiness (Code 6) 	<p>"This picture says 'New Hope' which relates to mentoring by always having new hope. If something makes you feel a certain way you can always get new hope by talking to a mentor and they can make you feel better. A mentor is supposed to be by your side and always give you good advice if you are feeling down. Hope for better things in the future because for me I hope for success in the future" (Mentee).</p>
<p>Code 9: Trust in relationships</p>	<p>"You can trust your mentor during a problem like if you have a problem in the streets your mentor will understand the problem that happened in the streets of Chicago and your mentor will help you with that problem so you can get that problem solved and out of mind" (Mentee).</p>
<p>Code 10: Building community within their neighborhood environment and peer groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes mentions of collectiveness and teamwork 	<p>"I do feel like this can change a lot of our neighborhoods but we all have to play a role in it and not be afraid" (Mentor).</p>

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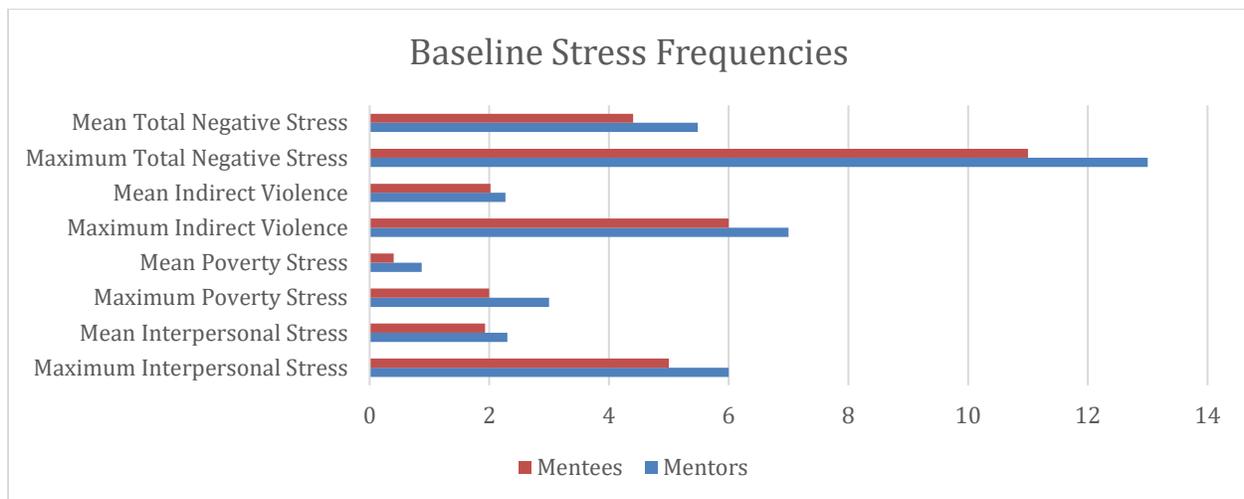
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Chapter 4. Context of Risk and Resilience

Context of Risk and Resilience

In addition to gaining a qualitative understanding of mentor program impact, the project sought to assess the extent to which youth reported elements of risk and resilience in their daily lives. Quantitative reports of negative stressful event exposure at baseline revealed higher levels of stress for mentors entering the program compared to mentees. Types of stress included indirect violence exposure (e.g., witnessed a shooting or beating; 7 items), interpersonal stress (e.g., death of a loved one, living in a foster home; 7 items), and poverty stress (e.g., food insecurity; 3 items).

Figure 3. Frequencies of Stressful Events at Baseline for Mentors and Mentees.



Thematic Analyses of Risk

SLIY mentors and mentees resided in neighborhoods with disproportionately high proportions of deep poverty, unemployment, health disparities, and single-parent families as discussed in the introduction. To better understand the youths' experiences of extreme deprivation on multiple levels, following are summaries of youths' comments about the risks inherent in their environments. These statements were organized by codes in the Risk coding manual and derive largely from field notes by staff. The comments quoted in discussion qualitative findings below are representative of other comments made, but are by no means exhaustive, as in general each excerpt quoted represents 20-30 similar excerpts.

Resource deprivation. In SLIY sessions, the youth discussed the effects that manifold stressors had on them. Although many were clearly ashamed about impoverished conditions, they expressed concerns about being able to access food, transportation funds, hygiene supplies, and health care for family members. The youth also described the conditions of extreme poverty and the challenges associated with being deprived of basic needs, including resources, support, and safety:

Table 6. Resource Deprivation Excerpts

<p>Hunger</p> <p><i>“My low [during highs and lows] is I’m still hungry, I haven’t eaten anything all day because there wasn’t nothing at my house” - Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“Many of our mentors expressed how hungry they were throughout session. The popcorn we brought wasn’t enough to placate their hunger, and as a result, there was low focus and low energy.” – Staff report from Field Notes</i></p> <p><i>“I just kept getting in trouble with teachers, and then I had an in-school for two days, and I didn’t know about it, so they didn’t let me eat no food. I was crying because I was hungry.” – Mentor</i></p>
<p>Other Resource Deprivation</p> <p><i>“I feel like I am going to need financial support with college. My dad works and my mom but I don’t really have much support financially.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“[Mentor] was irritated because grandma has no money for his haircut.” – Staff report from Field Notes</i></p> <p><i>“I didn’t have a way to get here. I literally went on the green-line and waited for someone to tap me on [to pay for train fare].” – Mentor</i></p>
<p>Lack of Resources in School and General Negative Interactions with School Staff</p> <p>(Regarding lack of safety in school) <i>“My teacher told me that I was fat and that I need to exercise and lose some weight in front of the whole class, and I started crying.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“My teacher was crying today because someone punched her.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“Everyone is getting bullied these days.” – Mentor</i></p>
<p>Health Issues, Stress Reactions, and Access to Healthcare</p> <p><i>“She had a panic/asthma attack during track practice.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“I have been asking people about counseling for my anger issues and I am not getting any help with that at all.” - Mentor</i></p>

<p><i>“For the last two weeks, I haven’t been talking to nobody. I haven’t been laughing, smiling, but crying. I was depressed.” - Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“My low for the week is I ain’t been getting no sleep.” – Mentor</i></p>
<p>Youth is Concerned about Lack of Support in Family due to General Stress or Loss</p>
<p><i>“I lost 9 people this year. 8 of them was my family, the 9th is him. I lost a lot of people, so when that happened...it don’t really hit me until I see them in the casket.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“I lost my Daddy.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“I lost my friend yesterday, so I wasn’t feeling it today.” – Mentor</i></p>

Violence exposure. In addition to concerns like pervasive loss, poverty, and lack of healthcare, SLIY mentors and mentees discussed their experiences with violence exposure and engagement. Specifically, youth indicated that they were exposed to community violence, dating violence, family violence, and violence within their schools. They also described experiencing a loss of psychological support, emotional trauma, or neglect from their primary caregiver, as well as general exposure to psychological violence:

Table 7. Violence Exposure Excerpts

<p>Exposure to Physical Violence at all System Levels</p>
<p><i>“Someone pulled a gun to my head and threatened me.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“They always shooting and gang banging violence is at an all time high.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“I witnessed 3 shootings two which resulted in death.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“People dying on my block almost every other week.” – Mentor</i></p> <p><i>“It was gang-related, it was people that weren’t supposed to be at the school. They actually broke into the school, had guns, and was ready to like actually shoot us; multiple boys that was in my classroom, because of they went to their house and did something, 24 hours of that day, so it was like...” – Mentor</i></p>
<p>Concerns about Exposure to Psychological Violence</p>
<p><i>“I don’t like my Foster Mom. I used to go through verbal and physical abuse and never became a case with DCFS.” – Mentor</i></p>

“[Mentee] reminiscing on how her mom used to treat her, once saying she regrets having adopted her.” – Staff report from Field Notes

“But, my mama, the one that adopted me. I’ve had many issues with her. She has said, ‘I wish I never adopted you. You ain’t never gonna be nothing.’ - Mentor

“My aunt is petty. She won’t give me my daddy’s phone or ashes.” – Mentor

As is true of many adolescents who experiment with illicit behavior at some point, SLIY youth described their own conflict with the law and entanglement in physically conflictual relationships (with youth other than SLIY youth). They trusted staff enough to confide such activities. Following are examples that indicate how these generally prosocial youth could become entangled with negative social networks and then, at those times, act on hostile motives.

Table 8. Youth in Conflict Excerpts

Youth in Conflict with the Law or School Rules, Engagement in Violence
<i>“I got into a fight today because a lot of people mess with me.”</i> – Mentor
<i>“Well I wasn’t involved in...well actually I was. Actually I jumped him. About my brother being in a gang. And being with some dudes, and the dudes had some of them females and like I jumped them.”</i> – Mentor
<i>“I guess we saw a car running and it was cold. People leave their car running and we was walking. We see the car. I took it I don’t know why. I was in the mindset. He got in and it wasn’t his plan. It was my plan. And we just took the car. I was driving that car all day until the gas run out, parked it and left.”</i> – Mentor

It is important to emphasize that the youth above all had very positive outcomes in SLIY, and in the exit interviews specifically described having learned to forego violent and illegal activities.

Table 9. Intimidating Experiences Excerpts

Intimidating Experiences with Unrelated (non-familial) Authority Figures
<i>“Yes, actually this was recently. My mom’s, not to put her out there, but she smokes cigarettes so like, I went down the street to get cigarettes for her and the lady like, she was so bad, like she would not give me the cigarettes, if I ask her for 4 cigarettes she only give me 2 and she take me dollars or whatever. But like, I had this thing where I had to like open her gate, and I had to ask her like, I say ma’am, this not my money this my mom’s money. I understand that y’all need money but how bout you just take one of my dollars instead of like just taking my</i>

mom's money because I'm responsible for what she's had. Um, I don't want to buy cigarettes, you can just have the dollar, I don't mind but please don't take my mom's money. And, she actually wasn't caring, she threw it all back out the window like she locked the door, threw it all back out the window. And I was just like, fine.” – Mentor

“When this man on the bus got to calling me out of my name.” – Mentor

“When a teacher put her hands on me.” – Mentor

Youth Police Interactions and Perceptions. One aspect of the peer-to-peer interviews concerned the youths' community experience. It is well-known that youth residing in low-income, high crime communities are exposed to stressors that are numerous and varying. Disproportionate rates of being targeted by the police, lack of police accountability, and perceptions of unfair and racialized treatment are likely to have a cumulative effect on youth interactions with police. Although negative outcomes associated with police encounters with urban youth of color have been established, research is limited by a lack of clarity regarding the formation of youth perceptions of safety based on their encounters with police. Data derived from the Peer to Peer Interviews helped illustrate how mentors describe their perceptions and interactions with police. When asked to describe encounters with police, youth largely reported a diverse array of negative interactions. Most often, they witnessed negative interactions between the police and other youth, which they found frightening and unfair. Being stopped by police without cause was the second most frequent negative interaction with police reported by the youth. Youth who reported negative interactions with police reported lower perceptions of neighborhood safety, whereas youth who reported neutral interactions with police endorsed higher perceptions of neighborhood safety, suggesting that experiences with police impact not just how youth feel about police, but also might have important implications for the youths' sense of safety in their neighborhoods as a whole.

Other stressors at school. Youth also described their concerns with succeeding academically due to stress, including failing classes, missing school, and dropping out. They also discussed feelings of hopelessness and failure regarding their academics, and the feeling of being unable to succeed or master a skill or academic subject. Includes feeling overwhelmed by

responsibilities; difficulty with time management. They also discussed negative thoughts they had about themselves, including self-deprecating thoughts or thoughts about hurting or killing oneself, as well as risky sexual behaviors associated with exposure to violence.

Table 10. School-based Stressors Excerpts

Concerns about Poor Academic Performance
<i>“I haven’t been in school in a long time. Which messed my grades up.”</i> – Mentor
<i>“She’s [mentee] has been ditching school.”</i> – Mentor
<i>“My low is it’s hard to organize my time.”</i> – Mentor
Sexual Behavior Associated with Stress
<i>“Oh, it was just, this is like a couple days ago. It was like my neighbor across the street. So we was over there, we was playing cards, we was cool. Then that’s when my homie showed up then, we played cards, then he left. Then the neighbor, the one I was with, he asked me could I help him do something for him, so I helped and he tried to kiss me, and I told him nah bro, I ain’t gay. That was just it. That was one thing I did.”</i> – Mentor
<i>“Boys always try to convince me...”</i> – (female) Mentor
<i>“I was walking in the classroom, and the boys treat the girls wrong, and be feeling on them.”</i> – Mentor

Racism and discrimination. Mentors and mentees also reflected on risk factors related to more macro and mezzo level systems. The youth indicated a fear of being discriminated against, including communications indicating historical trauma and perceptions or fear of society’s negative stereotypes about African Americans. They also discussed their concern about a lack of input into the Democratic Process, as well as a political climate, which resulted in feelings of powerlessness. The youth indicated that they also had many negative experiences with those with power and authority in their communities, such as the police and other adults. As all mentoring sites were located in hyper-policed neighborhoods, youth discussed issues, like: instances of reaching out to police for help and not receiving that help as well as staff communications about seeking police help and not receiving it (e.g. staff member reports child abuse and police refuse to protect child, saying “call us from inside the home” even though the family was widely known to have illegal guns). Also, the youth referred to wanting to get help from police but stating that

they chose not to do so due to mistrust or fear of the consequences of that encounter, or stating in general that they have a negative view of police. They also described mistreatment by police, including police criminal behavior (stealing their IDs, smashing their cell phones, harassing them, endangering them). This included having contact with police that the child concludes was a violation of their rights or an adversarial meeting.

Table 11. Racial Discrimination Excerpts

Concerns about Racial Discrimination
<p>“I feel like there’s a war going on - I’m afraid that things will go back to the way they used to be for black people. Like white people will go back to calling us n****rs again.” – Mentor</p> <p>[Asked by staff how black people are portrayed] <i>"Ignorant"; "Slow"; "Lower level"; "Jail birds"; "People beneath them. That we can't amount to anything they can do. Young black people that graduate from the best colleges still not equal." "That we dumb"</i> <i>"That we got the most single parents"</i> <i>"African-American men like white women more than African-American women."</i></p> <p><i>"For the stereotype to be thrown in my face that as I get older, I'll go to jail, that's offensive to me. My education is very important to me."</i> – Mentor</p> <p><i>"People don't want us Blacks to rise up"</i> - Mentor</p>
Concern about Lack of Input into Democratic Process, Political Climate Resulting in Youth Experiences of Powerlessness
<p><i>"He's the president and there are some things he can do."</i> – Mentor</p> <p><i>"Mr. M taught us that our votes don't count."</i> – Mentor</p> <p><i>"I wouldn't even want to help no more... it makes us look weak, we are not prepared, we ain't united, we aren't no team."</i> – Mentor</p>
Concerns about Injustice in the Criminal Justice System and Negative Interactions with Police
<p><i>"My friends and I saw a big fight. Trying to break it up. Police thought she was involved and she got beaten."</i> – Mentor</p> <p><i>"I got slammed by the police before."</i> – Mentor</p> <p><i>"They [police] threw my belongings on the ground and drove off."</i> – Mentor</p>

“Last summer my friend and I was playing basketball. He ran home to get something to drink. When he came back there was shooting at the end of the corner. We were at the other corner but they arrested him and held him for 15 hours because they thought he was the one shooting.” – Mentor

“I recently saw them shoot someone.” – Mentor

Thematic analyses of resilience

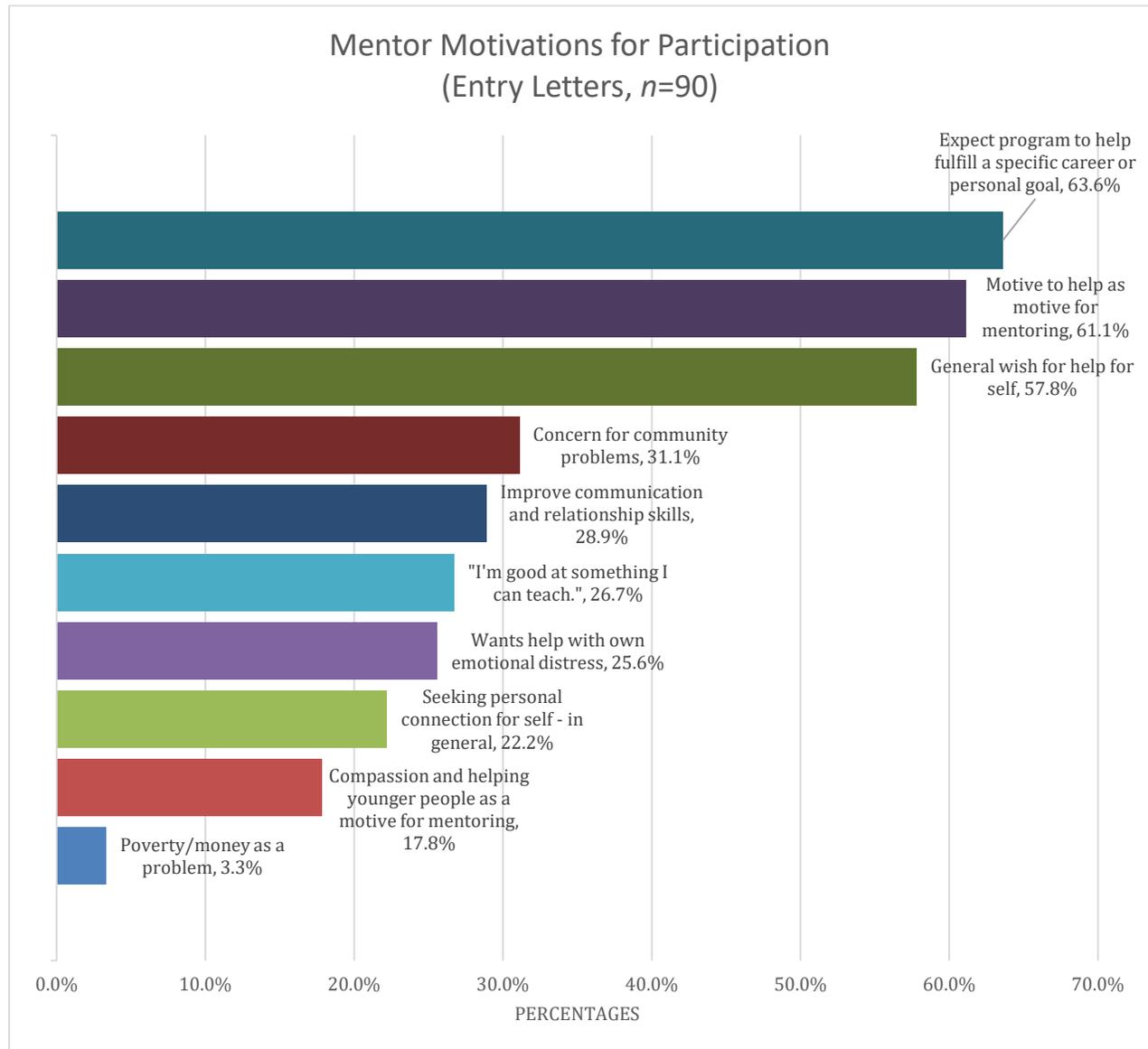
As was found in quantitative data, SLIY mentors entered the mentoring program as prosocial youth, with relatively strong bases of resilience that they were able to rely on in the face of ubiquitous risk. The SLIY mentoring intervention utilized a strengths-based framework, in which staff were trained to recognize existing sources of resilience that youth draw upon, and work with the youth to strengthen and sustain those sources for the future.

Youth Letters Regarding Prosocial Motivation. The mentors’ entry letters, responding to the question of why they wanted to participate in the program, illustrate their positive motivations and goals. The entry letter format asked three specific questions: “What is life for you right now in your family, your school and your community?” “What would you like help with?” “What would you like to get out of the mentoring program?” The mentors’ responses to these questions provided qualitative data that were coded. A coding manual was developed based on 15 percent of the letters and the axial codes that emerged, and the interrater reliability rate was above 80 percent. A total of 91 entry letters were scanned and analyzed. These qualitative data were entered into SPSS and analyzed. The results showed that major themes emerged that captured the powerful motives for youth mentors participating in the program, which included themes of assistance with personal goals, goals of helping others, and a desire to help themselves (Figure 5). Sixty-four percent of the youth mentors were motivated to participate in the program to receive assistance with specific personal goals such as learning “how to educate,” 56.3 percent of the youth participated in the program seeking a general form of help for themselves. Again on the theme of seeking help for themselves, 26.4 percent of the youth sought a personal connection. About 22 percent of youth expressed significant personal distress they wanted help with.

A large proportion of youth expressed motives to help and show compassion to others: 60.9 percent of the youth said specifically they wanted to help others, and 20.7 percent said they

knew the suffering the children in their community were experiencing and wanted to help alleviate it (coded as compassion). Perceiving the major problems in their communities, 23 percent said they wanted to help with community problems. Another indicator of their generosity was that over 34 percent of the youth mentors wanted to give back to their community. Figure 5 illustrates the breakdown of codes from the entry letters.

Figure 4. Entry Letter Content Analysis



Sources of resilience. Additional qualitative analyses describe the ways in which SLIY youth exhibited resilience. For example, qualitative analyses revealed that mentors and mentees drew upon their relationships for resilience. Social supports they mentioned included spending time with significant others, peers, mentees, family, giving and receiving encouragement, and valuing the mentor-mentee relationship. Also, youth described receiving and providing support aligned with the concept of Ubuntu (Zulu for “I am because we are”), experiencing themselves

as empowered through the give and take with community members as if they were family members. Additionally, youth described value-based communication, leadership, and non-violence as sources of resilience. While the resilience analyses covered the length of the program, the comments below come from the programs’ inception – to reflect the resilience with which the youth came to SLIY. Again, the excerpts quoted below represent more than 20-30 similar codes.

Table 12. Sources of Resilience Excerpts

Relevant Resilience Codes	Representative Statements by Youth
Social support	<p>“I feel like all the mentees trust everybody in here, basically. They see that we come in here every Friday and Wednesday, or whatever day we come in, and we take time out of our time to come see them and stuff.” – Mentor</p> <p>“We know they process it. We know like how far along they came. Like because, like I said, because sometimes they do open up, and maybe they didn’t want to because someone could judge them. The fact that they become more open with us and trust us, it’s a good thing because they actually talking to us much more than when we first started out.” – Mentor</p> <p>“My favorite part of the program is actually bonding with the kids, with the little programs we do as far as the learning sheets we do with them I love the way they respond you know, the kids are very active and open to getting to know new people.” - Mentor</p>
Ubuntu	<p>“Me and my peers...we’re all feminine and we all understand each other. We have one common goal, the same goal. And above that, they are great. I couldn’t have asked for anyone better.” – Mentor</p> <p>“Feeling like I have a family and I have somewhere to go myself I feel like this place has made me feel at home and there’s more to</p>

	<p>live for more to look forward to, you know? Happiness is not too far away.” – Mentor</p> <p>“She [mentee] got a little boyfriend or whatever. She’s been ditching school. She’s been cursing and kissing and everything. I was like ‘Why are you ditching school?’ And she’s like ‘Cuz it’s fun.’ I was like ‘No it’s not.’ I told her it wasn’t good.” - Mentor</p>
<p>Ability to resolve conflict constructively and without violence</p>	<p>“I learned that I can control myself like when people talk over me. I learned that I can work with people that I don’t like.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I cannot be quick to ‘pop off’ at somebody because I never know what they go through behind closed doors.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I am gonna use it when I get to work and in school. I used my skills last night, and my best friend broke up and I had to talker her out of doing things she was trying to do...the skills I learned here. And somebody poured their heart out to me, and I used a lot of stuff I learned here. I used it at school and at work. I work with people and crowds, especially my self-control.” – Mentor</p> <p>“Mentee was telling me his story – he got in trouble at school. They called his parent and felt some type of way. I just told him to take a couple of deep breaths, you can count, do the ABCs.” – Mentor</p>
<p>Communication and relationship skills that are value-based</p>	<p>“I learned how to have patience with younger children.” – Mentor</p> <p>“What worked well was letting the kids know that somebody actually cares and will listen to them and help them out.” – Mentor</p> <p>“Because without trust, you can’t really communicate. I don’t really know how to explain it, you just need trust to have somebody to be there for you.” – Mentor</p>

Leadership	<p>“I feel like kids need role models. I am a role model to my mentee.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I feel like I’m a good role model and I felt that me having a mentee I could be able to influence them to do good things.” – Mentor</p> <p>“Yeah, I felt like I had a chance to be a leader. Actually saying what I think is best for the program, you know, that my opinion even matters, you know, that we actually consider binding all of our ideas together.” - Mentor</p>
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Another form of resilience SLIY youth demonstrated was a focus on their goals and opportunities. This included pursuing academic goals related to classes, grades, college, graduation, and career aspirations. They turned to hope and positive expectations as ways to reduce the effects of risk factors such as exposure to violence. Their hopes manifested in various ways, such as belief in a higher power, beliefs about changing one’s future and destiny, and hope related to their future family, education, and career. Additionally, the mentors and mentees often discussed opportunities available to them and how best to take advantage of them. The following table expands upon these sources of resilience:

Table 13. Goals and Opportunities Excerpts

Relevant Resilience Codes	Representative Statements by Youth
Pursuit of constructive academic goals	<p>“I got accepted to North Central College, Illinois College, UIC, and Dominican. Dominican was my number one choice. I plan to go there.” – Mentor</p> <p>“She [mentor] told us she will be going to school for Nursing, but she is still figuring out when she will be starting (she will know after her test results). She told us she will still be committed to the mentor program even in the Nursing program.” – Staff report of mentoring session</p> <p>“For all my grades to get up to A’s and B’s.” – Mentor</p>

<p>Future expectations and hope</p>	<p>“I feel excited about the program because it is like a different learning experience for me. It opened so many doors for me like me working with kids, interacting with others, and going into my community and participating with others that I did not know.” – Mentor</p> <p>[Mentor] wants to have family later in life so she can travel the world. – Staff report from mentoring session</p> <p>“Look, all I wanna say is only your future and your self motivates you. Not other people being like oh good job, it’s your future and your self. I know a lot about science, but I failed, but I also know that I know things.” – Mentor</p>
<p>Perception of opportunity and ability to make use of it</p>	<p>“I have the chance to be a big sister to a little kid.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I got three jobs. Soon I’ll have four jobs.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I had a job interview with that medical internship over the summer. It was Tuesday. I dressed real nice. First, he got into a lot of personal topics.” – Mentor</p>

The youths’ resilience was also partially based on internal, psychological factors, such as grit, self-efficacy, self-determination, and positive racial identity. The youth demonstrated grit by overcoming obstacles and challenges related to finances, relationships, and loss. Their self-efficacy manifested in gaining comfort in their ability to grow and taking steps to achieve their goals. Self-determination had to do with their autonomy, competence, and belief that they could choose their own goals (Deci & Ryan, 2000), while positive racial identity was based on the ways in which youth celebrated their racial and ethnic heritage and the ways in which they expressed pride relating to their ethnicity and race.

