Youth “Crime” and “Resilience”: Exploring Community Stakeholder’s Perspective

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research on resilience is continually growing and while, a focus on economic policies or individual factors may be most effective in some areas of resilience research (Seccombe, 2001), many researchers recognize the need for a community focus with regard to resilience to delinquent behaviour and crime (Chandler and Lalonde, 1998; Ungar, Teram and Picketts, 2001). This developmental research project intends to understand youth crime, risk and resilience from the perspectives of key community stakeholders. The objectives of this research project are:

• to identify and describe existing programs and supports to foster youth resilience for youth at-risk of criminal involvement.

• to document the perspectives of community stakeholders regarding youth crime and resilience.

• to compare and contrast experiences across locations to identify system barriers and opportunities/ pathways to resilience.

Environmental scan was conducted using Internet and other sources (brochures, handouts) of available services and programs for at-risk youth at both research sites. Findings indicate that there are number of programs available for youth at-risk of offending. Many programs focus on education, however most of the programs dealing with offending youth seems to be aligned more with extrajudicial measures and encouraging family involvement very much lined up according to the YCJA principles.

Using in-depth qualitative interviews and focus groups with community stakeholders from Calgary and Saskatoon, we investigate the contextual, social, and cultural factors related to youth
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crime and resilience as well the important barriers and protective processes which reduce risk and enhance resilience amongst youth. Looking beyond statistics, the findings provide critical, community-specific understandings essential to developing effective, community programming in justice. Stakeholders in both Calgary and Saskatoon shared perceptions on the protective factors and risk factors. However, they differ on the issue of racism as a risk factor in their communities. Saskatoon stakeholders who deal largely with Aboriginal youth offenders recognize systemic racism as a risk factor, whereas Calgary stakeholders who view their clientele as more multicultural, does not recognize racism as a major risk factor for youth crime or as a barrier to youth resilience.
1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this developmental research project is to understand youth crime, risk and resilience from the perspectives of key community stakeholders within two geographical research sites—Calgary, Alberta and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. This developmental project is also currently being completed in partnership with Milton Keynes England, funded separately by The International Centre for Comparative Criminological Research (ICCCR), The Open University, Milton Keynes. Our exploratory research questions are twofold: What are the relational, social and cultural factors related to youth resilience, for youth at risk of criminal activity? And secondly, how can we develop a culturally appropriate research plan and method towards the development of an expanded research project to understand the experiential accounts of youth considered as resilient who have had previous conflict with the law?

The specific objectives of this research are to:

A. Identify and describe existing justice-related policies, programs and supports for youth offenders via an environmental scan (e.g., literature, programs, and policies).

B. Identify needs, barriers, and pathways to resilience/resistance to offending from community stakeholder’s perspective.

C. Compare and contrast stakeholder’s perspectives across research sites (i.e. Calgary and Saskatoon).

This report details the literature review, methodology and findings of the research study, implemented from August 2010 to February 2011. Recommendations for an expanded research project to understand the experiential accounts of youth considered as resilient are also presented.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section we will briefly discuss available literature on youth resilience and positive youth development. Research on resilience has continually grown since the 1950s when resilient children were described as being “invincible” (Werner, 1993) and resistant to damage (Rutner, 1993). Currently concept of resilience is seen less as a “personal” characteristic but more as a social construct, i.e., characteristics and mechanisms by which resistance to adversity is achieved (Ungar, 2004). In large part, well documented programs designed to enhance adolescent protective factors to mitigate the impact of risk have emphasized a risk, rather than a resilience focus (Hawkins, Catalano and Miller, 1992). Within a risk focus, the primary concern rests with individual deficits and pathology, while a resilience focus examines the strengths that individuals and environmental systems have brought about in preventing criminal involvement of at-risk children and youth and promoting their healthy development (Bernard, 1994; Ledogar and Fleming, 2008). Placing the focus on resilience allows the intervention to move beyond a concern over youth problems into a commitment to youth development.

In the 1990s crime prevention has gained substantial political and academic support as providing possible solution to the crime problem across the developed world. As a result we have seen programs, policies and practices on young people and crime that are heavily focused around notions of risk, early intervention and prevention that reduce delinquency and promote pro-social development. The idea is that preventing delinquency will not only save young lives from being wasted but will also prevent the onset of adult criminal careers and thereby reduce the burden of crime on its victims and on society. Therefore, investment in successful crime prevention and intervention programs can save taxpayers primarily in the form of reduced
spending on prisons. This ideology led to the development and expansion of diagnostic tools and instruments that can identify risk factors which can be minimized and recognize protective factors that can enhance chances of success despite adversity. However, over the years looking at children and youth as either good or bad, healthy or ill, invulnerable or vulnerable has moved to a more codified system of assessment and categorization. As more and more young people are slipped into well defined boxes, the meanings they construct for their behaviour and the social context in which it takes place has been overlooked (Ungar, 2004). Therefore, it is of vital importance to investigate the contextual, social, and cultural factors related to youth’s pathways in and out of crime.