Table 14. Internal and Psychological Factors Excerpts

Relevant Resilience Codes	Representative Statements by Youth
Grit	<p>“Because I don’t come to mentoring a lot. Sometimes I have to go homes on Thursday to watch my brother so that my mother can leave. When I left to go to my cousin’s funeral someone took my spot. In January I will not be cut-off from cheerleading anymore.” – Mentor</p> <p>“Yesterday, my friend died. He got shot. We went to the candlelight yesterday. I went to my friend’s funeral on Tuesday. It was kinda hard. [Mentee] had an attitude.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I was crying in front of everybody on Tuesday. Everybody kept getting in my face, and it made it worse. Today, [mentee] just made me mad. I barely wanted to come, but I did.” – Mentor</p>
Self-efficacy	<p>[Mentee] “I don’t know what his problem is, but I’m going to fix it. He don’t listen. I don’t understand why. I know someone just like him, so I got that.” - Mentor</p> <p>“My long term goal is to be a soccer player. To make that happen I have to make little league.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I am already applying the skills from here to work.” – Mentor</p>
Self-determination	<p>“I learned confidence because I had my own mentee and I'm usually shy when it comes to new people but during this program I learned that sometimes you just gotta go for it.” – Mentor</p> <p>“You all helped me help myself. Being around the kids helped me. I made better choices in my life because of them.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I usually be afraid to go out and do what I'm suppose to do so I can go and reach my goal</p>

	so maybe this program gave me a piece of mind that I could go out there and be a people person, because like I said before I don't really like people like that.” – Mentor
Positive Racial Identity	<p>“I think Black History Month is for people who fought for our freedom”; “they died for us to be free.” – Mentor</p> <p>“[Mentee] talked about how he designed his picture around his Mexican/Hispanic background. [Mentor] drew R2D2 and tried to add some Hispanic references.” – Mentor</p> <p>“Barack Obama, I’m thankful to him.” – Mentor</p>

In addition to relying on support from others, positive relationships, and psychological facets of resilience, SLIY youth also affirmed each others’ perceptions that systemic injustices were the problem, not themselves as people (in concert with a critical consciousness approach to youth work, see Ginwright, 2010b). They discussed oppression and collectively reflected on ways in which they could contribute to positive community change. They strove to respond by “taking the high road,” when faced with institutional or societal injustices.

Relevant Resilience Codes	Representative Statements by Youth
Contribute to positive community change	<p>“You’re giving back to the community because you’re giving the kid a place to turn to and taking them off the streets.” – Mentor</p> <p>“Because I think the mentors should have a good like special relationship with the mentees so that they can understand like so they can talk to them and understand violence is not the key and all that to get them to stop for whatever they're doing.” – Mentor</p> <p>“It's just one step at a time and I feel like I'm making a big difference in peoples' life and that's something that I'm proud of.” – Mentor</p>

	<p>“I do believe it can help but we have to start by showing them we are the change. We are the ones who makes the change. We settle for less we settle for more and we go for what we want- you know? There's no stopping us.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I do feel like this can change a lot of our neighborhoods but we all have to play a role in it and not be afraid.” – Mentor</p>
<p>Being Able to Persist with One's Goals for Positive Social Support in the Face of Injustice</p>	<p>“I didn’t let what happened to me affect what I did up here.” [A group of mentors were yelled at the reception desk. The mentors said they didn’t say anything back. [Mentor] said that if this keeps happening, she doesn’t want to come back.] “We was positive. We didn’t say anything.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I think it’s good they’re standing up for their rights” – Mentor</p>
<p>Collective reflection on oppression as a base for resilience</p>	<p>“I definitely feel like the kids’ [mentees’] voices matter. They wanna grow up and have a nice life like us. They don’t wanna struggle with what they’re struggling with. They shouldn’t be struggling with what they’re struggling with now. They’re just kids.” – Mentor</p> <p>“I think moving on, and how politics are with Donald Trump being president. I think about my status in this country, it brings fear. When you are little you don’t really focus on all those closed doors. I would hear adults talk about it but I did not understand. Now that I am growing up I am already facing that. Getting to those closed doors and not knowing what to do after that.” – Mentor</p> <p>“No closure from police killings. Public forgets about victims” – Mentor</p>

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Chapter 5. Mentee Findings

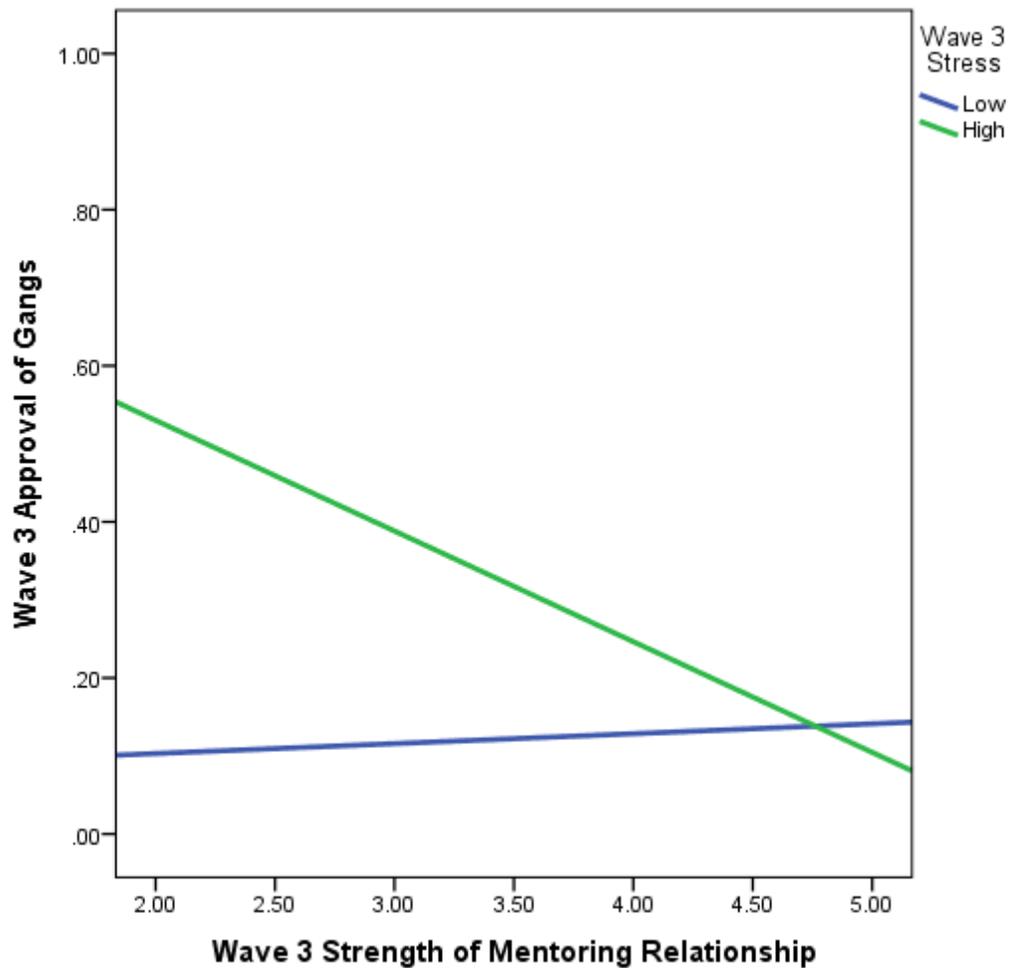
Quantitative Findings

Regression analyses for Wave 1 to Wave 3. When regression analyses were computed on the ten outcome variables with attendance as the independent variable and the baseline scores for each outcome along with neighborhood and protective services as covariates, no significant results emerged for the whole group, suggesting that according to the quantitative data, our measure of quantity (attendance) did not predict to our outcomes for the mentees as a group. Table 20 shows all basic linear regression results. Our measure of quality (mentor strength of relationship) predicted several changes in mentee outcomes when trending effects were considered. For all analyses involving less than 80 participants, $p = .120$ or less was reported as trending significance. In contrast to attendance, mentor strength of relationship predicted higher self-esteem at Wave 3, as well as higher future expectations, better beliefs about aggression, and less interest in gangs among all intervention mentees.

Moderation analyses for Wave 1 to Wave 3. Next, the moderators of gender, social support, and stress were individually examined in regressions separately with attendance and mentor strength of relationship predicting to each of the ten outcomes (Table 21). Several significant and trending results emerged from these analyses suggesting some support for our hypotheses. Gender significantly moderated the relationship between attendance and self-esteem with boys showing a significant positive effect of mentoring on improved self-esteem. There was also a trending gender moderation of attendance to future expectations indicating that among boys, program attendance predicted better future expectations. No other gender moderations were found with attendance. Turning to MSR, two trending effects suggested that, MSR predicted improved attitudes towards gangs among girls specifically, as well as fewer disciplinary infractions among boys. Social Support moderated effects of attendance such that mentees with more support reported better attitudes towards gangs with more attendance. Among those with more support, MSR predicted better beliefs about aggression and more days present in school. Stress as a dichotomous moderator (high versus low stress grouped by a median split) of attendance produced one significant moderation effect for racial identity with trending effects of lower ethnic identity for those with fewer stressful experiences and higher

ethnic identity for those with more stressful experiences. Stress moderated the relationship between MSR and several outcomes. For higher stressed individuals, MSR contributed to higher future orientation, higher racial identity, and improved attitudes towards gangs.

Figure 5. The relationship between strength of mentoring relationship and approval of gangs at Wave 3 for mentees, moderated by negative stressful events at Wave 3.



HLM Analyses to include Wave 4. Multilevel modeling is used when there is clustering among the data. This can include data when the research is a longitudinal design. In this case, the individual is the cluster in which their observations are grouped. Because the mentee data are longitudinal, utilizing multi-level modeling is preferred over traditional analytical methods. Using multilevel modeling is advantageous because it accounts for and measures the correlation between observations within the same person and the correlations between the individual

clusters. Additionally, multilevel modeling can increase the power by retaining more individuals in the analyses than traditional regression techniques because individuals do not have to have all time points to be included.

Table 22 presents the parameter estimates for three models examining the effect of mentee's attendance on their self-esteem score. To build upon this model, the first model included neighborhood and DCFS involvement at level one. Including these two participant variables appeared to help the model fit as indexed by a decrease in deviance. Having some deviance indicates that there is room for model improvement. The full model added attendance as a predictor to the model. Although indices of model fit decreased in small amounts, it is important to note that the attendance variable was significant in predicting participants' self-esteem outcome. The intercept 3.061 ($SE = 0.173$) is the expected self-esteem when Time = 0. At each successive occasion, self-esteem is expected to increase by 0.0146 for everyone. In another model examining the effects of attendance on an individual's beliefs about aggression, results were trending. This model included beliefs about aggression as an outcome variable, neighborhood and DCFS as control variables, and attendance as the main predictor. This model did not improve upon model fit but may be an important variable for future exploration because it appeared that attendance was changing mentee's beliefs about aggression in a positive way, $t(71) = -1.726, p = 0.089$.

Other models attempting to explain mentee's variation in self-efficacy, attitudes towards non-violence, future expectations, ethnic identity, and attitudes towards gangs did not find attendance or mentor strength of relationship to be important predictors of change. None of the three measures of academic engagement, GPA, days present in school, and disciplinary problems were significantly predicted by attendance or mentor strength of relationship in the HLM analyses.

The three different moderators were next examined in our HLM analyses of the ten different dependent variables. None of the relations were moderated by gender for attendance or mentor strength of relationship. Our second moderator, stress, dichotomized, moderated attendance as it predicted increased self-esteem ($p = 0.043$). The high stress group showed stronger relations. Stress, again, moderated the effects of mentor strength of relations on

attitudes towards gangs ($p = 0.022$) and school attendance ($p = 0.029$). The high stress group demonstrated stronger relations between mentor strength of relationship and both outcomes. Finally, social support moderated the effects of attendance ($p = 0.024$) and mentor strength of relationship ($p = 0.021$) on self-efficacy, with the stronger relations occurring in the group with higher social support.

Qualitative Findings

Utilizing various forms of qualitative data allowed for a more nuanced understanding of mentee experience in SLIY, capturing program outcomes from the youth's perspective. When evaluating mentee experiences, data were collected from both mentees in mentee focus groups, and from mentors' reports of their mentees, primarily in field notes. Specifically, when asked for their thoughts via interviews or debriefings, or when observed by SLIY staff via field notes, mentees described improved resilience (self-esteem, empathy, leadership), enhanced social bonds with their mentor, adaptive beliefs about aggression, and social support in response to the program. Relatedly, mentors also reported similar outcomes about their respective mentees.

Building resilience. Quantitative analyses revealed that mentees who reported higher stress reported increased positive resilience traits such as self-esteem and better future expectations. This was also described broadly by mentees in the qualitative data as a whole. Thematic analyses of qualitative data demonstrated that mentees reported that the mentoring program helped build resilience in a variety of ways (i.e., leadership, self-esteem, empathy). During one mentee focus group, one mentee reported that her mentor "helped [her] forgive, show empathy, and just learn to be me and to be humble." Mentees also described experiencing growth in their capacity to help others, be positive, and be more confident. One mentee reported that the program helped him be more "positive at school" while another reported that they became "a role model" in a mentee debriefing. During a termination mentee focus group, one mentee shared an increase in altruism from being in the mentoring program, reporting that "if someone does not know something and they need help, I help them so that they can help other people."

Mentors also reported observing improved resilience in their mentees. In an exit interview, one mentor reported observing receptiveness and openness in his mentee over time,

stating that he “know what his self-worth is and he knows how he is gonna get through every problem. I feel he has grown, because he wasn’t open, but now he talks to me and gives me a hug...” Another mentor reported similar sentiments during a focus group, reporting that her mentee “used to fight, insult people” at the start of their relationship. Over time, the mentor shared that her mentee “started listening, and she started coming in [to mentoring sessions] with good vibes. It all worked out.”

Improved mentor strength of relationship. In addition to gathering quantitative information on the variables of interest, qualitative data demonstrated similar outcomes for mentees in the mentoring program. Through using both the Resilience and Program Impact coding manuals, the findings demonstrated an improved mentor strength of relationship in numerous ways. Strong connections could be formed as the program progressed, and mentors and mentees got to know each other more deeply through engagement in activities. During an exit interview, when reflecting on the program, one mentee stated, “friendships affected me. I started hanging out with people I trusted in the mentorship program.” The mentoring program facilitated strong bonds, led to an increase in trust between mentees and mentors, and appears to have built a positive social network that has the promise of continuing outside the boundaries of the program itself. The importance of trust in the lives of the mentors was evident during a mentor focus group when one mentor said in regard to the role that trust plays in developing relationships “because without trust, you can’t really communicate. I don’t really know how to explain it, you just need trust to have somebody to be there for you.”

Better attitudes toward aggression. In a focus group with mentors and mentees, a mentee reported a decrease in aggressive tendencies which was attributed directly to attending SLIY: “it helps me get stuff off my chest. Peoples these days don’t stop till you put your hands on them. It helps me get that off my chest, sometimes the person comes to school and you get in fights. Before I came here, I had an attitude, but not since coming here.” Overall, the mentors seem to have had a real impact on mentees and their behaviors, helping them reflect on whether to act on impulse when they got angry, and teaching coping skills for anger management, such as talking over what bothered them with group members, using words rather than physical action, and “using the stress ball with rice,” when faced with conflict.

Social support. Per mentee report, the mentoring intervention also provided a supportive social network. When asked about their experiences, the mentees not only described the impact of the mentor-mentee dyad relationship, but also the mentoring program system consisting of other mentors, SLIY staff, and community collaborators. During a mentee focus group, one mentee described her solace in the program, sharing that when she attended “you guys showed me how to express my emotions and you guys helped me feel like I’m at home when I’m here.” Relatedly, when asked about her thoughts of the program in a focus group, one mentee reported that she felt as though she was “dedicated to a team now.” Mentees also shared that it was important to them that they felt cared for and heard.

Chapter 6. Mentor Findings

Quantitative Findings

The variable of neighborhood site location was found to vary significantly based on treatment group, therefore it was included as a covariate in all mentor analyses. Correlations of all variables, as well as means and standard deviations, are presented in Table 23 for Wave 1 and Table 24 for Wave 3 separately.

Regression analyses for Wave 1 to Wave 3. When regression analyses were performed for the 19 outcome variables with attendance as the independent variable and the baseline scores for each outcome along with neighborhood as covariates, very few significant results emerged for the whole group, suggesting that according to the quantitative data, our measure of quantity (attendance) did not predict to our outcomes for the mentors as a group. Specifically, more attendance in the mentoring program predicted significantly more internalizing symptoms. Our measure of quality (mentor strength of relationship) predicted significant change for some outcome variables for mentors in the expected direction, including increased empathy, self-efficacy, character, and grit as measured at the end of the program with baseline levels controlled (Table 25).

Moderation analyses for Wave 1 to Wave 3. Next, the moderators of gender, quality of perceived neighborhood, social support, and stress were individually examined, in regressions separately with attendance and mentor strength of relationship predicting to each of the 19 outcomes over one year (Table 26).

Gender. Gender analyses did not reveal findings in the expected direction for males. In particular, greater attendance in the program significantly predicted greater disciplinary offenses in school. Also for males, stronger perceived mentoring relationships were associated with greater internalizing, externalizing, and post-traumatic stress symptoms. For females, stronger perceived mentoring relationship predicted trending reductions in internalizing symptoms.

Neighborhood environment. After creating a high and low variable for negative neighborhood environment using a median split at Wave 3, those in better perceived neighborhoods reported less endorsement of non-violent alternatives with higher attendance in the cross-age peer mentoring program. Also in better perceived neighborhoods, greater strength

of the relationship with their mentee predicted higher ethnic identity, self-esteem, and more positive perceptions of their community. For those in worse neighborhoods, stronger mentoring relationships were associated with lower self-esteem and ethnic identity, but also fewer beliefs supporting aggression.

Social support. A median split was also used to categorize high and low social support at Wave 3 as a moderator. Stronger mentoring relationships predicted greater character after the year-long program, but only for those with low perceived social support.

Stress. When negative stress was used as a dichotomous moderator at Wave 3, those with low stress experienced less endorsement of non-violence after attending the program for one year, with this same pattern occurring for attendance and ethnic identity for those with high stress. Stronger mentoring relationships were associated with better GPA in school, but only for those with high stress. In sum, there were many results in the unexpected direction for mentors at the end of the program.

HLM Analyses. For the mentor data when examining Waves 1, 3 and 4 in one model, HLM was utilized for its capacity to examine three time points at once and for its capacity to enhance power. Our measure of dosage, attendance, did not predict to any of the 19 outcomes, suggesting no effects over time. In contrast, however, mentors' strength of relationship (MSR) significantly predicted a number of outcomes in the hypothesized directions. Mentors strength of relationship significantly impacted mentors' future expectations, $t(98) = 2.514, p = 0.014^*$, and reduced mentors' beliefs about aggression, $t(98) = -2.689, p = 0.008^*$, improved mentors' attitudes towards violence, $t(98) = 2.051, p = 0.043$, and improved self-efficacy, $t(98) = 3.166, p = 0.002$, and grit, $t(98) = 3.23, p = 0.002$. Mentor strength of relationship significantly predicted increased leadership, $t(98) = 2.179, p = .032$, character, $t(98) = 3.751, p < .001$, contribution, $t(98) = 2.488, p = .015$, empathy, $t(98) = 4.012, p < .001$, ethnic identity, $t(98) = 2.163, p = .033$, attitudes towards the youth, $t(98) = 2.258, p = .026$ and GPA, $t(98) = 2.418, p = .018$. The analysis of strength of relationship and self-esteem was trending significance, $t(98) = 1.694, p = 0.093$, but ultimately non-significant. Results indicate that the quality of interaction, rather than simply the frequency of interaction, impacted the mentors' outcomes on 12 of the 19 outcomes 9-12 months after the program ended.

Four separate moderators, gender, stress, social support, and perceptions of neighborhood, were next examined in our HLM analyses of the seven different mentor dependent variables. None of the relations were moderated by gender or stress level for attendance or mentor strength of relationship. Social support moderated attendance as it predicted increased grit ($p = 0.034$). Among mentors with low social support, mentor strength of relationship predicted increased grit. Mentors with high social support had equally high grit for strong and weak mentor strength of relationship.

Negative neighborhood environment perception moderated the effects of mentor strength of relationship on self-esteem ($p = 0.015$). Among mentors with more positive neighborhood environment perceptions, mentor strength of relationship predicted increased self-esteem. Mentors with high negative environment perceptions had similar lower self-esteem for strong and weak mentor strength of relationship. That is, when the neighborhood was perceived as more negative, self-esteem was low regardless of the strength of relationship.

Analysis of Mentor Findings based on sample of African-American youth

Self-efficacy and grit. As part of a dissertation, an additional analysis was conducted based on a subsample of only the African-American youth, to determine the impact of participants' attendance in SLIY on self-efficacy and grit. This study hypothesized that higher participant attendance in cross-age peer mentoring programs would predict higher self-efficacy and grit. A simple moderation analysis was used to determine if higher attendance in cross-age peer mentoring programs predicted higher self-efficacy and grit at wave three, when moderated by age. The results showed a significant positive main effect of attendance on self-efficacy, as well as a significant interaction effect between attendance and age on self-efficacy. Specifically, higher attendance predicted increased self-efficacy for younger mentors, but decreased self-efficacy for older mentors (conditional effects not significant for younger mentors). Similarly, this study found a significant positive main effect of attendance on grit, as well as a significant interaction effect between attendance and age on grit. Specifically, higher attendance predicted increased grit for younger mentors, but not for older mentors (conditional effects not significant).

The results also showed that trauma symptoms were associated with reduced self-efficacy and grit over time, but no significant interaction emerged between attendance and trauma symptoms.

Qualitative Findings

Theoretical bases for construct validity for coding categories. Several theories are relevant for supporting resilience for youth in high-poverty, high-crime communities, which are discussed in greater depth elsewhere (McCrea et al., 2019). Theoretical principles can provide a base for an explicitly theory-based program evaluation. In other words, theoretical principles yield guidelines or indices that a program should live up to in order to bring about change. By specifying those indices, one can then see whether, from clients' perspectives, the program lives up to those guidelines. Moreover, using theoretical principles explicitly facilitates linking findings with those from other studies, contributing to theory development, and providing construct validity.

Accordingly, theoretical principles for analyzing SLIY's program impact were drawn from the following theories: trauma-focused psychodynamic, critical youth studies (Ginwright, 2010b), positive youth development (Larson, 2000), trauma-focused and client-centered (Perry, 2006; Courtois & Ford, 2009; Gil, 2011), restorative justice (with regard to conflict resolution principles; Johnstone & Ness, 2013), and attachment (Sroufe, Carlson, Levy & Egeland, 1999).

Program Impact

Overview. Broadly speaking, the qualitative analyses yielded findings that the program was meaningful to both mentors and mentees. From a skeptic's perspective one might say this is because the youth that stuck with the program to the end were those who experienced it as the most meaningful. In reality, participation was deeply affected by contextual factors (poverty, fear of crossing gang lines, escalating community violence as the program went on, families moving to escape the violence, etc.), so while participation does indicate youths' opinion that it was valuable to them, in the communities SLIY served non-participation is not a clear indicator that the program lacked relevance.

To some degree, the meaningfulness of the program reflected in qualitative data may be because the grounded theory nature of the qualitative analyses made it possible to reveal the

impact the program actually had, across some variables that we had not expected and so did not plan to measure. Most notably among these, from youths' perspectives, were 1) improved communication skills and 2) a positive shift in self-image that seems to have resulted from: a) well-being experienced in the program, b) feelings of being idealized by mentors or mentees, and c) positive, caring connections with staff and other youth. This shift in self-image was broad, as youth seem to have experienced it. For example, youth frequently described a "high" of their day was being at the program, and they felt "happy" being there. It was unexpected, but clear in the data from field notes, peer-to-peer interviews, and exit interviews, that many youth made the direct connection between the enhanced well-being and relatedness that they connected to participation in the program, and their ability to think before acting, manage their anger, and forego violence. Accordingly, the qualitative results provide youths' perspectives on how their violence engagement improved. As will be seen below, youth regarded the program content on anger management and thinking before acting as directly improving their ability to make better choices in regulating their anger and aggression.

The bottom line for youth with regard to their critiques of the program was that they wished it had gone on for longer and more frequently, "more time." The following discussion unpacks the specifics of program impact as described by the mentors.

Violence Prevention. To examine program impact, one method used by evaluation researchers is to develop guidelines from relevant theories, and examine whether the data indicate that the program carried out those guidelines (also termed a process evaluation, Patton, 2014). The following discussion of how SLIY met one of its goals of helping youth prevent violence engagement draws from existing theories about what is needed for preventing violence engagement, and illustrates how, from youths' perspectives, SLIY matched up with those guidelines. In addition, the following yields insights about how preventing violence engagement works from within youths' subjective experience.

The first outcome of the SLIY program development was **violence prevention**. In examining the qualitative data presented in our youth mentoring program, results demonstrate that violence prevention was achieved in participants as involvement in the cross-age mentoring program helped them to develop both **self-regulation skills and good character**.

One major theme that researchers identify as important for violence prevention is the **development of self-regulation skills** (Perry, 2006). Participants made use of the cross-age peer mentoring program and the resources it provided them to develop self-regulation skills in order to reduce their internal levels of hostility and, essentially, forgo fighting. Noted by the qualitative findings in the exit interviews and codes pulled from the team’s developed Program Impact Manual this was done by 1) increasing general well-being, 2) giving participants a place to “get stuff off of my chest”, 3) undergoing a shift in values and empathy, as well as 4) acquiring coping skills. Table 5 illustrates relevant themes and representative youth statements.

Table 14. Relevant program impact themes and representative youth statements

Relevant Program Impact Themes	Representative Statements by Youth
Increasing general well-being	“The program made me feel better. I won’t be like I was before. If the situation came up again, I would calm down and not fight.” – Field Notes
Providing a place to “get stuff off my chest”	“Peoples these days don’t stop until you put hands on them, it helps to get that off my chest...Before I cam here, I had an attitude. But not since coming here.” – Mentor Focus Group
Shift in values and empathy	“Yes, it helped [me] not be violent. Definitely because I seen that hurting people is actually bad.” - Exit Interview
Acquiring coping skills	“They were teaching me not to be mean and keep my hands to myself and stop yelling at people” – Exit Interview

Violence prevention by building good character. Trauma-focused and developmental theories emphasize that violence prevention occurs as youth develop positive character traits that offer alternatives to the despair and enraged lashing-out that are associated with violent behavior (Gil, 2011; Ngwe, Liu, Flay & Segawa, 2004; Sroufe, Carlson, Collins & Egeland, 2005; Washington, 2014). Accordingly, another main theme presented in the qualitative data of this study was that **building good character traits** also contributed to violence prevention in participants. Different aspects of the program helped to build good character in participants and thus, helped to decrease involvement in and overall direction interaction with violence. Qualitative analysis indicated participants demonstrated and described the following traits during

the end phases of the mentoring program. These in turn were used to conceptualize “good character,” and captured in the Program Impact Manual:

- 1) Leadership/being a role model
- 2) Patience
- 3) Impulse control, anger management, and responding to conflict with kindness rather than retaliation
- 4) Showing mutual respect, collaboration, and how to support and encourage others
- 5) Hope, as a result of being in the program
- 6) Grit, as a result of being in the program
- 7) Listening to others, being reflective before acting
- 8) Building positive racial identity
- 9) Fulfillment, pride in mentee progress.

Table 6 highlights representative youth excerpts for each of the Program Impact codes regarding the above elements of building good character. Again, the elements that follow are representative of many more codes.

Table 15. Program Impact Codes and Excerpts from Youth – Building Good Character

Relevant Program Impact Codes	Representative Statements by Youth
Leadership, being a role model	“I always wanted to be a role model to someone. Younger people have not experiences what I have experienced so it feels good to be able to help them.” – Mentor Focus Group
Patience	“The patience I learned to have with these kids, I use it at home.” – Mentor Focus Group
Impulse control/anger management/responding to conflict with kindness rather than retaliation	“I learned that I can control myself like when people talk over me. I learned that I can work with people that I don’t like.” – Peer to Peer Interview
Showing mutual respect, collaboration, how to support and encourage con	“We gained trust. In order to work with each other we have to trust each other and have to know that the next person has your back and with us like we all hold each other together, you know?” – Peer to Peer Interview

	“I would say how you can work with people that you don’t like. Like you better yourself by working with people you don’t like, I’ll take that experience with me.” – Mentor Focus Group
Hope, as a result of being in the program	“I learned to be creative and follow your dreams.” – Field Notes
Grit, as a result of being in the program	“During the program I have an issue going on myself but I was still coming to work, I feel like coming here they always made me feel like I could come here and I realized that I’m strong even though I got stuff going on everyday.” – Peer to Peer Interview
Listening to others, being reflective before acting	“I feel like in the short time I’ve been here, I’ve learned how to be a little more serious and to step back and watch a little more, seeing what’s going on around me before I act.” – Field Notes
Building positive racial identity	“...But I learned more about my people and about the people.” – Peer to Peer Interview
Fulfillment, pride in mentee progress	“The mentee I have now, I feel like he is part of the future. He is so smart, his smartness and dignity, and his potential is going to lead him very far. He don’t need anybody to fuss at him, and I feel like he has self-determination. I don’t think he need motivation. I feel like he gonna make it. He know what his self-worth is, and he knows how he is gonna get through every problem.” – Mentor Focus Group

Pleasure in the service relationships. Trauma focused and psychosocial theories indicate services need to bring about safety, well-being, and general pleasure for young clients to promote resilience and affect regulation (Perry, 2006; Courtois & Ford, 2009; Barish, 2004). The Program Impact coding illustrated youths’ satisfaction and pleasure in being at the program. For instance, during the “highs” and “lows” that began mentoring sessions, it was very common that the mentors stated a “high” was being at the program:

Table 16. Program Impact Codes and Excerpts from Youth – Building Resilience

Relevant Program Impact Codes	Representative Statements by Youth
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<p>Being with mentees is a “high” (included in Highs and Lows, but other comments as well) – Services should provide safe, pleasurable space</p>	<p>“My high is seeing my mentee and there was no low.” – Field Notes</p> <p>“My high is I am here and y’all brighten my day a little bit when it was getting gloomy.” – Field Notes</p>
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Staff and peer support. For services to be effective in building resilience and preventing violence engagement, young clients need to be able to turn to the staff and other peers (as opposed to venting anger in conflict or soothing themselves with drugs, for examples) for support for the disappointments and losses they experience (Gil, 2011; Ludy-Dobson & Perry, 2010). The Program Impact coding manual found multiple instances of mentors describing how they turned to staff and peers for support during times of disappointment, such as, “Yes, I feel like she has helped me personally because when I do need her to talk to stuff about she does come help me and she’ll ask me to give feedback and stuff.” They felt supported in four general ways: through their bonds with mentees, with instructors, with peers, and these feelings generalized to the program as a whole. Table 8 highlights youth reports of staff and peer support in these ways:

Table 17. Program Impact Codes and Excerpts from Youth – Staff and Peer Support

Relevant Program Impact Codes	Representative Statements by Youth
<p>Facilitated strong, healthy bonds</p>	<p>“It’s good, I can talk to him with no difficulties.”</p> <p>“It’s good and I get a positive vibe from him. Like it spreads and it makes my day.”</p> <p>“He is fun and I get along with him.” – Mentee debriefing</p> <p>“I feel like, everything about my life has progressed, because I couldn’t keep a relationship for nothing, but this taught me how to build bonds.” – Mentor Focus Group</p> <p>“My favorite part of the program is to engage in an activity with my mentee.”</p>

Support from staff/instructors	<p>“Yes they helped em get through an issue I didn’t think I Could get through. They were here to listen and I talked.” – Peer to Peer Interview</p> <p>“Yes, actually yes. Besides just helping me, when my mentee was going through a lot of things. Like, really rough times I talked to them and they helped out a lot. And we started communicating more and that’s when like engaged more and also just general if I ever have any concerns or anything I would just go talk to them and they’re always there for me.” – Peer to Peer Interview</p>
General social support in program	<p>“Because I had people who would listen and give em words of advice to help me.” – Peer to Peer Interview</p> <p>“The instructors definitely have helped me. At the start of the program, they were helping me structure resumes and stuff. That was pretty helpful.” – Peer to Peer Interview</p>
Support from peers	<p>“My peers are really awesome and they really help and we really have fun together and we laugh all the time.”</p>

A capsule summary of the youths’ perspectives on the program’s impact with regard to their violence engagement, occurred in the exit interviews they had with staff. The exit interviews focused specifically on the youths’ experiences of violence engagement before, during, and at the conclusion of the program. Coders of the interviews were asked to summarize whether the youths’ opinions about the program’s impact on them were positive, mediocre, or negative. Coders rated all of the interviews as expressing SLIY’s positive impact.

Other salient aspects of Program Impact

When mentors asked each other what they got out of the program in the peer-to-peer interviews, and when mentors freely shared what they learned in their exit letters, one quality they highlighted was the **leadership and empowerment** they experienced by being co-researchers and co-planning mentee activities. For example, youth described how the participatory methods provided them with empowerment, such as with regard to the website:

“Um, I say yes because like people always asking me like what is mentoring, or like what do you do when you go to your mentor group. And I, I can explain it to them, but like more of like showing them the website, it’s showing them like what we do, it explains more than what my words say.”

“I think it could help to empower my peers. Personally, seeing other peers work on the website was interesting for me so I feel like the peers might have a similar idea.”

“Well the things I liked about the website is the fact that we get to show off what we’ve been working so hard to do, like everything that we work on is with our mentee and our mentees come here with a purpose and our mentees really come here to work hard and to bond with a person that can really guide them in their lives so I feel like that’s a really good thing.”

Through its participatory and community-based nature, enabling youth to be co-researchers, SLIY also helped promote **mentor critical consciousness**. Other researchers (Ginwright, 2010b; Fine, 2012) have emphasized the importance of fostering critical consciousness so that youth oppressed by multiple injustices realize the problem is not their personal inadequacy (internalized oppression), but rather environmental and systemic injustice. An example from our data is that at program inception some youth expressed negative racial identities associated with community violence (“black on black crime”) and began to think instead about community strengths and the unfair obstacles so many of them faced. Fostering critical consciousness in participatory action research for young people can potentially build their capacity to address the social inequalities that they face while working as co-designers and co-evaluators of services. Research suggests that the development of critical consciousness happens through group dialogue, participatory action, and empowerment in arenas known as “opportunity structures” (Watts & Flanagan, 2007, p. 784). Mentor responses on the Peer to Peer Interview also illustrate the development of critical consciousness, suggesting that SLIY existed as an opportunity structure for youth that enabled them to surmount feelings of inferiority and instead understand obstacles were outside themselves. The qualitative analyses of the interviews revealed three broad themes related to their involvement in the project: 1) Collective reflection on oppression as a base for resilience, 2) Opportunities to be agents of change in their communities, and 3) Promotion of leadership abilities. The findings suggest the importance of

including youth engagement strategies in programs aimed at promoting critical consciousness as youth are willing and able to utilize their own social capital to serve as agents of change.

Communication was one of the most frequently-mentioned skills when mentors interviewed each other and wrote their exit letters (which was not a capacity measured quantitatively nor had it been anticipated theoretically, so it is fortunate we had the open-ended data):

“The program is basically like making you open up. To me it’s like having like, showing your spirit, like how you is, how your emotions is.”

“Like how she said I would really use the communicating skills to talk to my niece and nephew because I don’t really talk to them as much cause I don’t really ask them what they did like how their school day was and everything. Also, coming to this program made me more open minded because I used to think that the kids never notice what is going on in their family or notice any problems, like when I talked to my mentee I noticed how much it affected him even though I thought it didn’t.”

“Yes. I would say my ability to converse with others without feeling so like an introvert. I’m more open now and I like that. This program helped achieve that goal.”

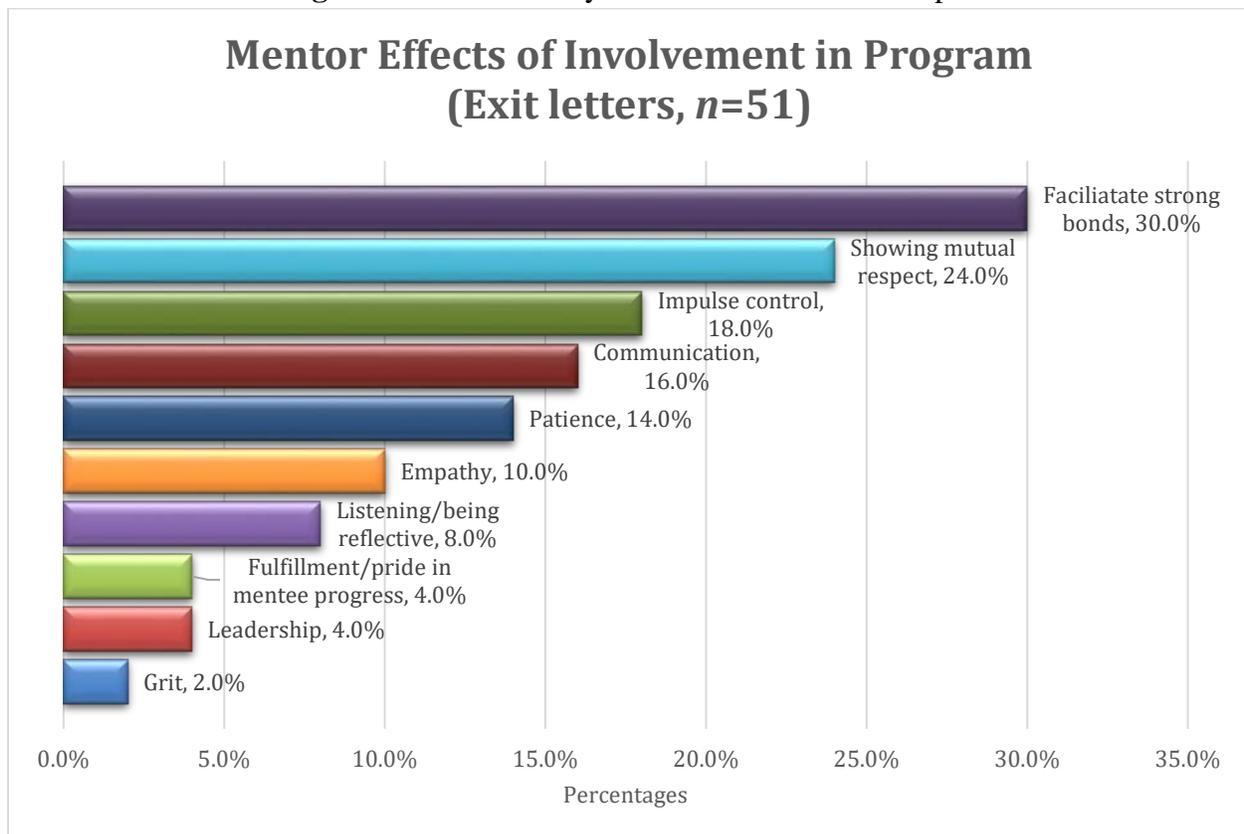
Findings from **exit letters** also demonstrated the importance to the mentors of developing communication skills. Mentors were asked to write an exit letter as another way to determine the impact of the cross-age peer mentoring program. The mentors were asked three questions: “Could you put into writing what you feel you have learned from this program?” “Are there any skills you learned from this program that you can apply in your daily life?” “Are there any problems you still would like to solve?”

Axial and sub-codes emerged from these data and were used to develop a coding manual. The interrater reliability rate for the letters coding manual was 91 percent. The coding manual consisted of three major areas of focus—program activities, mentors’ reflections, and the impact of programs’ impact on mentees. Each of the three major sections had axial and sub-codes. For the sections focusing on mentors, specifically their reflections, there were four axial codes and 14 sub-codes.

Fifty-one exit letters were coded and analyzed (Figure 6). SLIY’s predominant impact according to youth mentors was to facilitate strong bonds (30%) and improve their interpersonal

skills, especially regarding collaboration and showing mutual respect to others (24%), communication (16%), and empathy (10%). The youth valued and prioritized the reflectiveness associated with the ability to forego physical conflict: they mentioned they improved impulse control (18%), patience (14%), and listening to others (8%). Figure 5 presents the prevailing codes and their respective percentages.

Figure 6. Content Analysis of Exit Letters Subsample



Photodocumentary. To document and reflect the lived experiences of the participants, we built a thematic and content analysis of the youths' pictures and narratives from the photodocumentary (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). A team of mentors supervised by a staff member engaged in an open thematic coding analysis of the photo-documentary narratives, which were then used to create a coding manual. The preliminary analysis sheds light on what the youth themselves regard as meaningful about the positive social networks they are building. The themes that stand out thus far are: Safety, trust, idealization and acceptance, hope, pathways

towards a positive future, and healthy relaxation (“fun”). The youths’ themes point towards cross-age mentoring being a direct remedy for aspects of their specific disadvantages. They feel frightened and conceptualize mentoring as “safe as a home.” They feel devalued, and regard mentoring as a place where mentees can discover they are “beautiful” and “good.” They experience profound lack of opportunities and see the mentoring relationship as a place where youth can be helped to find pathways towards a positive future, “my picture about the [iron] bars represents help you get to get to the other side.” They feel disconnected, and see mentoring as a committed solidarity, “me and my mentee are connected for life.” They are worried about their communities and peers and see mentoring as a chance to “train a new generation in what to do and not to do.” The photodocumentary will result in a scholarly paper, an art book containing the photos, narratives, and contextualizing statements, and hopefully an art show. All three are well underway.

Ecomaps. 116 ecomaps were drawn with youth ($M= 16.82$, $SD= 1.37$) at the initial phase of the Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth, a Cross Age Peer Mentor Program located on the South and West Sides of Chicago. The sample is predominantly female (60.6% females; 39.4% males), Black (81.4% Black, 15.4% Hispanic/Latinx, .4% Native American, 2.8% Other/Multiracial), and 16% reported involvement with DCFS.

A preliminary analysis of the data revealed that youth used the ecomaps to describe the quantity of their support networks, with whom they had significant relationships, and the quality of conflict, cut-off, and support they experienced in each relationship. They described family members, friends, social groups such as police, and institutions such as school and church. The data suggest areas of significant loss (e.g. familial relationships, loss of friends/peers). The ecomaps also allow researchers a promising tool for exploring the validity of the eco-maps in relation to a perceived social support scale.

Chapter 7. Discussion of the Program Best Practices and Barriers

Sample and Engagement

There are important differences between the SLIY sample and samples for clinical and social services populations. The SLIY mentors were recruited to sign up for a job, as mentors were paid an hourly minimum wage for participating. The great majority did not see themselves as needing clinical services, and even if such services had been available, it is not likely they would have attended due to obstacles such as transportation and lack of cultural relevance. Therefore, comparisons with clinical and other social service samples, and the evaluation parameters used for those populations, have limited relevance. The SLIY youth are more accurately understood to be a subsample of the youth in their neighborhoods who are relatively prosocial, still involved with school and other social services, not involved with the criminal justice system for the most part, and who in the context of the gravely under-resourced communities and schools, would not normally be served by formal mental health or social services. It became clear, however, as the program went on that the SLIY youth suffered from deep poverty, exposure to community violence, police brutality, racial segregation, and educational deprivation to extreme degrees, with higher rates of suicidal ideation and other symptoms than comparable non-clinical samples in more privileged neighborhoods. Therefore, this type of preventive services can be thought of as a safety net, catching those youth who would not be served by mental health or other services but who can still be at risk for tragic life trajectories.

Program Barriers

SLIY also contributed to the development of cross-age mentoring best practices, and understanding how cross-age mentoring contributes to a theory of change (Garringer, Kupersmidt, Rhodes, Stelter & Tai, 2015). The following section describes barriers to implementation SLIY staff encountered, and how those were addressed.

As such, the overarching goals of SLIY were to foster positive youth development and reduce negative outcomes related to violence exposure over time among Black American and Latinx youth from low-income, urban neighborhoods in Chicago. Challenges to program

implementation included chronic exposure to violence, the realities of low socioeconomic status, racial oppression, secondary trauma, and navigating partnerships with community collaborators.

Chronic exposure to violence. The Chicago community context of violence had a profound impact on the SLIY youth mentors and mentees. The interpersonal and structural violence that these communities experienced, particularly with the spike in shootings, homicides and other violent crimes that occurred in Chicago in 2014-2016, presented serious challenges for youth and staff. For example, the annual increase in violence during the summer of 2016 reached such an apex in one neighborhood that the summer program was suspended. In winter, parents often required their children come home right after school due to the fear of after-school violence that could harm their children if they walked home from school unattended. Shootings caused the schools where the program was located to be “on lock-down.” Mentors and mentees often would arrive at the program having recently seen shootings and other criminal acts, and reported witnessing a homicide or losing family members and friends due to violence. During programming, one mentor who was briefly enrolled in the program was murdered. Staff routinely suspended planned agenda to offer support to distressed youth. Program planning sought to reduce these concerns by facilitating transportation to and from the mentoring program (giving youth rides, providing a van from the University), but the resources were not available to ensure safety for all participating youth given the circumstances. Staff also needed support because of their own distress at the community violence, and their sympathetic distress in response to the often-horrendous suffering of the youth.

Context of low socioeconomic status. The 2010 U.S. census data indicated participants resided in community areas with poverty rates ranging from 25.8 – 46.6% and per capita income spanning between \$11,000 to \$13,000 (City of Chicago Department of Public Health, 2018; Chicago Data Portal, 2012). Poverty had a major impact on mentor and mentee recruitment and retention. In several instances, mentees could not participate in the program because their parents worked two or three jobs and made arrangements for other after-school care. Many of the mentors worked jobs that provided more paid hours than what the mentoring program could offer. Retaining both mentors and mentees was difficult during the summer break because many mentors needed to work full time jobs to pay for basic necessities and mentees experienced

transportation and other summer related difficulties attending programming. Many participants were hungry during the after-school mentoring program, which led the program to offer food and snacks during sessions. Poverty posed obstacles to attendance as well. For example, a mentee who loved the program had to miss more than half the sessions due to having to care for an ill grandparent.

Internalized racial oppression. Internalized oppression among school administrators, staff and teachers served as a barrier to implementation, as well. Internalized racial oppression is conceptualized as beliefs, often unconscious, held by individuals regarding racist stereotypes, ideologies, and images. These, in turn, create doubt and a lack of respect for the racial minority groups toward whom it is directed (Pyke, 2010). The majority of the students participating in SLIY were Black. Although many of the youth who participated in the program were prosocial, school administrators and staff at one site criticized students in our program using racist stereotypes, describing youth as “gang members” or unfit role models. This internalized racial oppression in one of our school-based sites caused the program to end abruptly. When we asked the administrator to give us feedback about improving the program, he responded that we needed to recruit better kids who could serve as more exemplary role models for his students, pointing to “sagging” pants and wearing baseball caps; these stereotypes were untrue. Moreover, concurrent increased media attention targeting urban young people created a city-wide perception of black and brown youth as pathological and dangerous. Such factors contributed to challenges with establishing buy-in between community collaborators and SLIY (due to perceptions of high school mentors).

Secondary trauma. Traumatic events and their effects often impact not only those who are victims of trauma, but also those who are intimately involved with trauma victims. The indirect impact of trauma on caretakers of traumatized victims is known as Secondary Trauma Stress (STS), conceptualized as behaviors, emotions, and stress resulting from assisting or wanting to assist victims traumatized by violence (Bride, 2007). STS certainly was a barrier to establishing the current program in some schools. School staff experienced chronic exposure to the suffering of their students. As attempts were made to establish partnerships with various elementary and middle schools to provide mentoring, some school administrators were reluctant

and outright dismissive of the idea of bringing high school students into their school as mentors, even though the SLIY staff were always present. They feared it would inevitably be disruptive of their efforts to ensure safety. Many administrators and teachers understood the importance of cross-age mentoring intervention, but they were overwhelmed with stress due in part to the cutbacks in staffing and other resources the public schools in these communities endured. Therefore, at certain sites, school staff were hesitant to allow entrance to children other than those for whom they were explicitly responsible. While community collaborators tended to be heroic, some also appeared to express compassion fatigue and symptoms of secondary stress trauma.

Navigating partnerships with community collaborators. Tensions between research and practice may present challenges with this work (e.g., mistrust, stigma against research), particularly in marginalized communities experiencing systemic oppression and structural violence. This was also the case with SLIY. Such factors contributed to challenges with establishing buy-in between community collaborators and SLIY among others (e.g., perceptions of high school mentors, scarcity of resources, mistrust of research). Moreover, the schools and other organizations with which we worked experienced high staff turnover. This meant instability in our programs at certain sites. In several instances, losing staff members or community collaborators created major challenges to site continuity.

Macro-level limitations of funds. Limited funds for programs, based on state level budget impasses, as well as citywide and CPS budget shortages, created major challenges for our program and reduced the summer mentoring program as well as sustainability efforts (Richards et al., 2017). A partial budget was approved in June of 2016, and again in June, 2017, but these budgets only detailed temporary funding plans through, leaving much work needed to be done by legislators to continue balancing the budget and a state with bonds valued just barely above junk status. A United Way of Illinois State Budget Survey of 444 human service agencies revealed that 85% of respondents cut the number of clients they serve due to inadequate funding. Furthermore, since July 2015, the percent of programs supporting youth development that were cut rose from 8% to 31% in 2016 (United Way of Illinois, 2016). These budget cuts to youth development initiatives devastated after-school programming, at-risk youth intervention

programs, and programming aimed at prison diversion for youth. With the new partial budget, only 65% of social services costs would be covered, and it was unclear who would be paid when (Chicago Tribune, 2016). As of June 15, 2016, Chicago Public Schools, specifically elementary and secondary education, remained \$551 million in debt (Governor's Office of Management and Budget, 2016).

Program Best Practices: Solutions to Barriers

During the course of the project, SLIY research staff sought to adapt and evolve program services and research approaches to not only best fit the needs of the youth, but do so in a community-conscious manner. It is important to note that any changes made in the implementation plan did not interfere with the meeting of the original goals and objectives set forth in the project.

Family-Style Mentoring. Given the varying attendance from mentors and mentees each week due to stress or other obligations, mentors and mentees met in small groups more often than pairs, creating "mentor families." These "families" can help mentors overcome stressful obstacles (e.g., becoming stressed by the needs of their mentees) and can provide both mentors and mentees with additional supports provided throughout the intervention.

Community partnerships. Relationships with community collaborators have proven extremely valuable to implementation. These partners were essential to problem solving issues with the location and with encouraging youth participation. To address challenges with community collaborators, SLIY staff worked to adapt approaches to programming to best fit the needs and concerns of the community collaborators (e.g., adjusting mentoring times after-school, setting up consistent one-on-one meetings with collaborators, among others). SLIY also drew on the strengths of the youth mentors and involved them in the process. By increasing transparency while utilizing a participatory approach with the youth, SLIY staff were able to help build trust between community collaborators and the program.

Trauma-informed care. Low income families typically lack the time, money, access to transportation and child care required to make use of clinical visits, and the youth are more likely to share personal information and needs with an instructor or coach who has already earned their

trust through caring and sensitive responsiveness. Accordingly, mentor and mentee referrals were made to counselors from Loyola's Empowering Counseling Program (at times, separate from SLIY staff) for those youth requiring intensive individualized counseling. Counselors met with youth on their turf and within their time-frame (following youth assent and caregiver consent).

Counselors utilized a trauma-informed model within a humanistic, client-centered orientation to provide services to the youth. The building of trust was essential for clients to engage in any way with counselors. Clients set session agendas and were told explicitly that the aim of services was youth empowerment. Counselors addressed traumatic experiences at clients' pace, minimizing diagnosis so as to avoid stigmatization. Counselors supported youth in going to court, meeting with physicians, and obtaining resources (e.g., clothing). If clients temporarily backed away from services, counselors gently continued reaching out, as then clients typically resumed services.

Given the serious mental health concerns and needs of some mentors, SLIY staff attended Clinical Seminar Series. The series focuses on topics including psychosocial assessment, trauma and trauma-focused counseling, crisis intervention, and promoting engagement of youth in programming. As all sites have completed the intervention, the series has ended but staff have the opportunity to discuss relevant questions at weekly lab meetings. The lecture and discussion content that was developed for this series will form the outline for the clinical care chapter of the planned cross-age mentoring services book.

Sustainability. As violence and trauma occur at the individual and community level, interventions that target systems are needed to adequately address these public health concerns. One promising way to facilitate systems-level change in health strategies may be the promotion of task-shifting, or the training of less specialized community members to provide basic health services (Barnett, Lau, & Miranda, 2018). Task-shifting plays an important role in creating sustainable intervention efforts for those who are vulnerable in a community and in empowering those within a community who may be in a position to help long-term. This process is typically discussed and successfully employed as a way to address issues with the health care systems in

marginalized countries, where the shortage of specialized health care professionals has led to the training of paraprofessionals (Swartz, Kilian, Twesigye, Attah, & Chiliza, 2014).

In order to maintain our collaborations and relationship with youths in the communities, we employed a number of sustainability mentoring sites. The community collaborators at each site were vital in training the mentors, engaging the students in activities, and retaining the attendees from week to week. Supported by SLIY staff, the community collaborators utilized the SLIY trauma-informed training manual to train the youth on how to be an effective mentor. In efforts to make cross-age mentoring sustainable after the completion of the program, the SLIY team engaged community organizations in task-shifting. SLIY's approach to sustainability included training community collaborators and youth mentors, providing appropriate scaffolding as those programs developed, fostering more demanding leadership skills among eligible mentors, and increasing community service providers' organizational capacity by assisting with grant writing. The community collaborators and mentors shadowed our mentoring staff and met for weekly supervision until they were comfortable running the program on their own. To maintain programming, SLIY worked with community collaborators to develop three external sustainability sites in neighborhoods where programming had terminated. Additionally, SLIY staff implemented support groups at established sites to aid in transitioning the youth out of the intervention. During this time, trained staff members held debriefing-style sessions with mentors to check in about how have coped with the mentoring program ending, to support one another through life stressors, and maintain community outside of the formal program. Doing so illustrated the importance of implementing sustainability program as they were well-received by both mentors and mentees.

The importance of youth voice. Incorporating youth voice, feedback, and opinions throughout programming can help address the previously discussed barriers. Mentors and mentees have consistently told SLIY staff that they rarely felt heard in previous experiences with after school programming and that this caused them to feel disengaged and disempowered. The participatory processes utilized by SLIY contrasted the youths' previous experiences in after school programs. Specifically, youth were often able to choose and lead activities that interested them. They also co-evaluated programming through a peer-to-peer interviews, as well as during

mentor debriefing sessions that occurred at the end of each meeting. Additionally, mentors and mentees were engaged as youth co-researchers, in which their opinions and feedback were incorporated into studies to ensure findings reflected and accurately portrayed their experiences as participants. SLIY staff observed youth developing new and strengthening existing skills, like leadership and self-confidence. Emphasizing youth voice improved youth engagement and attendance. This also helped strengthen the relationship between mentors and mentees (Scholars Strategy Network, 2018).

The importance of sensitivity to LGBTQIA youth. Sensitivity to LGBTQIA youth is essential in programming; they are at higher risk for negative psychosocial outcomes (Ryan, Huebner, Diaz & Sanchez, 2009; Ryan, 2014). However, this is difficult to achieve if mentors are not given an opportunity to share their identity experiences in a safe space. Therefore, it is important for mentor training and programming to be affirming and inclusive to gender identity, sexual orientation, and ally-ship. Asking for participants to share their preferred pronouns is an example. It is also important to help mentoring staff understand that a youth's identity does not inherently define their interests and goals. Rather, it is a part of their overall identity that needs to be recognized and empowered.

Chapter 8. Discussion of Mentee Findings

For mentees, the quantity and quality of mentoring were significantly related, suggesting that as mentoring sessions increased, mentees viewed the strength of mentoring relationships as growing stronger. Our attendance variable acted like a dosage measure with no indication of a particular number of sessions acting as a cut-point, with sessions above or below that point showing different effects. Thus, we viewed it as a continuous variable with more sessions producing more effects. Quantity and quality of program produced similar results with outcomes at times, and affected outcomes differently at others.