Few studies dealing with young offenders have focused on resilience; the notable exceptions (Wilkinson, Bucholtz & Vasquez) call for a provision of supportive environments that bolster protective factors. In addition, while a focus on economic policies or individual factors may be most effective in some areas of resilience research (Seccombe, 2002), many researchers recognize the need for a community focus with regard to resilience to delinquent behaviour and crime (Chandler & Lalonde, 1998; Ungar, Teram, & Picketts, 2001). While the term “community” does not explicitly include the concept of culture, it does inherently place a focus on the cultural complexities pertinent in the lives of individual community members and the community as a whole. Therefore, the research draw attention to non-resilience, risk as well as positive adaptation as arising outside of the individual, offering insight into the importance of cultures, families, communities, environments and society (Fleming and Ledogar, 2008), including comparative insight into the impact of existing intervention and prevention strategies. Resiliency here provides a focus on rebuilding strategies (Anderson, 2008) and crime-
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prevention. This empowering philosophy of resiliency research envisions building upon community strengths, rather than focusing solely on [crime] problems (Ledogar and Fleming, 2008). Documenting stakeholder’s perspectives surrounding youth risk and resilience, we suggest is essential to develop and enhance community-based programs, policies and practices. This multi-site research also allows different communities to share perspectives and move forward towards future research programs and policy. In addition, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge around resilience with youth, especially as we have identified a lack of qualitative research regarding resilience and non-resilience related to youth criminal involvement.

Further, we have identified a lack of literature with stakeholders regarding youth resilience related to criminal activity. This study’s focus on resilience and positive youth development from stakeholder’s perspective is crucial (Green and Healy, 2003; Ungar, 2004) since stakeholders are conceived as key “partners in [crime] prevention” who work together to improve community safety through crime reduction (Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association, 2009). O'Dea and Loewen (1999) suggest that the research on youth crime and violence can guide better policies if it emphasize the themes defined by local stakeholders and has a strong commitment to continuously investigate and identify the changing needs of young people and their communities over time. In resiliency research, community members are viewed as experts in their own lives, and the focus is on acknowledging community strengths and on rebuilding strategies (Anderson, 2008) rather than on individual or social problems (Ledogar and Fleming, 2008). We outline the methods that were used to conduct research with the stakeholders in the next section.
3. METHODOLOGY

As mentioned in the previous section, the study objectives were three-fold and followed appropriate methods and approach. Below, we will first discuss the methodology for environment scan of available programs and services for at-risk youth in each province, followed by discussion of qualitative interviews that were conducted with community stakeholders who work with youth in conflict with the law.

3.1 Conducting an environment scan

In this task, we carefully analyze all available programs and services available to the youth at-risk of offending. While we cannot claim to have conducted an exhaustive search of all relevant programs and sources, we believe we accumulated a relatively comprehensive database of information. An environmental scan of each province and associated research sites was completed, aimed at identifying and describing existing programs to foster youth resilience for youth at-risk for criminal involvement. The environmental scan consisted of compiling an inventory of resources and information (e.g., scholarly literature, pamphlets, websites) currently available in each province. We searched the scholarly database for journal articles and evaluation research of any programs for youth in these two provinces that focus on decreasing risk factors and strengthening protective factors to enhance resilience. We also searched the Internet and www for information on resources and programs available to youth in conflict with the law, where we found a great deal of information. We categorized the available sources and programs based on their focus; target population; age group; orientation, i.e. education, justice, skill sets, restorative justice; and whether the program/service was mandatory or voluntary.
3.2 Exploring community stakeholder’s perspective

We want to explore the community stakeholder’s perceptions on issues facing youth and determine contextual and societal barriers and enablers to youth resilience. One-on-one in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with the community stakeholders. Stakeholders were chosen by the research team as members of the communities who work closely with youth. Stakeholders represented 16 individuals (8 each in Calgary and Saskatoon) who worked directly or indirectly with youth, community organizations, justice, probation, legal aid, addictions, youth programming, and social services. Following ethical guidelines, none of the stakeholders have been identified throughout the research and findings.

The interview focused on the stakeholder’s perspectives on issues facing youth, youth resilience, including perceived barriers and strengths faced by youth within their contact. To help the interviews stay focused, the interview guide (refer Appendix A) was developed by the research team through a series of consultations. It contains core questions meant to uncover the participants’ knowledge and experiences with youth. Under each core question were several ‘prompting’ questions that were only used if necessary and appropriate. We held the focus groups with interested stakeholders at both sites to continue the dialogue about youth resilience and to identify issues facing youth. The focus group was also an opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on themes developed from the interviews, towards shared data analysis and reflection. Since perceptions may vary across the individuals, we facilitated an open discussion in the focus group, with the additional goal of building relationships and trust.