Self-esteem and future expectations

Self-esteem and future expectations were two of the outcomes that showed improvements across analytic strategies and time, especially for boys and for high stress mentees. Boys' self-esteem showed a significant increase due to attending more mentoring sessions and with more strength of mentoring relationship, while high stressed mentees showed self-esteem and future expectations improvements from both quantity and quality of mentoring. Past research suggests an explanation for the male self-esteem enhancement from mentoring, especially when their mentor was the same gender, a strategy used in this program. When asked the reason for this, the mothers of these youths thought it was due to the boys' lack of a father figure in their lives (Phillips, Hagan, Bodfield, Woodthorpe & Grimsley, 2008). The experience of guidance from a mentor who is two to three years older, from the same community, and often was male, may have allowed boys and high stressed youth to identify with a figure who was like an older sibling. The trauma informed training and developmental education that all mentors received allowed them to display compassion for their mentees as they helped them navigate the many challenges of their lives (Richards et al., in press). The compassion demonstrated by the mentors appeared to create a better sense of hope in the participating youth as they saw more positive futures for themselves. Aronowitz (2005) writes about the transformative capacities of relations with competent, caring and responsible adults for at-risk adolescents to envision a better future for themselves. Hope seems to facilitate resilience and is associated with less violent behavior over time (Stoddard, Heinze, Choe & Zimmerman, 2015). Hope was one of several outcomes affected by level of stress.

High stress exposure

More highly stressed mentees had the most consistent set of findings of program impact. For youth who reported higher than average negative stressors in their lives, the quantity and/or quality of the mentoring program predicted improved future orientation, racial identity, and improved attitudes towards gangs. When data from roughly 9-12 months after the program ended were included in our analyses, beliefs about non-violence, school attendance and self-efficacy were also found to improve as a result of the mentoring program for high stressed mentees. As we know from many past studies, high levels of, and chronic, stress create many difficulties for youth. It disrupts cognition, emotion regulation and well-being, and causes short and long term health damage (Morsy & Rothstein, 2019). When interventions can reduce the effects of stress, such as improvements seen on a number of measures here, they become important tools in the fight against a powerful health risk (Shonkoff, 2012). Effects were found for this subgroup of mentees in improved well-being as well as lessened interest in aggression, violence and gangs, and improved academic engagement. For high stressed mentees, the program had positive effects across the different components of well-being essential to the success of high-risk youth.

The finding that mentees with highest stress exposure seemed to benefit the most from the program led us to identify several individuals with high stress scores. Individual case examples of highly stressed mentees are described. All names have been changed to protect the identity of the youth.

Ryan: Upon starting the mentoring program, Ryan was very withdrawn and did not want to attend sessions. He frequently got into trouble at school for disobeying teachers and other behavioral problems. Ryan himself said that his father's death the year previously still troubled him deeply and caused him severe emotional trauma. Staff observed him to be experiencing post-traumatic stress symptoms (i.e. flashbacks, hyperactivity, hypervigilance, feeling "keyed up"). He was not supported in the classroom or school, where these symptoms were typically met with punitive responses. SLIY staff frequently arrived at the mentoring site to find Ryan crying as a result of this trauma and the school's punitive reactions to his symptoms.

However, Ryan began to develop a positive connection with his mentor, Eddy. Eddy consistently came to the mentoring session each week, with the intent to care for and understand Ryan. Ryan recognized Eddy's care, and thus began to appreciate the program. SLIY staff collaborated with Eddy to ensure Ryan received the best care possible, and often found out that he had shared feelings and problems with his mentor

that he had not shared with staff. With the help of SLIY staff, Eddy engaged Ryan's feelings regarding his father's passing. Ryan memorialized his father with a drawing featured on the SLIY website. Given his sensitivity to loss, Ryan's connected way of handling small losses in the program was notable: when he was unable to make mentoring sessions due to sports or other engagements, he always stopped by the mentoring room to check-in with his mentor. Ryan was thrilled when he was awarded "mentee-of-the-month" for his improved attendance and engagement.

Rashad became a SLIY mentee during the summer after eighth grade. He attended sessions regularly and maintained a positive relationship with his mentor throughout the program. He felt such fulfillment, love, and care from SLIY that he joined the After School Matters-funded sustainability site "Law Under Curious Minds," and continues to be involved as a high school graduate. Throughout this time, he benefitted from extra support, resources, and opportunities that allowed him to highlight his strengths and prepare for college. Rashad was raised from birth by his grandmother, with very little resources. Throughout his experience in SLIY, it was evident that he was dependent on her for love and care at home. When she passed away due to an inability to access healthcare near Rashad's 18th birthday, SLIY became more crucial to his mental wellness than ever before. He began missing sessions because his older siblings excluded Rashad from the little inheritance that his grandmother left, and suddenly sold the house that he lived in, leaving Rashad essentially homeless. With the support of SLIY, he reconnected with his biological mother in order to find a safe place to live. Now, as a youth co-researcher affiliated with the sustainability site, Rashad successfully applied to jobs, and will also begin college next year. When asked to comment about what SLIY meant to him, Rashad was deeply enthusiastic. He said the staff members who counseled him saved his life, and commented that one staff was "the father I never had." SLIY provided job-like opportunities that enhanced responsibility on the part of the student, which is something Rashad has been able to utilize. Because of his commitment to bettering himself and taking advantage of all of the resources that SLIY offers, he found the drive to pursue his areas of interest. He helped develop academic presentations and attended conferences to co-present program findings with SLIY PI's and research assistants. Rashad co-led community forums in Neighborhoods A and B, presenting program findings and youth experiences to community residents. In addition to building job skills, Ryan has increased his openness as it pertains to his personal life, which has led him to learn healthy coping strategies for these stressors.

In contrast to high stress levels, youth who reported greater social support were impacted by the program in the form of better beliefs about aggression, improved attitudes towards gangs and more days in school. When examined 9-12 months after program completion, higher social support enhanced effects for self-efficacy for both measures of program impact. Social support seemed to boost the positive effects of the mentoring for mentees.

School-based outcomes

Academic outcomes were examined with three metrics gathered from the Chicago Public Schools. Improved days present in school were found for individuals with more support, with both greater program quality, while fewer disciplinary actions were found for males. GPA appears to have improved at both the end of the program and at 9-12 months later, suggesting some longer term effects. Given the academic difficulties of many high-risk, high poverty youth (Chaudry & Wimer, 2016; Morsy & Rothstein, 2019), the effects of mentoring on increased academic success is another important outcome. Other data suggest that consistent meetings between mentors and mentees can deepen and enhance the relationship to positively affect the mentee's school behavior and school achievement (Johnson, Pryce & Martinovich, 2011).

Access to mental health services

The mentoring program was able to serve youth who did not have access to mental health services. Both mentors and mentees were likely to confide their distress to staff who had earned their trust. They also shared distress on standardized scale responses (such as suicidal ideation). Through a partnership with the Empowering Counseling Program, SLIY was able to provide intensive social work assessment and counseling to every mentor and mentee who wanted counseling, to those who indicated suicidal ideation, and to other youth who were poly-victimized (empoweringcounselingprogram.weebly.com). The Empowering Counseling model of street-based social work made it possible to carry out intensive outreach and care for youth and family members who wanted help, situated in their schools and communities, at times when they could attend, and for free. For example, social workers would take youth out for lunch or snacks, meet them during study halls at their schools, or meet with youth and, rarely, their families, at community agencies.

In general, the program appears to have been an effective intervention for the highly stressed mentees, potentially providing some of the functions that counseling typically provides, such as an enhanced sense of self and hope, and improved attitudes towards risky behaviors and enhanced academic engagement and success.

Despite the documented greater risk of mental health symptoms that children of color in deep poverty face, the communities we served lacked accessible mental health care. Our sample

of mentees consisted of children whose families wanted them to participate in after school programming -- a non-clinical sample of neighborhood youngsters who were at greater risk of negative life trajectories because of the deprivation and neighborhood traumas they and their families endured. Overall, the cross-age mentoring program had many demonstrably positive effects for mentees, as is exemplified by Paul.

Paul joined SLIY as a mentee in the same cohort as Rashad after eighth grade. Like Rashad, Paul grew up with very few resources and attended a severely under-resourced high school. He had a positive relationship with his mentor and often turned to him in times of need. However, Paul did not enjoy socializing with his peers, and frequently did not participate in group activities. He became increasingly withdrawn and lacked confidence. SLIY staff intervened and learned from Paul that he was experiencing depression and severe anxiety. He had family members experiencing health problems, which increased both his depression and anxiety. In collaboration with Paul's mentor, SLIY staff supported Paul through his personal concerns and helped develop cognitive strategies for overcoming feelings of anxiety. SLIY provided Paul leadership opportunities to build his confidence, which helped reduce his depression and anxiety resulting from feelings of inadequacy. Paul, alongside his mentor, helped lead group activities with peers. SLIY staff also identified Paul as showing interest in being a youth co-researcher. He helped develop academic presentations and attended conferences to co-present program findings with SLIY PI's and research assistants. Paul also led community forums in two of the neighborhoods, in which he presented program findings and youth experiences to residents of those neighborhoods. Like Rashad, Paul joined the After School Matters-funded sustainability site "Law Under Curious Minds," and is continuing to strengthen his leadership skills five years after first joining SLIY. With the aid of his mentor and SLIY staff, Paul has developed the coping skills and confidence to begin college classes in Fall 2019. He is still working with the sustainability site as a youth co-researcher, and desires to apply for After School Matters funding to start his own mentoring program because he wants younger children to have the experiences and developmental supports that he did.

Along with attendance as a measure of quantity of mentoring, the quality of a mentor-mentee relationship was a vital part of the study because it allowed the child to see the mentor as a role model who would show support and encouragement (McDonough, Ullrich-French, & McDavid, 2018). When looking at the quality of the mentor-mentee relationships, girls showed a somewhat stronger effect. Through this relationship, adult mentors have shown adolescent girls deeper expressions of support to build trust and even promote a higher level of social processes (Deutsch, Wiggins, Henneberger, Lawrence, Kuperminc, Smith, & Henrich, 2013).

Emma joined SLIY as a mentee alongside Rashad and Paul during the summer before beginning freshman year of high school. She attended a high school notorious for being severely under resourced and for being among the most affected by violence. Many of her friends and peers were victims of gun violence throughout her high school career. Despite growing up in a particularly violent community, she found solace in SLIY, as she remained involved through the end of her senior year. Emma and her family struggled, as many families did near her home, with attaining basic human rights needed to survive. This, however, did not diminish her strong desire for improving her community and helping her neighbors. Even though Emma grew up in a highly stressful environment, she credits her family and SLIY for her successes. These successes now include attending college on a full-ride scholarship.

In summary, the results suggest the importance of the mentoring program for mentees, especially those with greater stress.

Chapter 9. Discussion of Mentor Findings

SLIY exhibited a host of impacts on its mentor participants, illustrated through both quantitative and qualitative data. While program dosage failed to demonstrate program impact, the quality of the mentoring relationship had several positive influences, suggesting the power of interpersonal relationships, social support, and youth connectedness. The role of the mentor participants in SLIY's family-style mentoring approach is similar to that of the "helper" in Riessman's Helper Therapy Principle where, by taking on a helping role, youth are able to experience positive development through that function (Quimby, 2017; Riessman, 1965). Sue and colleagues (2014) demonstrate this further by demonstrating that the foundation of mentoring is the bond between the mentor and mentee. Outcomes such as increased empathy, leadership, future expectations, and attitudes toward violence were predicted through the strength of the mentoring relationship, suggesting the value of that metric. However, it is also imperative to explore factors such as mentor engagement, mentor need, and mentor relatedness with other peers and staff.

Understanding our measure of relationship quality: Mentor Relationship Strength

Unlike attendance, our measure of relationship quality, better mentor relationship strength, predicted several positive outcomes for mentors; regressions found Mentor Strength of Relationship predicted improved empathy, self-esteem, self-efficacy, character and grit from the beginning of the program until it finished 9-12 months later. HLM analyses were able to extend the effects to measurements taken another 9-12 months after program completion, with results suggesting continued improved beliefs about aggression, attitudes towards violence, enhanced self-esteem, character, contribution, empathy, leadership, ethnic identity, self-esteem, self-efficacy, GPA, and grit. Consistent with these results, past research suggests that individuals who participated in cross-aged peer mentoring programs as mentors saw improvements in self-esteem and academic connectedness to school, peers, and academic achievement (Karcher, 2018). We explore possible explanations for our findings.

Programs need to provide relational safety. This finding about the value of mentor strength of relationship (MSR) as an indicator of mentor engagement, and the aspects of impact

that are associated with MSR, also throws into relief the importance for youth in high-crime communities of a relationally safe space. Over and over the data show that as SLIY progressed, youth experienced the relational safety the program provided as a “high” that made them “happy” (even allowing for biases such as youth conforming with each other once one says they are “happy to be here”). Since the programs were, at times, beset by neighborhood violence, it was the safety of relationships that was therapeutic for youth, not necessarily the freedom from community violence in the program context. For youth in highly stressful environments, establishing a service as a relationally safe space cannot be overestimated and indeed is a *sine qua non* or necessary cause for program impact: Without relational safety and a fundamental sense of pleasure in being together, nothing else can happen.

Services as a positive social network, providing alternatives to negative networks.

Another take on the importance of neighborhood context is the repeated youth statements, in the qualitative data, about the corrosive impact of neighborhood violence for their sense of safety and self-worth. Youths’ repeated statements about their exposure to violence and entanglement in negative social networks fomented by familial adults (e.g. uncles in gangs), non-familial authority figures (such as police brutality), and peers highlight the importance of programs that compensate for negative social networks by creating positive social networks with a promise of sustainability. The positive social networks give youth experiences of trust, care, and support for their hopes that are important for affirming youths’ resilience.

It is well known that many adolescents, even those who are highly prosocial, experiment with illegal behavior (such as drug use). In privileged communities, this experimentation can end fairly quickly and give way to youths’ commitment to activities that bring about positive life trajectories. In poverty communities lacking adequate social capital, and fraught with negative social networks such as drug-dealing, violent gangs and corrupt police, the youths’ experimentation can quickly lead to a troubled life trajectory. Yet youth in SLIY, especially those who lived in neighborhoods with fewer destructive forces, described appreciating the opportunity to build positive relationships that enabled them to forego toxic entanglements and acquire skills to pursue positive life goals. In an analysis of social support in the lives of children, the development of personal social networks through neighborhood resources

(librarians, crossing guards, and store clerks specifically) is essential to the lives of children (Spilsbury, 2005).

Research findings about youth violence make it clear that socialization into patterns of violence occurs in communities depleted of positive social capital and in which negative social networks such as drug cartels abound (Abt, 2017; Hoffman, Knox & Cohen, 2011). Whether forced by poverty or terrorized by older gang members, youth in poverty can shift from temporary experimentation with illegal behavior to making it a lifestyle when they lack positive alternatives at their doorsteps (Hoffman, Knox, & Cohen, 2011). SLIY staff heard youth poignantly describe this process in themselves and their peers, such as when one 18 year old called a staff member saying, “I feel the darkness all around me and no legal way to get by I need you to call...” The staff member helped the young man matriculate in college. The SLIY data describe youth facing those risks who strive to seize on programs that promise them professional skill-building and a positive social network, trying to vault themselves out of harm’s way.

Powerful affirmation provided by leadership and co-researcher experiences.

Sufficiently affirming experiences may provide competitive positive impact against corrosive trauma. Accordingly, the participatory approach in which youth experienced themselves as leaders contributing to program design, evaluation, and research has the potential to infuse empowerment for the youth along multiple dimensions (Ginwright, 2010b; Love, Morency, Miller, Onyeka & Richards, 2018; McCrea, 2014). In fact, the youth co-researchers who continued with the program were persistently highly enthusiastic both about being mentors, and also about being co-researchers.

An example is David, who witnessed a murder the night before his presentation to 250 people. Despite that trauma, he could still experience the presentation at which he received a standing ovation as “life-changing”:

David was a mentor, who was identified by SLIY staff as prosocial, highly intelligent, and very motivated to pursue a positive life trajectory despite various life stressors that were common among youth living in high crime, high poverty communities. He forged a positive relationship with his mentee and was a leader among SLIY mentors. He also had a close-knit family, including a brother, a mother, and father, upon whom he relied for support. David rarely missed school or mentoring sessions and was a high achieving

student. However, during his time as a mentor, his family's house was destroyed in a fire caused by poor construction, a relatively common occurrence in low income neighborhoods due to the age of some homes, as well as poor maintenance by building owners. This event was very traumatic for David and his family, yet despite that, he remained involved in SLIY. Shortly after the fire, while his family moved into a temporary residence, SLIY staff invited David to co-present at one of Loyola University's annual key conferences as a youth co-researcher. He worked closely with staff to prepare and practice for the presentation. The night before the lecture, after David practiced the presentation for the final time, he was doing his homework when he looked out the window and witnessed a murder right in front of his house. He informed SLIY staff and described feeling traumatized. He still attended and presented at the lecture, even receiving a standing ovation from the attendees. He described his experience giving the lecture, and the reception he received, as "life changing," but was still very clearly traumatized from the night before. A couple of months later, David and his family moved to a neighborhood across the city, fleeing the recent negative events. David was no longer able to be a SLIY mentor due to transportation concerns, but staff continued to check-in with him because he was so deeply connected with SLIY and also profoundly affected by stressors from his old neighborhood. We learned he happily celebrated his high school graduation.

Understanding our measure of program dosage for mentors

Engagement is typically the biggest problem that after school programs face. Some programs report attrition as high as 75% (Deschenes et al., 2010). Nationwide, attrition averages around 50%, but tends to be even higher in urban, impoverished communities of color. For example, a comprehensive effort to strengthen after-school program resources in three cities termed MOST (Halpern, Spielberger, & Robb, 2001) concluded that many more effective after-school programs are needed. Moreover, only 10-15% of disadvantaged youth participated in such programs. A decade later, the relative shortage of after school programs for disadvantaged youth, and struggles engaging them, continued, as reported in a survey of programs in six cities (Deschenes et al., 2010). Overall, given the considerable stressors posed by the communities, SLIY's attendance and retention rates put it above national norms.

Several best practices that promote engagement were used for SLIY, which were described above in the implementation sections, but engagement still needs to be thought about more deeply. When examining quantitative results for the mentors, we found our dosage variable, attendance, was, overall, not acting as had been expected. We had hypothesized that

more program attendance would predict to better outcomes for the mentors. Instead, we found either no effects or that attendance predicted to diminished outcomes. When the whole group of mentors and controls were examined together, no effects were found for attendance, in either regressions from Wave 1 to Wave 3 or with HLM analyses which included Wave 4. When the mentors and controls were divided by moderating variables, very few significant effects were observed. Among boys, more program attendance predicted greater disciplinary offenses and lower GPA. Those in better perceived neighborhoods reported less endorsement of non-violent alternatives, with higher attendance in the cross-age peer mentoring program.

Attempting to make sense of this set of findings, we examined the qualitative data and how our youth discussed attendance with us. Some youth told us they wanted to come, but they could not because they had to care for younger siblings or ill grandparents. At other times, spikes in violence caused parents to keep their youth at home. In one neighborhood in the summer, the high violence levels seemed to have forced families who could send their youngsters far away, to do so, and SLIY had to be cancelled altogether. Youth often said they wanted to attend, but if they found a higher-paying job to help support their families, they could not. Accordingly, using attendance as a measure of engagement may be less accurate for older youth who have more responsibilities for supporting their impoverished families. Moreover, attendance alone can be a less valid indicator of engagement because, as staff said, some mentors seemed to just show up to get the paycheck (understandable given their deprivation, but not likely to cause change in themselves or their mentees). Staff helped such mentors, but this is another factor that makes attendance less sensitive than a more quality-based measure such as perceived strength of relationship. Other indicators aside from number of sessions attended are essential to accurately measure youth engagement in such high-poverty, high-crime urban communities. Accordingly, the Mentor Strength of Relationship scale offered the best operationalization of engagement. As was noted, MSR related to several variables measuring program impact.

Dosage. A social service program with a relatively low dosage may not be able to overcome the effects of neighborhoods the youth believe to be toxic. At the same time, it is important to consider the conditions under which positive impact persists despite neighborhoods youth perceive as unsafe. In evaluating SLIY, youth insisted a higher dosage was desirable. Our

experience with the After School Matters-funded sustainability project, which allows for 40-120 sessions and the potential that youth can attend all the way through high school, supports youths' perception they need sessions more than once a week and duration longer than 9 months (Bulanda & Tyson McCrea, 2013). Moreover, after school program research findings indicate that the positive impacts after school programs have for disadvantaged youth tend to persist only as long as the programs continue, but fade if the youth have to face neighborhood obstacles without support (Halpern, 2006).

Youth with greater need attended more sessions

Unexpectedly, more attendance predicted decreased endorsement of non-violent beliefs, lower character, lower contribution, and more internalizing symptoms particularly among certain subgroups. Possibly, needier mentors reacted adaptively to their increased need by attending more sessions, which matches with staffs' experience of several mentors who came frequently. Raven is a good example (identifying information have been changed in case examples to preserve anonymity):

Raven was one of the mentors that attended the most sessions. She signed up to be a mentor at one program, and then quickly realized she enjoyed it and signed up for the other one in the same community. She came regularly and was quite expressive with staff and with her mentees. However, it also quickly became apparent that she struggled with aspects of the mentoring role. She seemed to lack reflective judgment and might make inappropriate remarks; sometimes her hygiene was poor; and when she was annoyed, she had great trouble calming herself and her irritation was very obvious. When staff talked together about how to help her, they arrived at a multi-phase set of interventions. She was given a special role as a "research assistant" which allowed her to work closely with staff and focus more on helping staff than being a mentor in the family-style sessions she was attending. A counselor from the Empowering Counseling Program began meeting with her during her study breaks at school, and another counselor began meeting with her parent. Soon they learned that Raven had experienced brain damage due to a very serious construction accident in the neighborhood in which a plank fell on her head when she was 14. Recovery had required a long-term hospitalization and rehabilitation. She at times fantasized that her parent had not protected her on purpose and felt considerable anger. Her parent felt guilty, although recognizing that the accident had been caused by the negligence of others. Raven's school was not able to provide sufficient special education resources, but through diligent searching the counselors were able to obtain a neuropsychiatric report and helped Raven's family bring her to the closest clinic that

could serve her - which was over an hour away by bus. At first Raven and her family attended regularly, and Raven continued counseling and SLIY, and began to improve her focus and mentoring ability. However, soon the family could not afford transportation or Raven's medication. Raven began to struggle and dropped out for a few weeks. The staff called her at many times for several weeks, reminding her they cared and would help her. They tried to see her at her school, and finally were successful. She confided to her counselor that she and a friend had gotten into a "knife fight," and the friend was going to press charges. At the court date, a staff member accompanied Raven and with her and her family's permission shared the obstacles Raven faced, her commitment to mentoring, and that they would keep helping Raven. The judge was supportive and created a plan whereby Raven could obtain state-funded rehabilitative care and then return to the mentoring program. Raven did so, returning as an even better mentor. When the program ended, Raven was among the youth who grieved openly, saying she wished it could continue and talking about the benefits she received from it.

Cultural relevance and the impact of Afro-centric and Latinx values

The cultural relevance of our work for the population studied must be considered. Understanding some variables may be significantly improved by qualitative data that capture the cultural norms of inner-city youth of color. For example, the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale was tested for construct validity among white middle class students on a college campus (Tipton & Worthington, 1984). Our preliminary qualitative analyses suggest that self-efficacy among African-American youth has a significant collective component. In other words, SLIY youth frequently mentioned forms of self-confidence and competence that they experienced as collective in origin. For instance, they mentioned that the experience of peer group affirmation and determination to constructively solve community problems affirmed their personal worth and determination to have better futures. Culture among inner-city youth, unfortunately, has been associated with a culture of poverty. This is a subculture among the urban poor that consists of cultural norms such as learned helplessness, powerlessness, a sense of inferiority, having a sense of not belonging to the mainstream, pathology, and engagement in behaviors that perpetuate poverty (Lewis, 1966; Lewis 1975). However, many of these youth mentors develop meaning and identity within a cultural context similar to cultural contexts on the continent of Africa.

There are two concepts from African cultures that provides a framework for understanding how identity is shaped and meaning is made within a cultural context. These concepts are Ubuntu and Omoluabi. African culture organizes itself within the context of

communalism. Communalism is cultural identity developed within the context of social relationships and traditional culture rather than on individual traits (Mabovula, 2011). This way of developing identity and meaning making is the essence of Ubuntu. Ubuntu, a concept deriving from the Xhosa ethnic group of South Africa, assumes that morality involves trust and interdependence of each member of the group (Mabovula, 2011). This interdependence manifests as sharing, caring, and exhibiting compassion. Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1997) described Ubuntu as individuals' humanity being inextricably linked to the humanity of the larger group, and what makes a person human is his or her belonging to the larger community. Ubuntu is a cultural context in which individuals within the group make themselves available to others, affirms others, and do not feel threatened by the progress of others within the group.

Omoluabi is a conceptual framework that derives from the Yoruba people of Nigeria (Adeniji-Neil, 2011). Omoluabi is a noun and an adjective, and it is a person who has a strong work ethic, gives back to the community, respect others, and is self-actualized. The concept of Omoluabi assumes that individuals have a mandated to give back to the community and should possess integrity. An Omoluabi is a person whose deeds and actions connect them to the larger community, and works hard to bring harmony to all relationships so that personal goals of self-actualization can be reached.

When qualitative data analyses were conducted for this study, the results showed the peer mentors exhibited many of the same cultural characteristics as groups in West and South Africa. For example, qualitative data were collected via entry letters written by the youth mentors and analyzed by conducting a thematic and content analyses. After asking, "what would you like to get from the program?" three major themes emerged -- assistance with their personal goals, helping others, and helping themselves. When asked to write letters about mentoring expectations at the start of the program, 65 percent of the prospective youth mentors were motivated to participate in the program to gain assistance with their personal goals, 60.9 percent wanted to participate in the program to help others, and 56.3 percent the participants wanted to participate to help themselves. The results from these analyses suggest that youth mentors' meaning making takes place within the context of social relationships and interdependence on members of the community, which is an essential aspect of Ubuntu and Omoluabi. Even though

the majority of mentors were motivated to participate in the program to achieve personal goals, they were looking for assistance from members within the larger community and their pursuit of goals were not solely an individual effort. Their individual goals were dependent upon the larger collective. Moreover, many of these youth reside in neighborhoods with high poverty rates, thus logically concluding that money would be the main incentive for participating in the program. However, the youth indicated they were highly motivated to help, and to receive help from, others in the community.

The results from the qualitative data have implications for further research within low income communities of color. Although instruments may have been used previously with a similar population, or language was changed to address dialects, cultural validity is nuanced. Researchers must consider whether the instruments used in research projects are sensitive to and relevant for the specific relational qualities in the culture of the population being studied.

Youths' perspectives on how violence engagement is prevented

According to the World Health Organization (2009), research shows that at the intersection of social development and academic enrichments, violence can be prevented through youth programming. The qualitative findings allow us to take a deeper dive into youths' perspectives on how violence engagement can be prevented through cross-age mentoring with supportive counseling. Several trauma-focused theories emphasize that, as was noted above, a context of relational safety is the *sine qua non* for therapeutic impact (Courtois & Ford, 2009; Perry, 2006; Barish, 2004). In fact, code cloud analysis of the qualitative data yielded how often the mentors began to associate the program with a general well-being. It was so present in the field notes and youth reports that it required a special code. While this general sense of relational safety and well-being is obviously connected with building resilience, the youths' statements connected it with preventing violence engagement as well.

Tri-level Mentoring. This general well-being can be understood as a reflection of the tri-level mentoring (Shaikh, 2018) that took place in the program: From mentors' perspectives, mentors were cared for by staff, mentors cared for each other, and mentors cared for their mentees who in turn idealized them. Mentees were cared for by both mentors and staff, and saw

staff caring for mentors. In prior research about this process it was termed an “accumulation of care,” which led to increases in the youths’ positive relatedness and intrinsic (as opposed to extrinsic) motivation (Bulanda & Tyson McCrea, 2013), both important components of the self-determination that underpins human well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The staff received ample psychosocial support through team meetings and clinical supervision in the Risk and Resilience Lab and Empowering Counseling Program, which made it four layers of care in all.

SLIY also provided youth with a platform and opportunities to lead that were direct and intentional. More specifically, the tri-level approach works seemingly in stages where youth, over the span of time and with careful guidance from practitioners, staff, and coaches begin to possess, understand and leverage their leadership skills. This process was essential to the success of cross age peer mentoring and the youths’ capacity to evoke change. During many debriefing sessions mentors stated that the staff played a vital role in their effectiveness and development as mentors. Many mentors referred to the staff as “my mentor”.

Hope nurtured by care and improving social capital (relationship capabilities). In previous research, a similar population of youth made the unexpected connection that being cared for compassionately by staff gave them hope (Guthrie, Ellison, Sami & McCrea, 2014). This is not surprising given that youth described feeling pervasively rejected by wider society due to racism and classism, and within their communities by non-familial adults who youth perceived as likely to be violent against them (Moore et al., 2017). The care provided by staff was a stark contrast. Indeed, the youth who persisted in SLIY and the sustainability project as co-researchers made profound statements of connection with staff members, “He was the father I never had and it changed my life” (Rashad, a mentee).

Hope is important because it is known to be an antidote to the despair that is associated with violence and poverty. But hope as an antidote to violence is not just optimism. As Snyder (1994, 2000, 2002) points out, hope consists of specific goals, attainable pathways to reach those goals, and the self-efficacy to believe one can follow the paths despite obstacles. So providing hope for mentors was not just about caring for them, it was also about helping them acquire specific relationship skills they could use to pursue positive life trajectories. This focus comes from research by Durlak & Weissberg (2007), who reviewed after school programs and

concluded that improving relationship-related skills was the single most important ingredient in after school programming that could help youth build positive life trajectories (graduating successfully from high school, getting good jobs and/or going to college). They were not clear, from the findings at the time, exactly what the relationship skills should be. Their findings echoed the work of Wilson, Gottfredson & Najaka (2001), who concluded that School-based prevention programs that increase social competency and self-control are most effective in reducing school dropout, substance use, and behavioral problems.

Cross-age mentoring focuses on relatedness, and the youths' descriptions of what changed in them due to the program unearth details about important aspects of relatedness that can be changed with this method. In exit letters and program impact codes, as well as youth's anecdotal descriptions (while presenting and at the community forums), the dominant capacity that changed can be summarized as their ability to communicate and connect with others. Individuals who serve as mentors in peer-mentoring programs have higher ratings of social self-efficacy than their peers who do not serve as mentors, and this helps with the development of interpersonal skills along with developing a strong relationship between the mentor and mentee (Brewer and Carroll, 2010). One mentor said, "I was shut off before I came, I didn't even think communication was important. Now I express myself all the time, I can back and forth with people, and I feel confident in myself."

Leadership. Another dominant relationship capacity was summarized by youth in the term "leadership." Leadership improved over time with stronger mentor relationships. Mentors experienced themselves as leaders of the program and as contributing to their community via the many participatory activities (the website, editing the newsletter, co-presenting and co-authoring papers, being peer interviewers). As they put it, it meant a lot to them that they had "say-so" in activities with the mentees and the agendas for their debriefing sessions. They felt they could improve the problem of negative public image of youth of color in poverty by contributing better science and adding to the program website. The importance of leadership has been echoed by other participatory researchers with a similar population (Ginwright, 2010a; Fine, 2012). In fact, Ginwright (2010a) emphasizes that affirming youths' leadership capacities in the context of a positive group that reflects critically on injustices they experience (developing critical

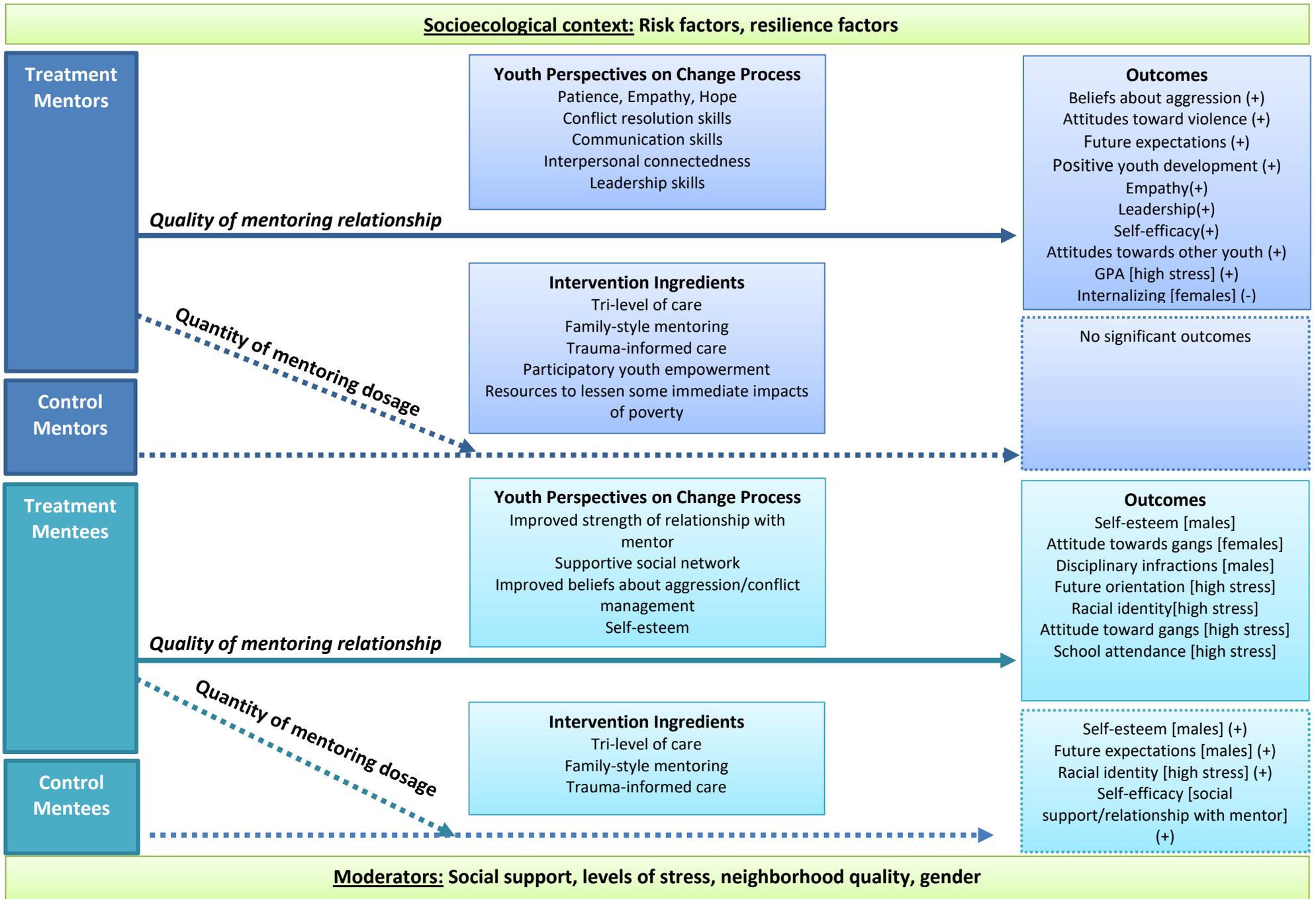
consciousness but not deepening a sense of victimization) brings about a new sense of identity. That new identity is based on a sense of affirmation from group support, being able to tackle community problems, and with a confidence free of internalized oppression (Ginwright, 2010a).

Specific strategies for non-violent conflict resolution and anger management.

Another important aspect of relatedness that enabled youth to forego violence engagement was helping youth learn specific strategies for anger management and non-violent conflict resolution. Attitudes towards violence and beliefs about aggression improved over time with more mentor strength of relationship. The program curriculum drew explicitly from restorative justice content and from a school-based conflict resolution program with documented effectiveness, Peacemakers (Johnson & Johnson, 2004), and CBT principles that were found to be effective with the “Becoming a Man” program that served youth in communities similar to SLIY (Heller et al., 2015). Youth were taught processes for self-calming, through affirming group discussions and activities that helped them to release stress. Staff taught them about resolving conflict through discussion and compromise, and how to share feelings of anger with “I statements” rather than physical lashing out. The program impact qualitative data indicate the youth learned that they could turn to the group with their understandable feelings of anger and loss, and they said this was an important ingredient in how the program worked for them. This aspect of the group process reflects traditional therapeutic group theory (Yalom, 1983), in which the group’s support, when internalized, strengthens youths’ coping abilities with stress and loss. Through the group’s safe space, mentors said they learned that when they were angry, they could make better choices about how to handle it, no longer needing to fight.

The figure below summarizes key findings related to understanding the change process that occurred over the course of the mentoring program, both qualitatively and quantitatively

Figure 7. Data-Based Understanding of Change Process



Chapter 10. Conclusions

Contributions to the Field

With the leadership of mentor and mentee co-researchers, we have been able to present the preliminary findings from the project to community members at two community meetings, to which all mentors and mentees and their families were invited. We held one in June in Neighborhood 2, and the second in August in Neighborhood 1.

We have presented findings in the form of posters, papers, panels representing our project at 11 university (Loyola University Chicago Center for Urban Research & Learning, Loyola Weekend of Excellence), 21 regional (Midwestern Psychological Association, Northwestern University Black Graduate Student Conference), and 29 national and professional conferences (American Psychological Association, Society for Community Research and Action, Society for Research on Adolescence, Society for Social Work and Research, Society for Research in Child Development, National Mentoring Summit). In total, we have given 61 presentations related to this project. Citations from these events are listed at the end of this document. We are in the process of developing additional presentations and publications that will document contributions to the research evidence surrounding cross-age peer mentoring programs.

Of note in our dissemination efforts, we compiled two policy briefs as part of the Scholars Strategy Network that were distributed to governmental officials in Chicago to discuss the need for preventing youth violence (Love, et al., 2018; Richards et al., 2018). Dr. Richards met with Congressional representatives in Washington D.C. in January 2019 to share our program as evidence of the need for continued and increased funding of mentoring programs, particularly for low income youth.

Limitations of the Research

As noted above, several limitations to our research design hampered our capacity to show effects. A number of these barriers are outlined below.

1. The context within which this was carried out led to a quasi-experimental design and did not allow us to conduct a true randomized controlled study, which would have potentially created a clearer set of findings.
2. Not all neighborhoods had control sites. Despite repeated attempts to convince numerous schools to become a site for data collection, we were unable to engage a control site in one of our neighborhoods.
3. We were unable to collect enough data from our Latinx sample to examine effects by ethnic groups.
4. Our longitudinal data were limited in size, especially by Wave 4, 9-12 months after program endings and was somewhat limited in representativeness.
5. We would have liked to work with and thus be able to study more male mentors and mentees.
6. Although we were able to survey the participants almost a year after the program ended, we did not have the capacity to study longer term effects. This would have been an advantage to the research.
7. The necessary reliance on family style mentoring and consequent inability to track mentor/mentee pairs limited our capacity to study what was occurring within the dyad.
8. It was not possible to gather qualitative data comprehensively from all mentors and mentees who participated.

Implications for Program Practices

1. Youth voice is essential to ensure youth participation and to be able to accurately understand youths' experiences for all components of the intervention Program staff and others involved should engage youth first by listening, learning what they care about, and taking cues from the aspirational needs and desires they say an afterschool program might fill. It is important to Include youth in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the intervention (Love, et al., 2018).

2. Program elements that focus on relationship variables such as communication skills, healthy self-expression, empathy, and healthy conflict resolution are the most vital curriculum elements for ensuring positive impact on mentors and mentees The mentors told us that this benefitted them greatly as they provided mentoring to their younger charges.
3. Poverty will interfere in many ways in programming and needs to be addressed, along with mentor pay, with fundamental resources such as food, hygiene supplies, and transportation. This program allowed us to provide for some of these material needs, but we developed creative ways to respond to this concern outside of grant funding.
4. When working with low income youth, pay for time is essential to the success of high school engagement with minimum wage as the floor. Job skills are another mandatory component of any programs for high school youth.
5. Tri-level mentoring was an essential part of the model of accumulation of care. Staff ended up mentoring the mentors and that was essential to the program effectiveness. One important component of cross-age peer mentoring is the concept of Tri-level mentoring, a concept which involves a tiered level approach using staff and coaches to promote positive youth development and leadership. The overall idea is that youth, though autonomous and capable, often need mechanisms in place to help initiate and foster their leadership skills.
6. Staff consistency and continuity beyond end of the program - In this prevention model, staff's relationship with youth needs to be open-ended, and flexible about meeting and supports so youth can engage support when they need it and sustain support past program termination. This occurred with multiple approaches including support groups, staff availability to mentors and mentees by phone, and co-researcher roles.
7. Sustainability programming - A key component of this community-based model was the participation and leadership of the community partner organizations where the program takes place. SLIY sought to maximize its impact by developing and maintaining partnerships with individuals and organizations

already working within the community. The community collaborators at each site were vital in training the mentors, engaging the students in activities, and retaining the attendees from week to week.

8. Leadership of the host site needs to have full buy-in so that stability is most likely
Creating a sustaining and open communication with site leadership is essential to success. Because of instability of leadership at many community- based agencies and public schools, creating partnerships with more than one leader at a site helps to guarantee long term success
9. Program staff need to be highly flexible, able to rebound despite multiple obstacles. Due to the myriad of challenges mentors /mentees face it is important for program staff, when attempting to reach mentors be willing to still engage despite youth shortcomings. This may mean that several attempts are made in order to achieve a particular outcome or goal. Commitment, follow-ups, flexibility, and creative strategies that emphasize resilience are key for program staff.
10. The problem of vicarious trauma needs to be thought through and addressed with intensive support at all levels of programming, for community liaisons and program staff as well as participants.
11. Staff should have consistent, ongoing training in trauma-focused services, assessment of suicide and homicide risk, and effective group work processes, with case consultation around challenging individual situations.
12. A higher dosage was persistently requested by mentoring youth. They emphasized that more meetings per week and longer program commitment was strongly desired.
13. When working with low income youth, pay for time is essential to the success of high school engagement with minimum wage as floor. Job skills are an essential component of any programs for high school youth.
14. Gender identity and sexual orientation were not examined in a sophisticated or subtle way either in the research or consistently in the programming and should be given that LGBTQIA youth can be higher risk. For example, use of pronouns

Building inclusive and positive content regarding gender identity and sexual orientation is particularly critical for youth from marginalized groups that have faced considerable discrimination. Doing so can help offset the impact of homophobia, transphobia, sexism, and its intersection with racism, which can be imperative in helping youth overcome social barriers.

15. The location of mentors and mentees needs to be addressed from the beginning as moving mentors across gang boundaries is untenable without considerable staff assistance. A university van was engaged for several sites and bus fare provided for others. At times, staff met mentors and walked them from their high school to the mentoring sites.
16. Community collaborators who are experienced with the local gang/clique situations and able to help defuse potentially violent conflicts are essential for programming and ongoing intervention.
17. Education and support around teenage participants' romantic and sexual choices is an essential component of programming as youth in high-poverty, high-crime communities of color. Low income youth typically lack such resources and are at much higher risk than privileged youth for sexual abuse and becoming victims of older predators.
18. Our data suggest effects are more powerful for subgroups of youth and these need to be kept in mind for future planning. For mentees, the mentoring program was most effective for those mentees with greater stress and for those with social support. For mentors, the mentoring program was most effective for mentors living in better neighborhoods.
19. Compared to quantity, quality of mentoring was more powerful for many positive effects.

Future Research

1. Researchers should seriously consider participatory action methods throughout the research process processes that benefit communities and that promote citizens' self-determination. Community members in high-poverty, high-crime

communities tend to have felt victimized by research projects that do not directly respond to their priorities or contribute to their communities' well-being. Unless community members can be assured these problems will not recur, they often decline participation.

2. In high-poverty, high-crime communities, quasi-experimental designs need to be thoughtful about decisions such as where control groups are located and the viability of randomization. In some locations, youth not chosen for a project may harass youth who were chosen, and so it is safer to separate intervention and control locations.
3. High mobility of residents and lack of consistent contact because of lack of consistent telephones in high-poverty communities make data collection very difficult.
4. Standardized measures are not always normed with youth of color in deep poverty communities and may not be culturally relevant; more grounded theory from youths' perspectives is needed to establish ecologically valid measures.
5. Effects may grow over time, we could not examine this beyond a year after programming ended (Karcher, 2018).
6. Involving youth as co-researchers in many activities seems to enhance program impact and ecological validity and was greatly valued by youth. This is best accomplished throughout the research process starting before the project begins and continuing after the program wraps up with co-authorship and co-presenting opportunities of research products.
7. The location of mentors and mentees needs to be addressed from the beginning as moving mentors across gang boundaries is untenable without considerable staff assistance.
8. Measures capturing social relations, social skills, and social intentions are needed for future work to examine shifts in these areas as a result of mentoring.
9. To capture the quality of the mentoring program in a more nuanced way, better measures of program quality, closer to the qualities described by coding qualitative data from youth, need to be employed.

Policy Implications

1. Providing positive networks: Social policies should focus on preventive programming that fosters such positive social networks in community schools and service contexts that can be skill-based but also have enduring impact. Similar to the results on neighborhood, mentors who indicated higher levels of stress.
2. To reduce deep poverty, employment skills programming should begin early in high school, when many youth, whose families suffer from deep poverty, experience it as imperative to get work. Youth in deep poverty can quickly become trapped in low-wage jobs that do not enhance skill sets that will eventually lead to higher-paying work. Cross-age mentoring programs are a way to improve communication and relationship skills that other researchers emphasize are critical in order for after school programs for low-income youth to enable youth to become successful academically and in the employment market.
3. Prevention programs that provide interpersonal and employment skills are good foundations for culturally-relevant trauma-focused mental health care for at-risk youth. Youth who are at risk but who would not otherwise seek mental health care for trauma may confide mental health problems such as PTSD and participate in counseling when it is in the context of an employment or skill-building program with a trusted instructor.
4. To provide trauma-focused counseling services for youth in high-poverty, high-crime communities of color, traditional clinic settings need to be supplemented by in-school and after-school counselor availability, as many youth lack transportation and other resources [such as time] for attending clinic appointments. Youth often needed counseling but were unwilling or unable to utilize the traditional mental health services, when they were available.
5. Youths' engagement in criminal activities that are transitory and relatively low risk (e.g. theft, fighting in self-defense) should not exclude them from participating in programming as many of these youth can become committed, active and transformed community members

6. The pro-social qualities of youth need to be acknowledged, engaged and supported, even when they are veiled by behavioral difficulties.
7. The youth voice must be a consistent and strong presence in all components of programming for youth. Far too often, the needs and preferences of youth are ignored and their resulting disengagement is misunderstood as a lack of motivation. When youth experience programming as developing their self-determination and advancing their life goals, their motivation and engagement are impressive, especially given the obstacles they face in their communities.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Tables depicting statistical analyses

Table 18. Mentee Wave 1 Correlations

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Future Expectations	4.12	0.80	-									
2. Self-Esteem	3.09	0.57	.485**	-								
3. Aggressive Beliefs	2.02	0.68	-.336**	-.257**	-							
4. Non-Violent Beliefs	3.01	0.81	.202*	.252**	.225**	-						
5. Self-Efficacy	5.05	1.00	.223**	.351**	-.075	.303**	-					
6. Ethnic Identity	3.03	0.63	.415**	.361**	-.284**	.142	.228**	-				
7. MSR Wave 1	4.35	0.74	.484**	.391**	-.394**	.198	.095	.518**	-			
8. Approval of Gangs	0.18	0.13	-.275**	-.221**	.141	-.173*	-.089	-.251**	-.382**	-		
9. Social Support	3.73	0.73	.610**	.491**	-.377**	.329**	.289**	.508**	.436**	-.231*	-	
10. Stress	0.26	0.16	-.296**	-.284*	.182	-.165	-.218*	-.014	-.177	.102	-.190	-
11. GPA	3.12	0.61	.467**	.413**	-.207*	.322**	.151	.390**	.279*	-.320**	.319**	-.216
12. School Attendance	0.96	0.04	.238**	.112	-.141	.087	.125	.234*	.438**	-.455**	.130	-.012
13. Disciplinary Offenses	0.19	0.71	-.244**	-.179*	.304**	-.115	.049	-.193*	-.273*	.124	-.154	-.030
14. Mentoring Attendance	7.34	8.88	-.048	-.020	-.104	-.007	-.191*	.161	.043	.175*	-.054	-.041
15. MSR Wave 3	4.28	0.77	.070	.079	-.003	.191	-.170	.168	.322**	-.133	.250	.201
16. Gender	-	-	.016	.076	-.120	.086	.199*	.185*	-.017	-.033	.165	.035

Variables	11	12	13	14	15
1. Future Expectations					
2. Self-Esteem					
3. Aggressive Beliefs					
4. Non-Violent Beliefs					
5. Self-Efficacy					
6. Ethnic Identity					
7. MSR Wave 1					
8. Approval of Gangs					
9. Social Support					
10. Stress					
11. GPA	-				
12. School Attendance	.211*	-			
13. Disciplinary Offenses	-.269**	-.155	-		
14. Mentoring Attendance	.040	-.050	-.029	-	
15. MSR Wave 3	.150	.093	-.025	.270*	-
16. Gender	.055	-.052	.063	.046	-.054

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. MSR = Mentoring Strength of Relationship.

Table 19. Mentee Wave 3 Correlations

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Future Expectations	4.13	0.75	-									
2. Self-Esteem	3.15	0.64	.396**	-								
3. Aggressive Beliefs	1.96	0.65	-.376**	-.370**	-							
4. Non-Violent Beliefs	3.03	0.73	.169*	.325**	-.430**	-						
5. Self-Efficacy	5.32	0.95	.440**	.289**	-.249**	.245**	-					
6. Ethnic Identity	3.12	0.56	.434**	.186*	-.256**	.117	.261**	-				
7. Approval of Gangs	0.17	0.14	-.051	-.137	.063	-.123	-.173*	-.079	-			
8. Social Support	3.75	0.75	.606**	.327**	-.265**	.160	.372**	.241**	-.041	-		
9. Stress	0.28	0.19	-.085	-.234**	.372**	-.196*	-.184*	.016	.303**	-.054	-	
10. GPA	3.08	0.56	.222*	.211*	-.156	.124	.203*	.033	-.267**	.113	-.365**	-
11. School Attendance	0.97	0.03	-.124	.024	.043	.023	-.099	-.189	-.100	-.096	-.071	.089
12. Disciplinary Offenses	0.16	0.49	-.009	-.038	-.024	-.082	-.046	-.083	.086	-.013	.021	-.185
13. Mentoring Attendance	7.34	8.88	.013	.099	-.075	-.016	-.066	.032	-.048	-.148	-.077	.165
14. MSR Wave 3	4.28	0.77	.133	.225	-.173	.063	.108	.093	-.254*	.162	-.032	.201
15. Gender	-	-	-.105	-.090	-.028	.101	.016	.028	.018	.100	.016	.026

Variables	11	12	13	14
1. Future Expectations				
2. Self-Esteem				
3. Aggressive Beliefs				
4. Non-Violent Beliefs				
5. Self-Efficacy				
6. Ethnic Identity				
7. Approval of Gangs				
8. Social Support				
9. Stress				
10. GPA				
11. School Attendance	-			
12. Disciplinary Offenses	-.012	-		
13. Mentoring Attendance	-.072	-.050	-	
14. MSR Wave 3	.004	-.152	.270*	-
15. Gender	-.128	-.082	.046	-.054

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. MSR = Mentoring Strength of Relationship.

Table 20. Significant and Trending Main Effects for Mentees

Predictor (Wave 1)	Dependent Variable (Wave 3)	<i>F</i>	<i>df1,df2</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Adj.R²</i>	<i>Adj. ΔR²</i>
Attendance	Self-esteem	6.33	4,125	.071	0.86	.391	.142	-.002
	Self-efficacy	2.44	4,125	-.030	-0.34	.738	.043	-.006
	Future Expectations	7.05	4,126	.068	0.82	.412	.157	-.002
	Ethnic Identity	7.51	4,125	-.008	-0.09	.927	.168	-.007
	Beliefs about Aggression	2.19	4,126	-.056	-0.64	.526	.035	-.005
	Beliefs about Non-violence	2.06	4,126	.012	0.13	.894	.032	-.007
	Attitudes towards Gangs	6.10	4,127	-.103	-1.23	.220	.135	.004
	Strength of Mentor Relationship	2.22	3,69	.277	2.34	.022**	.049	.061
	School Attendance	14.24	4,89	.008	0.09	.926	.363	-.007
	GPA	47.43	4,95	.080	1.30	.198	.652	.002
Strength of Relationship with Mentor	Discipline Offenses	1.95	4,127	-.027	-0.31	.756	.028	-.007
	Self-esteem	4.06	4,66	.237	2.12	.038**	.149	.044
	Self-efficacy	3.50	4,66	.162	1.42	.160	.125	.013
	Future Expectations	7.50	4,67	.163	1.59	.117*	.268	.016
	Ethnic Identity	4.61	4,67	.041	0.37	.712	.169	-.011
	Beliefs about Aggression	3.04	4,67	-.212	-1.89	.066*	.103	.033
	Beliefs about Non-violence	1.75	4,67	.019	0.16	.874	.040	-.014
	Attitudes towards Gangs	5.31	4,68	-.181	-1.68	.097*	.193	.021
	School Attendance	8.48	4,41	-.119	-1.01	.317	.399	.000
	GPA	48.60	4,48	.064	0.99	.327	.785	-.001
Discipline Offenses	1.13	4,68	-.134	-1.13	.262	.007	.004	

Note: Baseline outcomes, as well as level of family DCFS involvement and mentoring site neighborhood at Wave 1, were entered as control variables. Main effects of control variables were significant in most models but are not reported here to conserve space.

p*<.12, *p*<.05, ****p*<.01. *Beta* = standardized coefficient. *R*² = adjusted value.

Table 21. Significant and Trending Moderations for Mentees

Outcome (Wave 3)	Independent, Moderator Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	ΔR^2
Future Expectations	Attendance, Gender (<i>males</i>)	.02	1.96	.052**	.021
	MSR, Stress Split (<i>High Stress</i>)	.46	2.62	.001**	.042
Self-Esteem	Attendance, Gender (<i>males</i>)	.02	2.44	.016**	.037
Beliefs about Aggression	MSR, Social Support (<i>High Support</i>)	.29	-2.06	.045**	.056
Ethnic Identity Membership	Attendance, Stress Split (<i>High Stress</i>)	.02	1.92	.058*	.049
	MSR, Stress Split (<i>High Stress</i>)	.29	2.18	.033**	.069
Attitudes Toward Gangs	Attendance, Social Support (<i>High Support</i>)	-.01	-1.61	.111*	.029
	MSR, Gender (<i>females</i>)	-.08	-1.80	.075*	.035
	MSR, Stress Split (<i>High Stress</i>)	-.12	-4.00	.000***	.122
Days Present in School	MSR, Social Support (<i>High Support</i>)	-.01	-1.65	.109*	.033
Discipline Offenses	MSR, Gender (<i>males</i>)	.24	1.77	.082*	.041

Note: Baseline outcomes, as well as mentoring site neighborhood at Wave 1 and involvement in Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), were entered as control variables. Non-significant moderations are not reported here to conserve space.