Interviews and focus group conversations were transcribed, reviewed and cleaned in preparation for analysis. The data analysis followed phenomenological guidelines (Munhall,
1994; van Manen, 1984), whereby transcripts were examined line by line for meaning, as well as holistically. We extracted themes and did analysis based on emerging categories and themes, from which we developed a coding framework. After developing the initial coding framework, we imported the transcribed interviews into NVivo 8, a software package used in qualitative data analysis. Within the process, we made sure to test for inter-rater reliability on the coding and consistency of theme category development by asking all members of research team to independently extract themes and develop coding.

4. FINDINGS

The findings in this section are presented based on our research objectives. The first objective was to identify and describe existing programs and supports for youth at-risk of criminal involvement, via an environmental scan. In the following sub-section, we present key findings of an environmental scan. The findings of the second objective, that is, to understand stakeholder’s perspective on youth crime and resilience through qualitative interviews and focus groups are also presented.

4.1 Environment Scan of Programs

An environmental scan of Saskatchewan and Alberta aimed to identify and describe existing programs to foster youth resilience for youth at-risk for continued criminal involvement. We compiled an inventory of resources related to justice, health, and education currently available to youth at-risk in the two provinces. We demonstrate a few of our key findings below.

Both in Alberta and in Saskatchewan, there are a number of programs available for youth who are at risk for offending. With the implementation of the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) in 2003 Canada’s incarceration rates are declining and the use of extra-judicial and restorative measures are being more regularly applied. Both provinces seems to be dealing with
offending youth more with extrajudicial measures and encouraging family and extended family involvement. For example, for those youth who have broken the law there are a number of programs to supervise them within the community. An example of some of these key programs in Alberta are: Community Conferencing which provide an opportunity for everyone affected by a crime committed by a youth to participate in acknowledging and addressing the harm caused; Youth Drug Impact Program to reduce the influence of risk factors and increase protective factors associated with drug use for youth who are at risk for conflict with the law; Crime Impact Program to make youth understand the impact of their criminal behaviour; McMan’s crime prevention programs like the Restart and Kickstart; The Wrap Around program that supports young people from the Calgary Young Offender Centre in the transition back to their families and community. Few similar programs in Saskatchewan are: the ‘Judicial Interim Release’ program, which offers support and supervision; the ‘Alternative Measures’ programs, which offers justice forums and mediation; community based orders, such as probation and conditional supervision; and programs such as ‘StopLift’ offered in Saskatoon and Regina for youth involved in shoplifting.

Many of these programs take referrals from the youth courts. In Saskatchewan, although the YCJA has resulted in a significant drop in the number of youth charged and incarcerated, there are significant concerns related to the continued rates of incarceration for Aboriginal youth, as well as the number of youth held in remand (Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Court Survey, 2009).
4.2 Community Stakeholder’s Perspective on Youth “Crime” and “Resilience”

The second objective is to document the perspectives of community stakeholders regarding youth crime and resilience. Using in-depth qualitative interviews and focus groups with 8 community stakeholders each from Calgary and Saskatoon, we investigate the contextual, social, and cultural factors related to youth crime and resilience. The stakeholders were individuals who work within: youth justice and restorative justice; probation services; police; and related community agencies. The interview and focus group had two primary goals: A) to generate thematic knowledge about the main areas of concern regarding young offenders and resilience; and B) to develop guiding principles for conducting ethical, respectful and culturally appropriate research with youth, towards the larger international collaborative research proposal. We asked stakeholders their perspectives on: a) needs and resources for youth at-risk; b) contextual, social and relational factors that affect youth crime and resilience; and c) important barriers as well as protective processes which reduce risk and enhance resilience amongst youth.

In the consultation with sixteen community stakeholders, following main areas/themes are addressed and categorized in the findings: positive resilient factors and defining youth resiliency; barriers; prevention/intervention strategies; gender based interventions; risk assessments of youth; approaching future research with resilient youth.

4.2.1 Positive resilient factors and defining “youth resiliency”

The stakeholders identified some kind of support system as a key positive resilient factor. This support can be family, peer or mentor, stable home or a case/social/youth worker with whom the youth can relate to and rely on for continued support and guidance. One participant described the support in the following manner: “You need to have supports in place and to be
accompanied by peers or mentors or ideally by both and tap resources that you can to turn to...whether it be going back to school, going into treatment or finding a job or a better place to live.” Another participant stressed, “vulnerable youth want to be treated as humans as opposed to any ‘other’ case.”