MSR=Mentor Strength of Relationship

* $p < .12$ (MSR only), ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$. *Beta* = standardized coefficient. R^2 = adjusted value.

Table 22. Parameter estimates assessing attendance on mentee self-esteem.

	Unconditional Model		Level 1 Model		Full Model	
	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE
Reliability	0.558		0.494		0.468	
Fixed-effects						
Intercepts						
Self-esteem	2.893***	0.106	3.217***	0.160	3.061***	0.173
Neighborhood	0.147***	0.050	-0.155*	0.066	-0.177**	0.065
DCFS			-0.408*	0.181	-0.508***	0.182
Time			0.139**	0.051	0.145**	0.051
Slopes						
Attendance					0.015*	0.006
Random effects						
Level-1 effect (r_{ij})	0.251	0.501	0.254	0.504	0.254	0.504
Level-2 effect						
Intercept (u_{0j})	0.130***	0.360	0.102***	0.319	0.091***	0.303
ICC	0.341		0.286		0.265	
Deviance	334.183		326.451		328.184	
# of parameters	2		2		2	

Note. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. DCFS = Department of Child and Family Services. SE = Standard Error.

Table 23. Mentor Wave 1 Correlations

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Soc. Support	3.28	0.78	-										
2. Stress	0.32	0.22	-.091	-									
3. Future Exp.	3.84	0.81	.447**	-.206*	-								
4. Self-Esteem	3.09	0.57	.275**	-.082	.458**	-							
5. Agg. Beliefs	2.10	0.64	-.132	.261**	-.233**	-.108	-						
6. Non-Violence	2.91	0.67	.169	.010	.124	.138*	-.082	-					
7. Self-Efficacy	5.11	1.00	.245**	-.021	.259**	.333**	-.134*	.211**	-				
8. Ethnic Identity	2.84	0.66	-.225*	-.047	.228**	.164**	-.252**	.132*	.285**	-			
9. MSR Wave 1	3.59	0.49	.162	-.058	.231**	.231**	-.221**	.144	.211*	.159	-		
10. Leadership	3.13	0.59	.191*	-.166	.205**	.059	-.243**	.093	.284**	.271**	.154	-	
11. Approval of Violence	3.57	0.63	.257*	-.228*	.137*	.142*	-.482**	.274**	.177*	.315**	.148	.338**	-
12. Character	3.27	0.72	.076	-.230*	.407**	.181**	-.203**	.112	.273**	.162*	.338**	.273**	.236**
13. Contribution	3.00	0.66	.100	-.193*	.367**	.132*	-.123	.131*	.321**	.315**	.259**	.384**	.220**
14. Grit	3.43	0.65	.197*	-.222*	.314**	.302**	-.093	.163*	.344**	.204**	.276**	.183**	.194**
15. Empathy	3.45	0.66	.195*	-.099	.275**	.165**	-.242**	.234*	.267**	.282**	.245**	.298**	.347**
16. Neg. Neighborhood	2.38	0.55	-.365**	.443**	-.152*	-.072	.060	-.165*	-.157*	-.164**	.012	-.064	-.303**
17. Pos. Neighborhood	2.71	0.63	.300**	-.339**	.137*	-.008	-.103	-.026	.038	.018	.016	.150*	.145**
18. Attitudes Towards Youth	3.41	0.73	.283**	-.225*	.070	-.015	-.064	.013	.028	-.040	.059	.007	.040
19. Internalizing	0.59	0.36	-.378**	.381*	-.282**	-.300**	.161*	-.030	-.223**	-.068	-.140	-.220**	-.188**
20. Externalizing	0.49	0.33	-.263**	.332*	-.206**	-.184**	.270*	-.143*	-.263**	-.145*	-.275**	-.231**	-.351**
21. GPA	2.48	0.93	.064	-.278*	.216**	.182	-.215**	.090	.106	.207**	.056	.086	.226**
22. School Att.	0.86	0.13	.106	-.141	.115	.065	.541	-.081	-.057	-.010	-.062	-.064	-.017
23. Dis. Offense	2.48	1.97	.095	-.625	.053	.131	.003	-.094	.028	.148	-.120	.132	-.119
24. Gender	-	-	.006	.117	-.012	.001	-.143*	.107	-.042	.063	.045	.087	.177**
25. Mentoring Attendance	13.58	13.60	.250	-.157	.017	-.050	-.122	.192*	.044	.173*	.125	.066	.144

26. MSR Wave 3 3.62 0.50 .247 -.141 .267** .131 -.273** .067 .241* .185 .395** .173 .178

Variables	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1. Soc. Support													
2. Stress													
3. Future Exp.													
4. Self-Esteem													
5. Agg. Beliefs													
6. Non-Violence													
7. Self-Efficacy													
8. Ethnic Identity													
9. MSR Wave 1													
10. Leadership													
11. Approval of Violence													
12. Character	-												
13. Contribution	.625**	-											
14. Grit	.255**	.283**	-										
15. Empathy	.303**	.324**	.380**	-									
16. Neg. Neighborhood	-.096	-.047	-.174**	-.136*	-								
17. Pos. Neighborhood	.037	.068	.105	.050	-.400**	-							
18. Attitudes Towards Youth	-.070	.066	.153*	-.024	-.127*	.164**	-						
19. Internalizing	-.235**	-.112	-.263**	-.175**	.228**	-.214**	-.134*	-					
20. Externalizing	-.317**	-.184**	-.265**	-.305**	.254**	-.166**	-.070	.741**	-				
21. GPA	.114	-.082	.166**	.202*	-.119	-.015	-.163*	-.034	-.130	-			
22. School Att.	-.031	-.081	-.041	-.062	.011	-.023	-.076	.034	.050	.540**	-		
23. Dis. Offense	-.089	.091	.078	.116	-.199	.119	.138	.048	.176	.005	-.096	-	
24. Gender	.110	.037	.035	.156*	.038	-.143*	-.147*	.154*	.070	.181*	-.001	-.238	-

25. Mentoring Attendance	.187*	.117	-.011	.123	-.110	-.054	-.066	.004	-.070	.073	.026	.129	-.009
26. MSR Wave 3	.193	.212*	.206*	.273**	.020	.013	.111	-.057	-.092	.264*	.035	-.220	.170

*Note: *p<.05, **p<.01. MSR = Mentoring Strength of Relationship.*

Table 24. Mentor Wave 3 Correlations

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Soc. Support	3.36	0.76	-										
2. Stress	0.32	0.21	-.193*	-									
3. Future Exp.	3.97	0.74	.485**	-.159*	-								
4. Self-Esteem	3.16	0.68	.443**	-.013	.590**	-							
5. Agg. Beliefs	2.06	0.68	-.184*	.162*	-.128	-.142	-						
6. Non-Violence	3.11	0.65	.196*	.107	.129	.235**	-.089	-					
7. Self-Efficacy	5.34	1.00	.337**	.097	.355**	.458**	-.138	.273**	-				
8. Ethnic Identity	3.01	0.63	.234**	.100	.430**	.395**	-.184*	.187*	.255**	-			
10. Leadership	3.17	0.55	.373**	-.012	.363**	.473**	-.278**	.291**	.415**	.404**	-		
11. Approval of Violence	3.70	0.60	.186*	-.172*	.120	.192*	-.376**	.236**	.219**	.090	.218**	-	
12. Character	3.46	0.61	.244**	.056	.351**	.369**	-.214**	.290**	.355**	.352**	.431**	.064	-
13. Contribution	3.16	0.62	.340**	.072	.349**	.423**	-.234**	.218**	.355**	.353**	.551**	-.017	.647**
14. Grit	3.49	0.68	.278**	-.019	.373**	.405**	-.197*	.148	.414**	.248**	.241**	.141	.356**
15. Empathy	3.65	0.63	.323**	.034	.244**	.314**	-.306**	.214**	.287**	.394**	.394**	.271**	.489**
16. Neg. Neighborhood	2.42	0.62	-.191*	.313**	-.182*	-.137	.199*	-.099	-.037	-.126	-.166*	-.179*	-.062
17. Pos. Neighborhood	2.84	0.64	.240**	-.256**	.207*	.142	-.131	.118	.099	.059	.177*	.228**	-.074
18. Attitudes Towards Youth	3.45	0.75	.134	-.152	.252**	.129	-.032	.163*	.005	-.092	.099	.117	.033
19. Internalizing	0.53	0.35	-.382**	.351**	-	-.369**	.184*	.071	-.090	-.169*	-.266**	-.073	-.281**
20. Externalizing	0.41	0.31	-.271**	.200*	-	-.246**	.310**	-.063	-.115	-.270**	-.247**	-.186*	-.366**
21. GPA	2.78	0.84	-.035	-.072	.149	-.050	-.257*	.260*	-.046	.370**	.140	.243*	.278**
22. School Att.	0.85	0.14	.098	-.146	.019	-.068	.062	.067	-.071	.118	-.050	.048	.116
23. Dis. Offense	1.65	0.98	-.156	.148	.194	.065	.128	-.022	.025	.209	.144	-.402	.129
24. Gender	-	-	.041	-.025	-.013	-.073	-.103	.083	-.024	.165*	.099	.087	.143

25. Mentoring Attendance	13.58	13.60	.052	-.020	-.040	-.002	-.104	.001	-.084	.113	.024	.023	-.058
26. MSR Wave 3	3.62	0.50	.185	-.090	.170	.081	-.164	.055	.300**	.085	.184	.201*	.284**

Variables	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1. Soc. Support												
2. Stress												
3. Future Exp.												
4. Self-Esteem												
5. Agg. Beliefs												
6. Non-Violence												
7. Self-Efficacy												
8. Ethnic Identity												
10. Leadership												
11. Approval of Violence												
12. Character												
13. Contribution	-											
14. Grit	.311**	-										
15. Empathy	.460**	.371**	-									
16. Neg. Neighborhood	-.040	-.145	-.040	-								
17. Pos. Neighborhood	.039	.079	.010	.564**	-							
18. Attitudes Towards Youth	.002	.148	-.068	-.259**	.317**	-						
19. Internalizing	-.164*	-.217**	-.166*	.274**	-.150	-.261**	-					
20. Externalizing	-.242**	-.218**	-.282**	.217**	-.029	-.233**	.707**	-				
21. GPA	.032	.057	.266**	-.038	-.013	.081	-.068	-.267**	-			
22. School Att.	-.116	.068	.043	-.102	-.003	.030	-.114	.013	.532**	-		
23. Dis. Offense	.203	-.218	-.129	-.130	-.065	-.232	-.155	-.240	-.069	-.246	-	
24. Gender	.072	-.027	.174*	.173*	-.240**	-.229**	.078	-.040	.110	.126	.056	-

25. Mentoring Attendance	-.058	-.060	.084	.032	.064	.075	.144	.068	.122	-.034	-.097	-.009
26. MSR Wave 3	.173	.322**	.366**	-.129	.000	.091	-.027	-.010	.296*	.087	-.243	.170

*Note: *p<.05, **p<.01.*

Table 25. Main Effects for Mentors

Predictor (Wave 1)	Dependent Variable (Wave 3)	<i>F</i>	<i>df1,df2</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Adj. R²</i>	<i>Adj. ΔR²</i>
Attendance	Self-esteem	12.32	3,144	.005	0.06	.954	.188	-.005
	Leadership	10.77	3,147	-.003	-0.04	.966	.163	-.006
	Empathy	11.15	3,148	.038	0.49	.626	.168	-.004
	Self-efficacy	6.63	3,149	-.103	-1.28	.201	.100	.004
	Future Expectations	6.17	3,149	-.055	-0.68	.497	.093	-.003
	Ethnic Identity	15.15	3,149	.020	0.26	.793	.218	-.005
	Beliefs about Aggression	12.85	3,149	-.038	-0.50	.617	.190	-.004
	Beliefs about Non-violence	1.02	3,148	-.043	-0.50	.618	.000	-.006
	Attitudes towards Violence	13.45	3,149	-.030	-0.40	.690	.197	-.005
	Character	3.95	3,148	-.123	-1.47	.145	.055	.007
	Contribution	7.63	3,149	-.128	-1.61	.110	.116	.010
	Grit	18.35	3,149	-.032	-0.44	.663	.255	-.004
	Internalizing Symptoms	15.83	3,147	.165	2.21	.029**	.229	.021
	Externalizing Symptoms	8.54	3,148	.132	1.67	.098	.130	.010
	Post-Traumatic Symptoms	10.73	3,148	.059	0.75	.455	.162	.002
	Attitudes Towards Youth	5.41	3,146	.041	0.50	.616	.082	-.004
	School Attendance	44.53	3,104	-.101	-1.34	.184	.550	.004
	GPA	25.51	3,87	-.062	-0.72	.475	.450	-.003
	Discipline Offenses	1.70	3,8	.375	1.28	.237	.160	.060
	Strength of Relationship with Mentee	Self-esteem	9.44	3,98	.001	0.01	.995	.200
Leadership		6.68	3,98	.120	1.28	.205	.144	.005
Empathy		11.75	3,98	.264	2.93	.004***	.242	.058
Self-efficacy		13.20	3,99	.177	2.02	.046**	.264	.023
Future Expectations		7.69	3,99	.057	0.61	.546	.164	-.006
Ethnic Identity		7.21	3,99	.004	0.04	.967	.154	-.009
Beliefs about Aggression		7.46	3,99	-.053	-0.56	.576	.160	-.005
Beliefs about Non-violence		1.06	3,98	.012	0.12	.906	.002	-.010
Attitudes towards Violence		13.50	3,99	.133	1.54	.126	.269	.010
Character	7.65	3,98	.237	2.55	.012**	.165	.046	

Contribution	12.43	3,99	.057	0.64	.522	.252	-.004
Grit	26.05	3,99	.218	2.83	.006***	.424	.040
Internalizing Symptoms	13.28	3,98	-.001	-0.01	.993	.267	-.008
Externalizing Symptoms	6.92	3,98	.035	0.38	.709	.150	-.007
Post-Traumatic Symptoms	8.48	3,98	-.005	-0.06	.952	.182	-.008
Attitudes Towards Youth	1.82	3,97	.083	0.83	.407	.024	-.003
School Attendance	30.72	3,67	.072	0.91	.367	.560	-.001
GPA	16.04	3,52	.166	1.60	.116*	.451	.017
Discipline Offenses	2.12	2,3	.017	0.04	.971	.310	-.172

Note: Baseline outcomes, as well as mentoring site neighborhood at Wave 1, were entered as control variables. Main effects of control variables were significant in most models but are not reported here to conserve space.

* $p < .12$ (MSR only), ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$. Beta = standardized coefficient. R^2 = adjusted value.

Table 26. Significant and Trending Moderations for Mentors

Outcome (Wave 3)	Independent, Moderator Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	ΔR^2
Self-Esteem	MSR, NES (<i>Better Neighborhoods</i>)	.33	1.86	.067*	.050
	MSR, NES (<i>Worse Neighborhoods</i>)	-.31	-1.72	.088*	.050
Beliefs about Aggression	MSR, NES (<i>Worse Neighborhoods</i>)	-.32	-1.99	.049**	.045
Beliefs about Non-violence	Attendance, Stress (<i>Low Stress</i>)	-.01	-2.33	.021**	.048
Character	Attendance, Social Support (<i>Low Support</i>)	.45	3.09	.003***	.030
Internalizing Symptoms	MSR, Gender (<i>males</i>)	.31	2.59	.011**	.064
	MSR, Gender (<i>females</i>)	-.12	-1.68	.097*	.064
Externalizing Symptoms	MSR, Gender (<i>males</i>)	.21	1.93	.057*	.034
Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms	MSR, Gender (<i>males</i>)	.22	1.71	.090*	.035
Ethnic Identity	MSR, NES (<i>Better Neighborhoods</i>)	.29	2.06	.042**	.062
	MSR, NES (<i>Worse Neighborhoods</i>)	-.25	-1.85	.068*	.062
Discipline Offenses	Attendance, Gender (<i>males</i>)	.12	3.42	.014**	.290
GPA	MSR, Stress (<i>High Stress</i>)	.65	3.11	.003***	.054

Note: Baseline outcomes, as well as mentoring site neighborhood at Wave 1, were entered as control variables. Non-significant moderations are not reported here to conserve space. NES=Neighborhood Environment Scale, MSR = Mentor Strength of Relationship

* $p < .12$ (MSR only) ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$. *Beta* = standardized coefficient. R^2 = adjusted value.

Appendix B: Citations from Scholarly Products

Citations from Scholarly Products

Illinois Mentoring Partnership 2016:

Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K., Grimes, C., Morency, M., Scott, D., Moore, A., Rice, C., & Bautista, S. (2016, May). *Nurturing resilience among low-income urban youth living in Chicago: A cross-age peer mentoring program*. Invited workshop at the meeting of the Illinois Mentoring Partnership, Chicago, IL.

Society for Social Work Research 2016:

Moore, A., Davis, L., Tyson McCrea, K., and Richards, M. (2016, January). "Nowhere to Turn to be Safe": Deepening the understanding of community violence based on disadvantaged youths' perspectives. Oral presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for Social Work Research, Washington, DC.

Midwestern Psychological Association 2016:

Pica II, J. A., DiClemente, C., Rice, C. M., Quimby, D., Richards, M. (2016, May). Neighborhood environment, future expectations, and beliefs about aggression in urban African American youth. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Zarei, P., Rice, C., Richards, M., and Tyson McCrea, K. (2016, May) Perceptions of Neighborhood and Internalizing Symptoms in the Context of A Cross-Age Peer-Mentoring Program. Poster presented at Midwestern Psychological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

Morency, M., Miller, Kevin, Quimby, D., Richards, M. (2016, May). The impact of life stressors on African American youth. Poster presented at Midwestern Psychological Association Annual Conference, Chicago, IL.

Society for Research on Adolescence 2016:

DiClemente, C. M., Pica, J. A., Quimby, D., Rice, C. M., Michel, J., Scott, D., Richards, M. H., & Tyson McCrea, K. (2016, April). Future expectations and beliefs about aggression in a cross-age peer mentoring program for low-income urban African American youth. In M. H. Richards & N. Gaylord-Harden (Chairs), *Future orientation as a predictor of beliefs about aggression, school connection, delinquency, and violence exposure in urban youth*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Baltimore, MD.

Rice, C., Zarei, P., DiClemente, C., Grimes, C., Richards, M., and Tyson McCrea, K. (March 2016). Perceptions of Neighborhood and Internalizing Symptoms in the Context of A Cross-Age Peer-Mentoring Program. Poster presented at Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting, Baltimore, MD, March 31-April 2, 2016.

Kroc Peace Conference at Notre Dame 2016:

Pica II, J. A., DiClemente, C., Rice, C. M., Quimby, D., Richards, M. (2016, May). Neighborhood environment, future expectations, and beliefs about aggression in urban African American youth. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Notre Dame Student Peace Conference sponsored by the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, Chicago, IL.

Zarei, P., Rice, C., Richardson, C., Richards, M., and Tyson McCrea, K. (April 2016) Perceptions of Neighborhood and Internalizing Symptoms in the Context of A Cross-Age Peer-Mentoring Program. Poster presented at University of Notre Dame's 2016 Student Peace Conference, Notre Dame, IN, April 8-April 9, 2016.

Rice, C., Murphy, B., Escobar, C., Grimes, C., Miller, K., Puvar, D., & Richards, M. (April 2016). Building peace in Chicago's South Side: Cross-age peer mentoring as a sustainable solution. Panel discussion presented at Kroc Peace Studies Conference, Notre Dame, IN, April 8-9, 2016.

LUROP (Loyola student conference 2016):

Zarei, P., Rice, C., and Richards, M. (April 2016) Perceptions of neighborhood and internalizing symptoms in the context of a cross-age peer-mentoring program. Poster presented at Loyola University's 2016 Undergraduate Research & Engagement Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 16, 2016.

Pica II, J. A., DiClemente, C. Rice, C. M., Quimby, D., Scott, D., Richards, M. H., & Tyson-McCrea, K. (2016, April). Future Expectations and Beliefs about Aggression in the Context of a Cross-age Peer Mentoring Program Serving low-income, Urban African American Youth. Poster presented at Loyola Undergraduate Research Symposium, Chicago, IL.

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies 2016:

Quimby, D., Morency, M., Stevenson, K., & Richards, M. (October, 2016). The Association between Ethnic Identity, Future Expectations, and Psychosocial Outcomes. Poster presented for the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, New York, NY, October 27-30, 2016.

University of Lodz videoconference 2016:

'A bond as strong as a lock and chain': Participatory Action Research to Advance Human Rights with Youth in Deep Poverty." K Tyson McCrea, Dakari Quimby, Victoria Smith-Ellison, Amzie Moore, Kevin Miller, Cordelia Grimes, Darrick Scott, Maryse Richards, and Tamera

Smith. Participatory Social Work: Approaches, barriers, critique. University of Lodz, Lodz, Poland. Videoconference presentation. September 29, 2016.

National Mentoring Resource Center bulletin 2016:

Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K., Rice, C., & DiClemente, C. M. (2016). "Saving Lives and Inspiring Youth (S.L.I.Y): A Cross-Age Peer Mentoring Program." *Featured Grantee Bulletin for the National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC) of OJJDP*.

Society for Social Work Research 2017:

Grimes, C., Ellison, V., Miller, K., Love, E., Moore, A., Escobar, C., Richards, M., Tyson McCrea, K. (2017). A Client Co-Authored Website to Build Peaceful Empowerment for Youth with Marginalized Identities Who Are Profoundly Disadvantaged, presented at Society for Social Work and Research Twenty-First Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA, 2017.

Moore, A., Love, E., Ellison, V., Escobar, C., Rice, C., Richards, M., Tyson McCrea, K. (2017). Authority-Caused Community Violence and Its Implications for Youth Development and Community Violence Research, presented at Society for Social Work and Research Twenty-First Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA, 2017.

Miller, K., Morency, M., Rice, C., Grimes, C., Moore, A., Richards M., Tyson McCrea, K. (2017). "I understand how people feel when they are asking for help and nobody is going to help them": Disadvantaged youth describe their motives for mentoring community children, presented at Society for Social Work and Research Twenty-First Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA, 2017.

Joan Greenstone Memorial Lecture Series 2017:

Tyson-McCrea, K., Moore, A. Miller, K.M., Bodon, Z., Davis, D., Richards, M. (2017, March). *Cross-Age Mentoring with Disadvantaged Youth: Forging a Powerful Bond to Develop Resilience*. Joan Greenstone Memorial Lecture Series, Loyola University Chicago.

Society for Research on Child Development 2017:

DiClemente, C. M., Rice, C., Quimby, D., Richards, M., & Tyson McCrea, K. (2017, April). The promotive effects of mentee perceptions of relationship strength in a cross-age peer mentoring program. Paper presented in M. H. Richards (Chair), *Examining the Role of Relationship Qualities in Promoting Resilience in Low-Income Urban Youth*. Symposium conducted at the Society for Research on Child Development, Austin, TX.

Zarei, P., DiClemente, C., Puvar, D., White, A., Richards, M., & Tyson McCrea, K. (2017, April). *The effects of a cross-age peer mentoring program on neighborhood cohesion for low-income urban youth*. Poster presented at the meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, Austin, TX.

Midwestern Psychological Association 2017:

Luka, K., Onyeka, O., Rice, C., Richards, M., & Tyson-McCrea, K. (2017, April). *Aggression as a Predictor of Attendance Amongst Youth at a Cross Age Peer-Mentoring Program, Moderated by Gender*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Sullivan-Konyn, M., DiClemente, C. M., Warren, S., Bautista, S., Huddleston, N., Daniels, E., Richards, M. & Tyson McCrea, K. (2017, April). *Integrating Restorative Justice practices in the context of a cross-age peer mentoring program*. Poster presented at the meeting of Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Society for Community Research and Action 2017:

Quimby, D., Onyeka, O., Bautista, S., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea K. (2017, June). Research and services to advance the third Reconstruction: a view from city streets. Paper presented in E.P. Smith (Chair), *Minimizing Risk and Maximizing Health for Vulnerable Youth of Color: Using Global Mental Health and Community-Based Approaches*. Symposium conducted at the biennial meeting of the Society for Community and Research and Action, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Graduate School Interdisciplinary Research Symposium 2017:

Quimby, D., Onyeka, O., Richards, M., & Tyson-McCrea, K. (2017, April). Research and Services to Advance the Third Reconstruction: A View of Resilience from Marginalized City Streets. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Graduate School Interdisciplinary Research Symposium, Chicago, IL.

Loyola Center for Urban Research and Learning 2017:

Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K., Onyeka, O., Morency, M., Scott, D., Brown, R., & Lane, D. (2017). *Cross-Age Peer Mentoring: Building Resilience in the Midst of Severe Disadvantage*. Invited presentation, Center for Urban Research and Learning: Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL.

Loyola Social Justice Symposium 2017:

Onyeka, O., Bautista, S., Zarei, P., Bigelow, A., White, A., & Luka, K., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K. (2017, March). *Promoting Resilience Among At-Risk Youth: A Workshop Utilizing Community-Based Approaches to Help Change the Narrative*. Symposium conducted at the Social Justice Symposium, Chicago, IL.

LUROP (Loyola Student Research Conference 2017):

Sullivan-Konyn, M., Warren, S., Bautista, S., DiClemente, C., Richards, M., & Tyson-McCrea K. (2017, April). *Integrating restorative justice practices in the context of a cross-age peer mentoring program*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Undergraduate Research & Engagement Symposium, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL.

International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies 2017:

Morency, M., Zarei, P., Dusing, C., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K. (2017, November). *The moderating effect of gender and cross-age peer mentoring on the relationship between stressful life events and internalizing symptoms in low-income urban adolescents*. Poster presented at the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, November 9-11, 2017.

OJJDP Report 2017:

Richards, M.H., Tyson-McCrea, K., Dusing, C.R., DiClemente, C., Deane, K., Quimby, D. (2017). Interim report for the evaluation of a cross-age peer mentoring program for youth in high violence Chicago communities. *Office of Justice Programs' National Criminal Justice Reference Service*. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/grants/251379.pdf>

Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference 2018:

Pica, J., Miller, K., Dusing, C., Morency, M., Murphy, B., Moore, A., Tyson McCrea, K., & Richards, M. (2018, April). "*Hold Onto Your Dreams*": *Hope and future expectations of prosocial youth mentors in high-poverty, high violence neighborhoods*. Presentation At Ethnographic And Qualitative Research Conference Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV, February 26-27, 2018.

Miller, K., Moore, A., Pica, J., Grimes, C., Onyeka, O., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K., (2018, February). *We are not all gangsters: Enabling impoverished youth of color to revise their societal representations through multimedia creativity*. Poster presented at the Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV, February 26-27, 2018.

LUROP (Loyola Student Research Conference 2018):

Maten, S., Onyeka, O., Dusing, C.R., Sample, M., Ford, K., Williams, N., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K., (2018, April). *Examining the role of ethnic identity membership on the relationship between stress and internalizing symptoms*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Undergraduate Research & Engagement Symposium, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL, April 20 – 22, 2018.

Tran, C., DiClemente, C., & Richards, M. (2018, April). *The effect of neighborhood perceptions on self-efficacy and its impact on academic achievement in urban adolescents*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Undergraduate Research & Engagement Symposium, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago IL, April 20 – 22, 2018.

Northwestern Black Graduate Student Conference 2018:

Onyeka, O., Matthews, C., Hill, D., Sample, M., Ford, K., Williams, N., Richards, M., & Tyson-McCrea, K. (2018, April). *Promoting Resilience Among At-Risk Youth: Utilizing Community-Based Approaches to Help Change the Narrative*. Oral presentation presented at the annual meeting of the Northwestern Black Graduate Student Conference, Chicago, IL, April 14, 2018.

Miller, K., Tyson-McCrea, K., Richards, M., Ellison, V., Onyeka, O., Daniels, E., Denton, D. (2018, April). *We are not all gangsters: Enabling impoverished youth of color to revise their societal representations through multimedia creativity*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Northwestern Black Graduate Student Conference, Chicago, IL, April 14, 2018.

Midwestern Psychological Association 2018:

Onyeka, O., So, F., Tran, C., Richards, M., & Tyson-McCrea, K. (2018, April). *Police beats and city streets: Examining African American and Latinx youth interactions with and perceptions of police*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL, April 12 – 14, 2018.

Dusing, C.R., McDowell, J., Aydin, K., & Richards, M. (2018, April). *Who does mentoring help? Positive effects of cross-age peer mentoring for high school mentors*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL, April 12 – 14, 2018.

Society for Social Work Research, 2018:

Moore, A. Grimes, C., Richards, M., McCrea, K. Tyson. (2018). "Youth As Change-Agents for Violence Prevention: A Process Evaluation of a Cross-Age Mentoring Program in Chicago's High-Violence, High-Poverty Communities." For Society for Social Work and Research Twenty-Second Annual Conference, Washington, D.C. Jan, 2018

Society for Research on Adolescence 2018:

Dusing, C.R., Morency, M., Zarei, P., So, F., White, A., & Richards, M. (2018, April) *Developing strong bonds: Effects of youth mentors' positive qualities on mentoring relationships*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Minneapolis, MN, April 12 – 14, 2018.

Zarei, P., Dusing, C.R., Miller, K., Morency, M., So, F., & Richards, M. (2018, April). *A mixed-methods analysis of a peer-mentoring program's effects on beliefs about aggression in African American and Latino youth*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Minneapolis, MN, April 12 – 14, 2018.

UCSC Gender Development Conference 2018:

Onyeka, O., Pentakainen, A., Watson, H., Moliere, K., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K. (2018, October). *Gender differences among Black and Latinx youth encounters with police*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Gender Development Research Conference, University of California Santa Cruz, San Francisco, CA, October 17-18, 2018.

Scholars Strategy Network Chicagoland 2018:

Richards, M. H., Tyson-McCrea, K., Onyeka, C., Wilkins, K., DiClemente, C. M., & Miller, K. (2018). "Preventing youth violence in Chicago." *Policy Brief for the Scholars Strategy Network Chicagoland*.

Love, E., Morency, M., Miller, K., Onyeka, O., & Richards, M. (2018, May 18). How to Involve Young People in Afterschool Programs | Scholars Strategy Network. Retrieved August 27, 2018, from <https://scholars.org/brief/how-involve-young-people-afterschool-programs>

Children and Youth Services Review 2019:

McCrea, K. Tyson, Richards, M.H., Quimby, D., Scott, D., Davis, L., Thomas, A., Hart, S., and Hopson, S. (in press, 2019). Understanding Violence and Developing Resilience with African American Youth in High-Poverty, High-Crime Communities. *Children and Youth Services Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.12.018>.

National Mentoring Summit 2019:

Onyeka, O., Richards, M., Dusing, C., DiClemente, C., Miller, K., Tyson-McCrea, K. (2019, January). The power of the peer: *Utilizing cross-age peer mentoring programming for youth of color*. Workshop presented at the annual meeting of the National Mentoring Summit, Washington, D.C, January 31 - February 2, 2019.

Society for Research in Child Development (SCRD) 2019:

Dusing, C. R., Harris, E., Richards, M., & Onyeka, O. (2019). Impact of cross-age peer mentoring on mentors' internalizing symptoms: Role of relationship strength and gender. Poster presentation at the annual meeting of Society for Research on Child Development, Baltimore, MD, March 21-23, 2019.

Onyeka, O., Miller, K., Matthews, C., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K., Daniels, E., Denton, D., Edwards, K., Williams, N. (2019, March). For us, by us: Utilizing youth engagement & participatory action research strategies for youth of color. Paper presented in M. Richards (Chair), *From Perception to Participation: Examining Predictors, Factors, and Value of Youth Social and Civic Engagement to Promote Resilience among Urban Youth of Color*. Symposium conducted at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, Baltimore, MD, March 21 – 23, 2019.

DiClemente, C. M., Dusing, C. R., Gillis-Harry, K., Richards, M. H., & Tyson-McCrea, K. (2019, March). Saving Lives Inspiring Youth: Cross-age peer mentoring and externalizing problems in urban youth minority mentors. Paper submitted in M. H. Richards (Chair), *Examining*

the Effectiveness of Three Research-Based Mentoring Programs for At-Risk Youth. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, Baltimore, MD.

LUROP (Loyola Student Research Conference 2019):

Pentikainen, A., Dusing, C. R., & Richards, M. (2019). School climate and self-esteem as mediating factors for academic achievement in the context of a cross-age peer mentoring program. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research and Engagement Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 11-13, 2019.

Cruz, O., Onyeka, O., & Richards, M. H. (2019, April). *School sense of community, future expectations, and academic achievement: A relationship analysis*. Poster presented at the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research and Engagement Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 11 – 13, 2019.

McDowell, J., DiClemente, C. M., & Richards, M. H. (2019, April). *How do media portrayals of race affect self-esteem and ethnic identity in urban minority youth?* Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Loyola University Chicago Undergraduate Research and Engagement Symposium, Chicago, IL, April 11-13, 2019.

Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA) 2019:

Pentikainen, A., Dusing, C. R., & Richards, M. (2019). School climate and self-esteem as mediating factors for academic achievement in the context of a cross-age peer mentoring program. Poster submitted for the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL, April 11-13, 2019.

Tyson-McCrea, K., Watson, H., Onyeka, O., Moore, A., Chesney, C., Richards, M., Jenkins, G., Smith, T. (2019, April). We are not all gang-bangers: Prosocial motivation of youth in high-crime, high-poverty communities of color. Paper presented in G. Velez (Chair), *Experiencing Violence: From Laboratory to Community*. Symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL, April 11 – 13, 2019.

McDowell, J., DiClemente, C. M., & Richards, M. H. (2019, April). How do media portrayals of race affect self-esteem and ethnic identity in urban minority youth? Poster to be presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Network for Social Work Management (NSWM) 2019:

Tyson McCrea, K., Miller, K.M., Watson, H., Pica, J II., Guthrie, D., Richards, M., Temple, U & Lane, D. (May 2019) “*Why would I join something when I have no say-so?*”: *Using participatory processes with youth of color to improve services in severely disadvantaged neighborhoods*. The Network for Social Work Management Conference. Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

Tyson McCrea, K., Watson, H., Miller, K.M., Guthrie, D., Lane, D., Temple, U., Richards, M. (May 2019). *Designing and implementing street-based social work services for urban youth of color in poverty*. The Network for Social Work Management Conference. Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

Society for Community Research in Action (SCRA) 2019:

Onyeka, O., Wilkins, K., Gillis-Harry, K., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K. (2019, June). Examining the relationship between perceptions of neighborhood and attitudes about violence through a youth participatory action research framework. Paper presented in A. Roy (Chair), *Community Violence and Adolescent Functioning in Chicago*. Symposium conducted at the biennial meeting of the Society for Community Research and Action, Chicago, IL, June 27 – 29, 2019.

Onyeka, O., Miller, K., Matthews, C., Daniels, E., Denton, D., Edwards, K., Richards, M., Tyson-McCrea, K. (2019, June). Exploring the role of youth participatory action research in the development of critical consciousness among Black and Latinx youth. Paper presented in A. Roy (Chair), *Youth of Color as Agents of Change: Examining Critical Consciousness among Marginalized Youth in Diverse Settings*. Symposium conducted at the biennial meeting of the Society for Community Research and Action, Chicago, IL, June 27 – 29, 2019.

American Psychological Association (APA) 2019:

Dusing, C. R., Wilkins, K., & Richards, M. (accepted). Efficacy of cross-age mentoring: Impact of concurrent violence exposure and perceptions of safety. Paper presented in *Interrupting the Link Between Anxiety and Violence in African American Youth*. Symposium at the annual meeting of American Psychological Association, Division 27, Chicago, IL, August 8-11, 2019.

Onyeka, O., Serna, V., Richards, M. (2019, August). Examining the relation between neighborhood cohesion and positive youth development among urban youth participants of a cross-age peer mentoring program. Paper presented in M. Zimmerman (Chair), *Perceptions of climate and safety: Identifying factors that promote resilience among urban youth*. Symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL, August 8 – 11, 2019.

Appendix C: Qualitative Coding Manuals

Resilience Coding Manual

“Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth” Mentoring Program

Instructions: Please code all qualitative data using the specific sub-code that is listed under the general higher-level theme (which is highlighted in **yellow**), when applicable. If no sub-code can be identified, only the general theme is applied. All themes and sub-codes are listed in the codebook on Dedoose under the title “Resilience.”

Notes: Within one sentence there can be multiple chunks that should be coded separately: e.g., Youth says, “My uncle died and my brother was killed in a gang fight...” “My uncle died” and “my brother was killed in a gang fight” would be two separate codes with different meaning. Additionally, an entire elaboration of a statement that pertains to a code can constitute one chunk of meaning.

1) PURSUIT OF CONSTRUCTIVE ACADEMIC GOALS

Notes:

Does NOT include specific mention of overcoming obstacles. Does include accomplishments that are on the path towards accomplishing future goals such as scholarship to go to college, getting a good grade in class, etc.

Examples:

- Mentee: “Did well on test”
- Mentor: “My high is I didn’t have any detentions. Low is we took the practice SAT today, and I don’t feel good about it.”
- Mentor: "My high is that I made up all my homework after missing school."
- Mentor: "I brought my grades up. I do not have a low."
- Mentor: "My high is that I’ve been going to college fairs, I’ve got a job interview tomorrow. And I got a college scholarship on the table."
- Mentor: "My high is that I got a scholarship, I’m the only student to get the Comcast scholarship. I joined the basketball team. My layups are out of control."

- Mentor: "I've been going to college fairs for the last two weeks. I've been admitted on sight and some school gave me a scholarship and I will be sponsored for a college tour. I'm looking at Miami Florida and Northwestern. I'm happy for that."
- Mentor: "My high is that I have a poetry slam at Columbia college at 6 for a scholarship."
- Mentor: "My high is I brought my D in my English class up to a B"
- Mentor: "I'm passing every class and I got perfect attendance"

2) FUTURE EXPECTATIONS AND HOPE

Notes:

- *Youth reports that s/he/they feels hopeful or positive regarding their future expectations*

Examples:

- Mentor: "Be a better person. Make my mentee a better person."
- Mentor: "Actually getting mentee to engage more and get a better understanding of him"
- Mentor: "He need a lot more time than the other kids to get the work done; it's a process for him; he knows how to do it but I gotta keep reminding him what the focus is; I can guide him thru it; let him know it's okay to not know everything; it's okay to make mistakes; I can work on it with him"

3) ABILITY TO RESOLVE CONFLICT CONSTRUCTIVELY AND WITHOUT VIOLENCE: BELIEFS ABOUT AGGRESSION AND ALTERNATIVES; CHOOSING NOT USE VIOLENCE

Notes:

Mentors/mentees have to specifically talk about interpersonal conflict which they are resolving without aggression or violence. This could be either inside or outside of program.

Sub-codes:

- Taking the high road/ being a bigger person (verbal expression)
- Showing forgiveness
- Use distraction
- Intentionally choosing not to use violence (this is explicitly stated by the mentor/mentee)
- Using communication skills to resolve conflict/ peer mediation

Examples:

- “Takes into consideration others’ situation”
- “It’s easier for me to take other’s situations into consideration when I think about what it took for them to come to me”
- “Mentee was trying to argue, though, I told her she shouldn’t try to make others feel bad.”
- Mentor: “I was bullied before; stand up for yourself journal it when it happens, so you can have evidence and tell adults, so no one can tell any lies. Kill ‘em with kindness. A conflict with conflict never ends. You don’t always have to fight them.”
- Mentor: “Your life can change for better or worse in an instant. Be the bigger person”

4) COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP ABILITIES THAT ARE VALUE-BASED

Sub-codes:

- Respect
- Good communication
- Loyalty
- Importance of developing relationships
- Patience
- Positive attitude

Examples:

- “We chose dependability. We need to trust each other so we can depend on each other.”
- “We chose respect because you need to respect yourself to respect others.”
- “I said confidence. Because, when stuff happens you need confidence and help to stay strong.”
- “Honesty, because when you need help from the police they gon’ help you.”
- “Reliability. We want our mentees to rely on us.”
- Mentor: “I guess like, my experience with respect is the first time I went to a meeting. When I started speaking, everyone else stopped speaking. I was surprised because I’m used to people talking over me, and that was one of the first times I felt respected.”

- Mentor: “For me I think it is like, getting what you give pretty much.”
- Mentor: “One thing I think about respect is, we have a teacher in our school named Sgt. Howard, and he gets a lot of respect, because he gives us respect, more than other teachers, because they’re not the same.”
- Mentor: “To me, respect is like a two-way thing. You have to still respect some people even if you don’t get that respect, like your elders in your family.”
- Mentor: “How respect works for me is that if they respect me, I will respect them. It’s pretty simple. A time I’ve been shown respect is with Edwin. He respected me when I came here so I respected him.”
- Mentor: “For me it’s kind of like what Mentor said. Like if you were friends with someone and now maybe you aren’t, you still don’t talk bad about them, and you check in with them every once in a while.
- Mentor: "We learned that good communication is important and you can’t walk out on your team."

5) POSITIVE RACIAL IDENTITY

Notes:

How youth see themselves while understanding how they are seen by others—Sandra Smith, U.C. Berkeley. This may also be connected to exposure to violence/ exposure to stress.

Examples:

- "I am thankful for my skin color, I didn’t use to be."
- It’s important for us to know about our identity or aspects of it because...
- “To know who you are “so no one can change you “so others can recognize you” “know where you came from”

6) SELF-EFFICACY

Notes:

A person’s belief in his/her capacity to execute a plan and achieve goals. Bandura (1997) conceptualizes self-efficacy as a person’s belief in his or her capacity to pursue and achieve set goals. Beliefs in that capacity impacts what goals a person will pursue or abandon, and how he or she will endure in the face of obstacles to achieve goals, as well as how he or she bounces back from adversity to pursue goals. Emphasis on belief in him/herself, self-confidence.

- Any reference to particular goals and carrying them out is self-determination.

- *A chunk may be coded as both self-efficacy and self-determination*
- *Any reference to overcoming obstacles goes with grit.*

Examples:

- “Believing in your capacity to achieve—this was a goal I set for myself (self-determination)—it makes me stronger every time I show up—it makes me proud of myself because this is something I am doing for me.” (the proud of myself part would be coded as self-efficacy).
- "I improved my attitude. I am better today than I was yesterday. I feel like I work with kids better now. I don't get to see my brother a lot but when I do, it's better now. We're 9 years apart. It helped me with him, I know how kids think."
- Mentor: “Last year of school. I'm thinking about going to the National Guard In the year following that, I want to go to college and major in music”

7) SELF-DETERMINATION

Notes:

Youth report that they are able to choose goals, have autonomy, and be competent. Believing in your ability to do something (intrinsic). Has to do with choice; the choice can be supported or restricted by your situation/ context. Do you have the freedom to make a choice or freedom to achieve their goal? Do your environments support or thwart their ability to achieve? Do you have other people to help you? External conflicts impacting your ability to achieve your goals. Can use outside forces, like schools, to determine where determination comes from (self vs. external determination or motivation)

Self-Determination Theory assumes that social and cultural forces either support or thwart a person's sense of motivation, well-being, and how well an individual performs. This theory further assumes that environmental forces that supports an individual's autonomy, relatedness, and competency contributes to her or his self-determination or volitional motivation (Deci et al., 2012). Self-determination entails the ability to choose goals, specifically the goals of autonomy, relatedness, and competence.

- *Does not include overcoming obstacles which should be coded as grit.*

Sub-codes:

- Autonomy
- Competence

- Believing that one can choose one's own goals
- Believing one can achieve one's own goals/ motivation
- Putting effort into trying to achieve one's goals

Examples:

- "Be mindful of what's around and who's around you."
- "If you got a problem, we can solve it. Don't keep it inside."
- "If you got a problem with your grades we can help you."
- "No play fighting."
- "Don't involve yourself in somebody else's conversation because it escalates."
- "Fill out forms truthfully."
- "Don't touch the teacher's property."
- "If you don't miss a day for a month, 5 dollars."
- "If the mentees behave for a month straight, they are rewarded a pizza party."
- "The mentors then began to brainstorm on activities that the program could possibly implement."
- Mentor: "A detective, a criminal justice detective. I like to figure out stuff I like to solve problems"

8) PERCEPTION OF OPPORTUNITY AND ABILITY TO MAKE USE OF IT

Notes:

Youth report perception of opportunities made available to them.

Examples:

- "For highs, the "Posse" foundation pay for your whole education. All together there was like 400 kids. When I went, they didn't have my school on the roster. 400 kids and I was thinking like, my confidence wasn't there, and I was just told I am going to the second stage, a one-on-one interview. I'm about to go to college and not pay for it."
- Mentor: "High landed two jobs one of which is an advanced internship"
- Mentor: "Low: Missing the opportunity to make up work that might affect my grade"
- Mentor: "This was an opportunity to practice patience something I've been working on"

9) UBUNTU (I AM BECAUSE WE ARE)

Notes:

Ubuntu is an African Philosophy deriving from South Africa. A person with Ubuntu is described as anyone who is open and available to others, affirming of others, and understand that he or she is part of a greater whole. A person who has Ubuntu also understands that to humiliate or diminish other to oppress or torture others is to diminish himself or herself. Youth make specific statement about the value or goal of supporting the community, helping others

Ubuntu stresses connectedness, Afrocentric value that emphasizes that collective experience contributes to well-being. Collective efforts is what contributes to a person doing well (this cultural piece is how we can start thinking about resilience)

Examples may include: mentoring someone younger, which creates a common ground, talking with my mentor about what's stressing me out and they will give me good advice.

Examples:

- Mentor: “[I’ve] got to get them to do things together” “get them to be friends”
- Mentor: High/Today: “I think I feel like I really helped them out today” [mentees talked about gangs in their school “made it seem as scary as possible to them” talked about family members in gangs and jail “they said they don’t want no part of that”]
- Mentor: “my mom, my auntie, brother, sister, grandma; if I think I can’t do something, they’ll help me go back and do it.

10) LEADERSHIP

Sub-code:

- Mentor acts as a role model to peers or mentees

Examples:

- “Some of the mentors expressed a desire to work as teacher assistants, and thought that today’s session was good practice and training for them.... They explained that having the mentees respond to them in such a positive way boosted their confidence.”
- Mentor: “I have a set up. Mentors and mentees play a little a game/quiz as soon as they arrive and settle in at the program. Something like a small trivia game, possibly on what the mentees are learning in class. Reward them with some candy/food.

Duration (5-10 minutes max).” (2) Mentors and Mentees do “the handout stuff,” given by the program (20-25 minutes). (3) Mentors and Mentees split up and talk about how they have been doing. They can discuss the handouts given as well.

- Three mentors want to work on papers with the lab. Staff asked the mentors what topic they would like to discuss (with mentees) to improve the community. Here is what they came up with: Liter, Gang and gun violence and how to reduce it.
- Mentor: Wants to know her mentee, so she can look up to her.
- Mentor: "I learned that somebody can never be too young to lead them."
- Mentor: “We’re here for a specific reason and we need to teach them what’s right and wrong.”
- Mentor: “High student council I got to talk to principal about issues”

11) CONTRIBUTE TO POSITIVE COMMUNITY CHANGE

Notes:

Being able to make positive change in one’s community by responding to obstacles of poverty with active change rather than passive victimhood. They can be active in creating in their environment—perceiving all the negative obstacles—related to autonomy—they have an identity that is not just a victim of the environment. This refers to contributing to the community outside the mentoring group.

Examples:

- “I think it’s good they’re standing up for their rights” “I think it’s good for teachers to be fighting for their pay” “They deserve to fight for what they need”
- “I do believe community involvement can help...we need to show we can change....we need to be the change...there is no stopping us...you have to make sure you are in the right group.
- “You never know how much of a change you are to that person...even by saying Good morning you make the person feel you are a part of something I do feel like this can change a lot of our neighborhood but we have to play a role in it and not be afraid.”
- “My favorite part is talking about the community and what goes on in the community and what we can do to help.”
- "So, Chicago reached 704 homicides. Every 20 minutes, somebody dies from an overdose. With that being said, all the negatives happening, this is a way having positive reinforcement. When you give good to the community, you get good back. If I didn’t give people to look up to, I wouldn’t be safe."

- “I think I feel like I really helped them out today mentees talked about gangs in their school I made it seem as scary as possible to them talked about family members in gangs and jail they said they don’t want no part of that”

12) TAKING THE HIGH ROAD IN RESPONSE TO AN UNJUST EXPERIENCE RELATED TO AN INSTITUTION OR SOCIETAL SITUATION

Notes:

Here, the unjust experience refers to a power difference, not a conflict between peers (which would be coded 3). Code must include persistence towards a goal.

Examples:

- “Seeking support for positive coping in response to high stress and violence—Experience at Herzl—Young man whose brother was shot four times (gang retaliation decided to stay in the mentoring program for the support, even though he was paid bus fare, he stayed for the support. He could have wanted to retaliate but he chose a positive alternative instead through our program.”
- Mentor: "My low is that I am trying to get myself back together because my friend got killed on Saturday"
- Mentor: "I was a foster kid til my sophomore year and joined a program. They pay half my rent, help pay for Prom, and will help me with college. I have to work so hard, though. I’m gonna talk about staying positive and having a positive mindset because it will keep you happy, and give you higher energy.”
- "My takeaway was probably keeping a positive outlook on everything and I don’t know, and keeping a positive mind even if it’s something I can’t get through."
- Asked the mentors how do they respond to being confronted by the police and would they change anything?

13) COLLECTIVE REFLECTION ON OPPRESSION AS A BASE FOR RESILIENCE

Notes:

Group reflection or perception that the cause of one’s negativity towards oneself or others of the one’s racial group is not true but is absorbed from environmental sources (Freire for construct validity). Collective resilience refers to the “We Shall Overcome” mentality, versus the implicit and explicit negative biases African Americans have for themselves, and member of their group. One example of oppression is pervasive discrimination and how internalizing racism negatively impacts how African Americans feel about each other.

Examples:

- “As ignorant, slow, lower level, jailbird, low class, criminals.”
- “People beneath them. That we can’t amount to anything they can do. Young black people that graduate from the best colleges still not equal.”
- Mentor: The way you do things matter They tryna keep up in our place” (slavery was brought up here) They reminding us of what they can do to us (e.g. control; hierarchy). They don’t want us blacks to rise up”
- Mentor: More opportunities now for us blacks but we not living as that; we still living like there’s none”

14) GRIT

Notes:

Grit is the combined power of passion and perseverance toward achieving goals, as well as exemplifying resilience and a strong work ethic to achieve those goals. Grit is also the ability to start a goal and complete tasks necessary to achieve the goals (Duckworth, 2016). The youth must specifically describe overcoming an obstacle. Success is not necessary, but effort is needed. This may also refer to an internal obstacle.

Examples:

- “I learned how to control my anger with certain things and communicate with others better and stop being shy and being able to speak to a large group set of kids.”
- Mentor Low: “hard to engage because of mentee’s disability, hard to keep him focused and pinpoint what he likes, hard to understand him and keep him focused. This was an opportunity to practice patience “something I’ve been working on.”
- Mentor is coming despite irritation in his eye—people feeling they should come. Mentor was supposed to go to the game today, gave it up to come here. Good one for grit
- Mentor: “My dad died... at this point, I was like who cares but when you leave your past behind
- you, you can move on and not take it for granted. When my dad died, I didn’t have to do nothing for nobody... he wanted me to go to college and I got a job starting Monday and I’m starting college in the fall.”
- Mentor: “My high is I finally came back after some weeks...it’s

- been 2-3 weeks. My low is I'm still hungry, I haven't eaten anything all day because there wasn't nothing at my house. I didn't have a way to get here. I literally went on the green line and waited for someone to tap me on."
- "Got a lot of stuff going on Low I been up for 8 days and missed a whole week of school got out Friday it was really hard for me High seeing my mentee was cool today I'm here. Even though I'm dealing with these cases, I'm here"
- My high is being here. My low is just finding a job right now. I'm working
- really hard right now."

15) SOCIAL SUPPORT

Notes:

Social Support is the act of putting oneself in a position to be a positive resource for a peer, or someone they know within their age group. Social Bond Theory assumes that weak social bonds contributes to delinquent or anti-social behavior. Stronger bonds reduce delinquent behavior.

Examples:

- "I take pride in being that person that people come to when they need help dealing with their situation and feeling."
- "Most mentors expressed feeling very satisfied with their first mentoring experience and with their mentee. They expressed excitement about getting to know their mentees better and doing more activities together..... All mentors expressed a desire to spend more time during the week with their mentee."
- "The mentees really listened to the mentors as they gave instructions for the game."
- **Mentor** shared a story about a young girl at her school who is emotionally and physically abused by her peers. She expressed her genuine concern for the girl and said she tries to say hi to her every now and then. Mentor exudes confidence and leadership."
- "Be a better person. Make my mentee a better person."
- "My favorite part of the program is when we got to spend time with our mentees...talk about something new; piece of advice that your mentee can give you or you can give your mentee." Peer-to peer interview #1037
- "As mentors, we are a team. So let's think about ways to support each other."

Risk Coding Manual

“Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth” Mentoring Program

Instructions: Please code all qualitative data using the specific sub-code that is listed under the general higher-level theme (which is highlighted in **yellow**), when applicable. If no sub-code can be identified, only the general theme is applied. All themes and sub-codes are listed in the codebook on Dedoose under the title “Risk.”

Notes: “Exit Interviews” and “Peer to Peer – Community Concerns” data have their own unique codes applied to specific themes and sub-codes for specific questions asked by interviewers. These codes are highlighted in **blue** and **green**, respectively. When these specific questions are not being answered by a participant, then the general Risk codes are applied instead.

Within one sentence there can be multiple chunks that should be coded separately: e.g., Youth says, “My uncle died and my brother was killed in a gang fight...” “My uncle died” and “my brother was killed in a gang fight” would be two separate codes with different meaning. Additionally, an entire elaboration of a statement that pertains to a code can constitute one chunk of meaning.

Code 11.7 is applied to ALL Exit Interviews.

1) HEALTH ISSUES, STRESS REACTIONS, AND LACK OF ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

1. Lack of access to medical care

This refers to the inability to receive medical care when it is needed. For this code to be used, the person must indicate explicitly that they needed medical services but were unable to receive treatment.

2. Lack of access to mental health care

This refers to the inability to receive psychological care when it is needed. For this code to be used, the person must indicate explicitly that they needed therapy services but were unable to receive treatment.

3. Poor physical health

This includes explicit mention of a chronic illness, pain, or another detrimental health factor. Does not include common illnesses such as the common cold. Consistent lack of sleep.

- “I’ve been in and out of the hospital. I had caught a virus, a stomach bug. I’ve been in and out of school, but hopefully I go back tomorrow. Gonna see how that’s gonna go.”

4. Poor mental health (diagnosed)

This includes explicit mention of a psychological disorder, suicide, drug abuse, or other mental health factors. When rated by a staff member, this can include a youth coming to the program high or having to counsel a youth in session for mental health issues.

5. Suggestions of possible post-traumatic disorder or other emotional problems that are not diagnosed – e.g., Troubles with anger management, feelings of sadness or depression

- “She has a real bad temper like I do”
- “Attitude problem”
- “I was depressed yesterday”

2) LACK OF RESOURCES IN SCHOOL AND GENERAL NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS WITH SCHOOL STAFF EXCLUDES VIOLENCE FROM STAFF TO YOUTH, VIOLENCE AT SCHOOL, OR DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR (see later themes below)

1. Educational deprivation

Youth must state that they do not have access to an educational resource that they want access to. Getting in trouble at school should be coded in theme 11.

- “Our school, they ain’t got no funds. They broke. I wish I could have a real high school experience. In our school, we got teachers and students fighting. I feel like they putting money into stuff that don’t matter like dance uniforms.”
- “My Spanish teacher missed half of our class.”

2. Negative school climate

This code refers to negative interactions with teachers (e.g., verbal abuse), bullying, or other factors that create a negative environment at school. This does not include simply an attitude, it must be a specific example of an event. This can include sit-ins or other forms of protest. Getting in trouble at school should be coded in theme 11.

- "They should see how the teachers treat us"
- "Teacher tried to fail me"
- Can include here SLIY staff observations of negative interactions with youth by school staff (insulting, negative stereotypes, rejection, ignoring, etc.)
- Sit-ins, protests

3. Lack of resources and extra-curricular activities

This can include sports getting cut, lack of after-school programming, lack of toilet paper, books, school supplies, drinkable water, and related issues.

3) CONCERNS ABOUT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Fear of being discriminated against, including communications indicating historical trauma; Perception or fear of society's negative stereotypes about African Americans

- "I feel like there's a war going on - I'm afraid that things will go back to the way they used to be for black people. Like white people will go back to calling us n****rs again"
- Answers to the question "How do people see black people?"
 - "Ignorant. "Slow. Lower level. Jail birds. People beneath them. That we can't amount to anything they can do. Young black people that graduate from the best colleges still not equal."
 - "That we dumb"
 - "That we got the most single parents"
- "African-American men like white women more than African-American women."
- "For the stereotype to be thrown in my face that as I get older, I'll go to jail, that's offensive to me. My education is very important to me."
- "People don't want us Blacks to rise up"

4) CONCERN ABOUT LACK OF INPUT INTO DEMOCRATIC PROCESS; POLITICAL CLIMATE RESULTING IN YOUTH EXPERIENCES OF POWERLESSNESS

This code refers to the anxiety, fear, or other emotions that kids have felt related to stress surrounding politics. Includes responses to the Presidential election of 2016. If discussing powerlessness in the context of violence, code theme 7.

- "He's the president and there are some things he can do"
- "Mr. Murphy taught us that our votes don't count"
- "I wouldn't even want to help no more... it makes us look weak, we are not prepared, we ain't united, we aren't no team"

5) CONCERN ABOUT INJUSTICE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS WITH POLICE

This includes instances of reaching out to police for help and not receiving that help. This also refers to wanting to get help from police but stating that they chose not to do so due to mistrust or fear of the consequences of that encounter, or stating in general that they have a negative view of police. Includes mistreatment by police, including police criminal behavior (stealing their IDs, smashing their cell phones, harassing them, endangering them). This theme includes having contact with police that the child concludes was a violation of their rights or an adversarial meeting.

For coding Peer to Peer Community Concerns only:

1. Fearful about the presence of police officers or the potential of police interaction

6) CONCERNS ABOUT POVERTY

1. Food insecurity

This means someone stating that they are hungry specifically because of no access to food because of poverty. This could also be direct mentioning of being unable to purchase food because of lack of money. It also refers to youth behaviors indicating their hunger – such as stating they can't concentrate because they are hungry; hoarding snacks to take home to siblings, etc.

2. Resource insecurity

Like food insecurity, this is direct mention of being unable to purchase certain basic supplies that are needed for a household. Does not include supplies that would be considered luxury items. Can include lack of appropriate clothing for the weather. This could also include mention of items that a mentoring site is unable to provide for these same reasons.

3. Frustration with low income

This can represent mention of wanting a larger paycheck, either from the mentoring project or another job, and worry about family lacking resources.

4. Lack of transportation

This includes inability to find appropriate/efficient transportation when in need. ONLY code if clear that the person is expressing distress about this particular resource (“I’m done with buses” is insufficient if not clear what “done” means.)

5. Inability to attend college due to lack of money

- “The highlight was that I got accepted to my dream school, Michigan State, but my low is that the cost is really high and I didn’t really get aid. My other choice is New York...”
- "The low I didn’t get my financial aid from the school I want to go to and I’m scared."

7) EXPOSURE TO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AT ALL SYSTEM LEVELS, BROKEN DOWN THEN BY SYSTEM AND BY TYPE OF EXPOSURE

IF THEY THEMSELVES PARTICIPATED IN VIOLENCE, USE THEME 11 – THIS IS JUST EXPOSURE

1. Exposure to specific incidents of community violence

This includes reference to events such as victimization or witnessing of events that occur in the community or by community members that are unknown to the person. Can include gang violence.

- a) Life-threatening (being shot at, threatened with gun, etc.)
- b) Being threatened with violence (e.g., harassed about clique membership)
- c) Being robbed
- d) Shooting around school
 - o School on lock-down because of drive-by shooting - “this happens all the time”

Witnessing a shooting that results in wounding or death

- f) Knowing about a past or imminent act of serious violence – a lot of times the youth are vague about it out of self-protection.
 - “I know who is killing who”
 - “There is going to be a fight... “

For coding Peer to Peer Community Concerns only:

- g) Fearful about the presence of cliques/gangs or possibility of being involved in clique/gang-related incidents
- h) Fearful about witnessing violence in your community
- i) Fearful about being a victim of violence in your community

2. Exposure to family violence

This includes reference to events such as victimization or witnessing of events that occur in the family or by family members that are known to the person. It also includes child abuse (other family loss not specified by violence included in 9.3/9.5)

3. Exposure to school violence

This includes reference to events such as victimization or witnessing of events that occur in the school or by school peers/teachers, fighting

For coding Peer to Peer Community Concerns only:

- a. Fearful about witnessing violence at school
- b. Fearful about being a victim of violence at school

4. Exposure to dating violence

This includes reference to events such as victimization or witnessing of events that occur in the context of dating or by a romantic partner.

5. Statements of general concern about violence exposure, including those that reflect a negative racial identity because of violence exposure, specifically in the context of general community violence discussion

- “It’s a mindset. It went from Black people protecting their neighborhood to gangs protecting their gangs.
- “It’s always gonna be someone who don’t like somebody, and that’s gonna start a war.”
- “Black-on-black period. Whether it’s killing, boys fighting each other, girls fighting each other.”

6. General stress and fear NOT in the context of a constructed discussion on community violence, but clearly related to violence exposure

- “You have to watch your back”

7. Presence in a risky environment where violence is known to occur

For coding exit interviews *only* - BEFORE the program started:

- a. Going to a place where you thought violence might happen

For coding exit interviews *only* - DURING the program:

- b. Going to a place where you thought violence might happen

For coding Peer to Peer Community Concerns only:

8. Discussion of who commits the most violence in the community

- a. Adults not related to you (such as neighbors)
- b. Adults in positions of public trust (police, school staff, etc.)
- c. Other young people
- d. Adults related to you or living with you in your home

8) CONCERNS ABOUT EXPOSURE TO PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE, BROKEN DOWN BY SYSTEM AND BY DEGREE OF EXPOSURE

MUST DEAL WITH RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE

GENERAL MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES GO IN THEME 1

Do not include break-ups

Here we need to distinguish people in caregiving roles from other forms of social support, because the risk associated with caregiver emotional harm to child is much greater than from anyone else.

1. Exposure to significant family conflict

- “Arguing with my dad”

2. Lack of general social support

- "I don't have a support system"
 - "A life lesson I have learned is don't trust anyone"
 - "Y'all cool, I just don't trust with people. Friends don't mean anything."
 - "If you don't talk to your parents, and he keeps asking about people that don't care about you, you just sitting there."
- 3. Loss of psychological support, emotional trauma or neglect from primary caregiver (not due to death)**
- "I lost my relationship with my dad. We live together. I don't really care."
 - "I lost the relationship with my mama."
 - "The thing is when I was adopted, I wasn't supposed to be adopted. The moment she had me, she left the hospital to go get some drugs. When she got clean, she's like 'I'll come get you, you won't be adopted.' She said she was gonna come and get me. Next thing I know, she got back on the drugs and went back to jail for robbing a bank. It's hard for me to talk to her because I know she's gonna end up leaving"
 - I think about it sometimes. You know how a mother and a daughter have that bond? I don't ever see myself having that bond. You picked drugs over your kids"
 - "The only relationship that I lost was with my dad because we was kinda on good terms until I turned about 11. He told me that he don't even know if I'm his daughter or not. That really hurt me because my mama was sure she was with nobody else. He kinda messed me up."
4. *Psychological* violence in the mentoring program (insults, hurtful sarcasm, rejection or shunning) (code physical violence in 11)

**9) YOUTH IS CONCERNED ABOUT LACK OF SUPPORT IN FAMILY, DUE TO GENERAL STRESS OR LOSS
NO INDICATION OF SOMEONE DIRECTLY HARMING THEM
INCLUDES UNINTENTIONAL LOSS OR ABANDONMENT**

- 1. General concerns about troubles at home**
- "Things happen in my home"

2. Serious or chronic illness of family member

3. Death of parent or other primary caregiver including grandparents

- “In the bathroom I was crying because every time since my grandma passed away I used to talk to her”
- “I would have to say what affected me the most was losing my grandma that stayed in Arkansas.”

4. Abandonment by primary caregiver who is no longer present in their life

- "I feel abandoned from my mother"

5. Loss of other physical emotional support figure

This includes the passing of an emotional support figure, such as an important teacher, a family member, or a mentor. The youth cannot indicate a negative relationship with this figure to use this code.

- "We had to write about love, and my first love is dead"
- "I've had 6 people die this year that I was close to"
- "I have to go to another funeral"
- "If I could know death. I'd beat him up."
- “My spring break was kinda down. I found out my auntie had passed.”
- “Over the years, I only have one person that I actually miss from being in the grave. My grandma. She’s my great-grandma. No matter how old she was, she was my best friend. I felt like she was the only person that would actually listen to me.”
- Saturday was Rest in Piece Mariah day...I loved that woman, she used to always tell me be calm...”

6. Departure of a social support figure

- “My low is my teacher who been with me since freshman year left”
- Mentor leaving program

7. Rejection by social support figure

- "My low is that my sisters left me (moved out); they don't care about me."

8. Loss of pet

- "A low of my week was my chicken died."

10) CONCERNS ABOUT POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Including poor academic performance, feelings of hopelessness and failure about being able to succeed in school (with regard to school only), feeling unable to succeed or master a skill or academic subject. Often relates to being able to perform in school. Includes feeling overwhelmed by responsibilities; difficulty with time management.

1. Failing a test or a marginal grade

- "A low was I failed my physics test "
- "I have a C in biology and I can't do anything about it"

2. Chronic and multiple failure or drop-out

- Failing an entire class, having to retake a course
- "She said if I fail 8th grade than I'm going to give up" (about a mentee)
- Consistent lack of attendance

3. Feeling overwhelmed by school responsibilities or unable to manage one's time in order to get schoolwork done.

11) YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW OR SCHOOL RULES, ENGAGEMENT IN VIOLENCE

1. Disruptive behavior at school leading to punishment

This includes specific indication of violation of a school rule, truancy, being placed in detention, being suspended, being expelled, or some other punitive consequence or rule breaking behavior.

- "detention for 3 hours"
- "I had a 3-hour because I told a boy to scooch over"

2. Behaviors in conflict with the law outside of school

This includes behaviors that would be considered illegal, such as theft, drug or alcohol use, setting fires, burglary, destruction of property, not complying with juvenile justice procedures (showing up to court), or other delinquent activities. Youth must not have mentioned being arrested for this behavior to receive this code. This does not include physical violence engagement.

For coding exit interviews *only* - BEFORE the program started:

- a. Taking something that does not belong to oneself
- b. Carrying a weapon

For coding exit interviews *only* - DURING the program:

- c. Taking something that does not belong to oneself
- d. Carrying a weapon

3. Mentor/mentee engaging in physical violence anywhere

Can include in the mentoring program (mentee throws book at mentor, etc.).

Do not code things such as “mentee squabbles”, this code must reveal some sort of intent to cause harm.

For coding exit interviews *only* - BEFORE the program started:

- a. Hurting someone physically (hitting, pushing, using a weapon)
- b. Perpetrator of dating/relationship violence

For coding exit interviews *only* - DURING the program:

- c. Hurting someone physically (hitting, pushing, using a weapon)
- d. Perpetrator of dating/relationship violence

4. Arrests

This includes mention of any instance of having been arrested by police.

5. Participation in cliques/gangs

Only when it is the youth themselves; having friends that are in gangs should be coded in exposure to violence code 7.

For coding exit interviews *only* - BEFORE the program started:

- a. Joining a gang

For coding exit interviews *only* - DURING the program:

- b. Joining a gang

6. Thoughts about hurting/killing others (ideation)

For coding exit interviews *only* - BEFORE the program started:

- a. Desire to hurt someone or take physical revenge

For coding exit interviews *only* - DURING the program:

- b. Desire to hurt someone or take physical revenge

- 7. Coder's interpretation of change in violence engagement from before the program to during the program (code this for ALL exit interviews, even if no codes for risk are identified):

Each "yes" answer should be thought of as one instance of that behavior; if they indicate engaging in that behavior several times (e.g., 5 fights mentioned after saying "yes" to hurting someone physically), then this would be 5 "yesses" and should receive more weight when comparing behavior before and during the program.

- a. Decrease in violence/delinquency
- b. Increase in violence/delinquency
- c. No change

12) SEXUAL BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATED WITH STRESS

1. Suggestion teen is involved in unprotected sex

2. Fear of unwanted sexual advances/forced sexual encounters

For coding Peer to Peer Community Concerns only:

- a. Fearful about being involved in sexual activity you didn't want or were unsure you wanted

3. Mention of teen pregnancy for self or other that has the meaning of risk

Includes specific mention of being pregnant or caring for their own child. Unwanted or feared teen pregnancy. This can also include fear that they will become pregnant soon.

13) NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT ONESELF

This includes self-deprecating thoughts or thoughts about hurting or killing oneself (self-harm or suicidality).

14) INTIMIDATING EXPERIENCES WITH UNRELATED (NON-FAMILIAL) AUTHORITY FIGURES

For coding Peer to Peer Community Concerns only:

- 1. Fearful about the presence of or interaction with adults who have some authority over you**

Program Impact Coding Manual

“Saving Lives, Inspiring Youth” Mentoring Program

Instructions: Please code all qualitative data using the specific sub-code that is listed under the general higher-level theme (which is highlighted in yellow), when applicable. If no sub-code can be identified, only the general theme is applied. All themes and sub-codes are listed in the codebook on Dedoose under the title “Program Impact”.

Notes: “Exit Interviews” and “Peer to Peer – Community Concerns” data have their own unique codes applied to specific themes and sub-codes for specific questions asked by interviewers. These codes are highlighted in blue and green, respectively. When these specific questions are not being answered by a participant, then the general Risk codes are applied instead.

Within one sentence there can be multiple chunks that should be coded separately: e.g., Youth says, “My uncle died and my brother was killed in a gang fight...” “My uncle died” and “my brother was killed in a gang fight” would be two separate codes with different meaning. Additionally, an entire elaboration of a statement that pertains to a code can constitute one chunk of meaning.

Program Impact Specific Details: This coding manual consists of three broad overarching categories, which include (1) What did the program do? (2) what did the mentors say, in reflecting about the program, and what impact did the program have on mentors? (3) What kind of impact did the program have on mentees? These codes are based on field notes taken at each mentoring session across sites.

SECTION 1: WHAT DID THE PROGRAM DO?

Notes:

This section will include codes that speak to activities that mentors and mentees participated in, such as activities to strengthen mentor mentee bond or conflict resolution (example would be peace circles).

A) ACTIVITIES WITH MENTORS AND MENTEES TOGETHER

Sub-codes:

- Icebreakers and trust-building exercises
- Building positive racial identity
- Helping with stress of recent community violence

- Relaxation and other self-calming stress management exercises
- Fun and games
- Focus groups and other research activities, including training
- Specific communication skills development
- Future planning, career and academic support discussions

B) ACTIVITIES IN MENTOR DEBRIEFING SESSIONS ONLY

Sub-codes:

- Developing mentor empathy and communication with mentee
- Building positive racial identity
- Helping with stress of recent community violence
- Relaxation and other self-calming stress management exercises
- Fun and games
- Focus groups and other research activities, including training
- Specific communication skills development
- Future planning, career and academic support discussions

SECTION 2: WHAT DID THE MENTORS SAY, AS A REFLECTION OF THE PROGRAM?

Notes:

Codes in this section will speak to the mentors and mentees reflection on the program. What were their perspectives of the program, both bad and good. It can also include codes that speak to the impact the program had on the mentors, from the youths' perspectives.

1) PROGRAM BUILDS GOOD CHARACTER

Notes:

This code speaks to the program impacting some aspect of the mentors' character, such as contributing to the mentors' leadership skills, self-efficacy, grit, impulse control, patience, or enhancing their ability to work with others, for example.

Sub-codes:

a. Leadership, being a role model

- Examples:
 - i. "This program is helping me to become a good leader."
 - ii. "I have learned how to be a role model"

- iii. “Being a leader in the program really was a fun thing because I was taking charge and taking over and really participating”

b. Patience

- Examples:
 - i. “This was an opportunity to practice patience, something I have been working on.”

c. Impulse Control/Anger Management/Responding to conflict with kindness rather than retaliation

- Examples:
 - i. “I have learned how to control my attitude.”
 - ii. “This program, it really taught me to get to know the other side of kids. This side that’s not irritating.”
 - iii. “I had to learn how to talk to people. I had to learn how to use self-control. This skill I learn here sometimes don’t apply out there. I learn how to bite my tongue and talk to people. I became more of a people’s person.”
 - iv. “Kill em with kindness. A conflict with a conflict never ends. You don’t always have to fight them.”
 - v. “One of the mentees were cursing, and I didn’t like it. (previous chunk gets coded under mentee behavior mentor doesn’t like; following gets coded as anger management) I had to bite my tongue. I couldn’t say what I wanted to say because I wanted to curse back.”

d. Showing mutual respect, collaboration, how to support and encourage others

- Examples:
 - i. “In order to get respect, you have to give respect.”
 - ii. “I have learned how to work with others”
 - iii. “Positive encouragement makes mentees be more involved.”

e. Hope, as a result of being in the program.

- *Notes:* Hope is a conceptual framework that was developed by C.R. Snyder (1994). It has three primary features: defining goals; defining realistic pathways to goal attainment; ability to persist in pathways to attain goals
- Examples:
 - i. “I have learned how to be creative and follow my dreams.”

f. Grit, as a result of being in the program.

- *Notes:* Grit is a conceptual framework developed by Angela Duckworth (2016). Grit is defined as the combination of passion and perseverance toward achieving goals. Entails some sacrifice in persevering towards goal attainment. Do not code anger management examples here, but rather in C. We can also use those as examples of Grit in the analysis
- *Examples:*

- i. "I was supposed to go to a game today, gave it up to come here."

g. Listening to others, being reflective before acting

- Examples:
 - i. "I've learn how to be a little more serious and step back and watch a little more, seeing what is going on around me before I act."
 - ii. "I would always say something before a person finishes their story, but here I would always have to listen to my mentee before I could actually talk and tell them how I felt about the situation."

h. Building positive racial identity

- Examples:
 - i. "I am thankful for my skin color, I didn't use to be. And I am thankful for my self-esteem, because it has grown tremendously."

i. Fulfillment, pride in mentee progress

- Examples:
 - i. "This session is great. (Mentee) has made a huge improvement. I'm a very proud mentor."

j. Satisfaction specifically with being co-evaluators, co-researchers

2) CRITIQUES OF THE PROGRAM BY MENTORS

Sub-codes:

a. Program content: "Feels like school," not enough fun, boring

- Examples:
 - i. "There are not enough outdoor activities—feels like school."
 - ii. "Mentees were bored with the activity."

b. Program structure: Need for more focused planning

- Examples:
 - i. "I don't think they'll (mentees) will come back when the summer starts. The activities aren't focused. You have to give them a reason to come back."

c. Need more of this program: Wanting more of the same!

- Examples:
 - i. “An added day.” (As opposed to once a week) “and more group activities.”

d. Timing/duration: Scheduling doesn't work for youth

- Examples:
 - i. “I don't get how you doing this at 10am. Some of us will be at summer school.”

3) PROGRAM ENHANCED MENTOR WELL-BEING

Sub-codes:

a. Being with mentees is a "high" (including in highs and lows, but other comments as well): Mentor specifically mentions being with the mentees is the high

- Examples:
 - i. “The good thing that happened this week is meeting the mentees.”
 - ii. High of the day: “My whole day from this morning to seeing the mentees.”
 - iii. “Me and (mentee) was over here laughing, bonding.”
 - iv. “I bonded with a different mentee even though she wasn't mine.”
 - v. “They (mentees) were so excited to see us. Their eyes lit up.”
 - vi. Mentee is open and listening and sharing-depth of intimate connection: “The session was good today, and I think (mentee) really likes me and is comfortable with me. She was not shy and let me talk to her.”
 - vii. “I had so much fun doing the activity with my mentee. Her hug was so special to me.”

b. Being at the program in general is a high, brings happiness, gratitude (they are not discussing the mentees, the statement is about the program in general)

- Examples:
 - i. “Being at the mentoring program.” This was associated with being asked what were the mentors highs and lows.
 - ii. “My high is coming here.”
 - iii. “I am here and you all brighten my day a little bit when it was getting gloomy.”
 - iv. “I am thankful for my family and you all.”

4) SOCIAL SUPPORT WHEN FACING LOSS/DISAPPOINTMENT

Sub-codes:

a. **Support from Instructor**

- **Examples:**

- i. In the context of the death of a mentor's father. "Staff checked on him after session to see how he was doing and to remind him that he could come to us if he needed help."

b. **Support from other Mentors**

5) MENTOR EXPRESSES UNHAPPINESS ABOUT SOME INCIDENT IN RELATIONSHIP WITH MENTEE

Note: If mentee behavior is mentioned specifically, it should also be coded under the mentee section below

Sub-codes:

a. **Mentor distress about mentee's expression of anger**

- **Examples:**

- i. "One of the mentees were cursing, and I didn't like it."

b. **Mentor distress about mentee being withdrawn or non-communicative**

**The following section is to be used IN ADDITION TO THOSE ABOVE
for Peer to Peer Interviews**

6) EXPRESSES SATISFACTION/GRATIFICATION ABOUT PROGRAM PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO BE AGENTS OF CHANGE

Sub-codes:

A. Individual Level

a. *Notes:* Indicate proactive intentions for giving back (Helper Principle)

b. **Examples:**

- i. "*I feel like I'm making a difference*"

B. Community Level

a. *Notes:* Indicates some motivation to change

b. **Examples:**

- i. "*I'm motivated to make change in my community*"

The following section is to be used IN ADDITION TO THOSE ABOVE for Exit Interviews

7) **REFLECTION ABOUT THE PROGRAM ENDING**

Sub-codes:

a. **Negative Emotion (ex. Sadness, frustration)**

- **Examples:**
 - i. *"I'm sad that it's over!"*
 - ii. *"We always shorted for what we need!"*

b. **Wish we had more time (Explicitly)**

- **Examples:**
 - i. *"I wish that we had more"*
 - ii. *"I wish the program lasted longer"*
 - iii. *"I wish that we could continue"*

c. **We did a good job/Not regretful**

8) **CODER'S IMPRESSION OF THE PROGRAM'S IMPACT ON CHOICES MENTOR MADE.**

Notes: This reflects coder's judgment about the kind of impact SLIY did or did not have, having read the entire exit interview and considering all the material available in it. Does not require specific behavioral data, attitudinal change counts too.

Sub-codes:

A. **Positive Impact:** It seems the mentor's attitudes and/or choices changed in a positive direction during the time the program was in operation

- a. Mentor specifically attributes change to program
- b. No specific attribution of change to program

B. **Negative Impact:** There are indications in the exit interview that the mentor's attitude or behavior changed in a negative direction (e.g. mentor had not been stealing before, but started to, etc.)

- a. **Mentor specifically attributes change to program**
- b. **No specific attribution of change to program**

C. **No evident Impact**

SECTION 3: THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM ON MENTEES

Notes:

These codes focus specifically on what the program does for the mentee. The quoted content from mentor needs to reflect the process of program delivery.

1) PROGRAM BUILDS GOOD CHARACTER.

Notes: This code speaks to the program impacting some aspect of the mentees' character, such as contributing to the mentees' leadership skills, self-efficacy, grit, impulse control, patience, or enhancing their ability to work with others, for example.

Sub-codes

a. Leadership, being a role model

b. Patience

- Examples:

i. "I learn patience, how to control my anger, and how to be passive. I learned to walk away. I been in less trouble."

c. Impulse Control/Anger Management/Responding to conflict with kindness rather than retaliation

- Examples:

i. "People like to mess with you, and one time someone's was messing with me, and he was gonna do it the next day, then we started fighting. He was messing with me. I told him to stop. The program made me feel better. I wont be like how I was before...If that situation came up again, I would calm down and not fight."

ii. "It [mentoring program] helps me get stuff off my chest. Peoples these days don't stop till you put your hands on them. It helps me get that off my chest, sometimes the person comes to school and you get in fights. Before I came here, I had an attitude, but not since coming here.

iii. "I learned patience, how to control my anger, and how to be passive. I learned to walk away. I been in less trouble."

d. Showing mutual respect, collaboration, how to support and encourage others

- Examples:

i. "My mentee is respectful. She was talking about her Thanksgving Break. Today was a fun day."

e. Hope, as a result of being in the program.

- Notes: Hope is a conceptual framework that was developed by C.R. Snyder (1994). It has three primary features: defining goals; defining realistic pathways to goal attainment; ability to persist in pathways to attain goals

f. Grit, as a result of being in the program.

- Notes: Grit is a conceptual framework developed by Angela Duckworth (2009). Grit is defined as the combination of passion and perseverance toward achieving goals. Entails some sacrifice in persevering towards goal attainment. Do not code anger management examples here, but rather in C. We can also use those as examples of Grit in the analysis.

g. Listening to others, being reflective before acting

h. Building positive racial identity

2) CRITIQUES OF THE PROGRAM BY MENTEES

Sub-codes:

a. Wish for some kind of alternative content (e.g. “too much like school”)

- **Examples:**
 - i. When discussing the program: "Like a prize and raffle every week"

b. Wish for more time

- **Examples:**
 - i. "Is it possible for the program to go after the break?"
 - ii. When discussing the program: "Like a prize and raffle every week, we only come in every Monday. I would like more days too, like Monday thru Friday."

3) MENTEES COMMUNICATE PROGRAM ENHANCED STRONG SOCIAL BONDS BETWEEN MENTORS AND MENTEES

a. Examples:

- i. When asking the mentor what was their high in debriefing: "Mentee says she's going to miss me."

4) SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR MENTEES

5) DIFFICULTY DEVELOPING SOCIAL BONDS BETWEEN MENTORS AND MENTEES – the function of these codes is to understand the challenges the mentees presented.

- a. *Note:* If mentor expresses distress about the mentee’s behavior, the chunk is also coded in the section above, CODE 5, Mentor distress about mentee behavior

Sub-codes:

a. Mentee expresses anger

• **Examples:**

- i. "One of the mentees were cursing, and I didn't like it."
- ii. "[my] mentee was talking rude to me."
- iii. When asking a mentor the highs and lows: "We have to change my mentee. She is so disrespectful. She was cursing to the students and being mean. I was telling her to be nice. I liked the activity, but she was being too busy. My interactions with her weren't always like this. I asked her if something happened during the day, but she said she had a fun day. She was talking about 3018 (other mentee). She was also asking personal things like if I have a boyfriend. (Staff member addresses this and said not to talk about these things with the mentees. Set an example and say "I'm too young for that.")"
- iv. When asking a mentor about the highs and lows of the week: "One minute they [mentees] were happy, the next they were sad. [The mentee] can't stay still; he is everywhere. [The mentee] has an anger problem. You say the slightest thing, and he gets mad."