Stakeholders were asked how they would define “youth resiliency.” Answers focused on similar themes, such as having a stable family, positive peer support groups, and the ability to further their education and to seek employment. However, another theme that was evident in defining resiliency was related with “being realistic” with the youth and youth should not be judged by our standards when defining resilient youth. One participant elaborates it as “setting realistic goals for these youth. You cannot expect them to break ties with their friends. As long they are not committing crime, following their probation to a reasonable extend, to me the youth is resilient.” Another stakeholder resonates the same idea that, “if I have a very violent kid, I don’t expect him to be not angry or not involved in any physical altercation. If I have a drug addict, I don’t expect him to stop doing drugs at all.”

4.2.2 Barriers that youth face to remain “crime-free”

Themes related to barriers that youth face to remain crime-free included lack of aftercare, cultural issues, intergenerational issues, lack of funding, and racism. Lack of aftercare is viewed as a serious barrier. Youth may be incarcerated or treated for substance abuse, but then return to the same environment they came from with no continuing support system in place. One participant from Saskatoon said, “the biggest thing in Saskatchewan is our aftercare. We have no aftercare and I mean that is something that really has to be looked at. We need one-stop shopping, everything under one house.” One Calgary stakeholder stated the following about
aftercare “provide more targeted resources to specific individuals until we’ve built enough support and living skills in their lives that we can get that person onward and upward.”

Cultural issues in Saskatoon present a barrier because of the large aboriginal population in conflict with the law. All stakeholders interviewed acknowledged that aboriginals have special needs, which are not always being met. One stakeholder mentions: “I see culture as critically important and especially in terms of a lot of the population that we work with here are Metis or First Nations and a lot of those traditions that only instill the sacredness of life and they instill the connectedness of family whether it be your own biological family of the larger family and the love of your family and who you are; it gets away from the systematic racism and discrimination and what a negative impact that can have on your self-esteem, but it also teaches you pride in culture.” However, the Calgary stakeholders identify their city as more multicultural than identifying one specific culture. One stakeholder states: “I don’t think that our partnerships and our stakeholders in our communities utilize culture enough....” and further states after being asked about being culturally sensitive to aboriginals: “Why just aboriginals? This is the old way of thinking from our federal government and there are so many more cultures that need as much help in this country in the past 30 years...”

Another barrier identified by stakeholders at both sites is intergenerational criminal and gang involvement. Many individuals who become involved in crime pass this lifestyle on to their children. Youth who come in conflict with the law have their parents, relatives and siblings who have lifestyle that include crime, drugs and gang involvement. If youth try to leave this lifestyle, they are “practically going against their families which becomes challenging.”
Financial issues are another barrier, which poses problems for people caught in the downward spiral of crime and poverty. This when interacts with intergenerational criminal involvement becomes more significant in the lives of youth. One stakeholder notes, “Finances are a barrier to services and you know when you come from a regular family that has a lot of good connections in the community you can get into services a lot earlier than if you’re kind of on the fringe.”

Demographic profiles of cities of Calgary and Saskatoon had a significant impact on how stakeholders in both cities viewed racism as a barrier to youth resilience. Almost all Saskatoon stakeholders identified racism as a serious barrier. One stakeholder notes, “Race is pretty big because as you’ll kind of know that if someone’s labeled if we’re talking about the aboriginal population there is still a lot of racism that comes there from a lot of people.” Interestingly, all except for two Calgary stakeholders did not view racism as a problem. When asked if race and racism has anything to do with contributing to crime, the responses are somewhat similar to, “I personally haven’t seen that. To say this person is in this type of crime because of racism, I wouldn’t agree with that.”

4.2.3 Prevention and intervention strategies available for youth

Stakeholders were asked how they view the performance of prevention and intervention strategies and programs available in their respective communities to youth at-risk of criminal involvement. Stakeholders commented that more successful programs are ones that are less judgmental about the youth and work around the obstacles faced by the youth rather than the ones that are stricter and follow the policies and procedures of their own organizations.
Suggestions from stakeholders in both Calgary and Saskatoon ranged from the need of more reintegration programs that empower youth to better collaboration of available services in their communities. Stakeholders identified the need to fill gaps between the services available to youth. One stakeholder in Calgary commented, “I think we have a plethora of resources that is spread too thin and too many agencies all over this province attempting to do the same thing but not getting their fingers in deep, or actually dealing with the problem. They may provide one-tenth of the problem, or the next agency may provide one-tenth, but unless they all work together simultaneously and have a better system, how would that work? I don’t see it being successful in the future.” Similar reflection was made by a stakeholder in Saskatoon, “One of the problems we have I think is there’s a lot of redundancy and overlap because there’s a lot of community-based organizations coming up with an idea and they get some funding and they start and another one with similar ideas starts up and they’re working ...and we have a tough time really bringing all these agencies together for the common good.” Stakeholders also reflected on the less optimal working conditions of frontline workers, increasing caseloads, overworked staff, and lack of job stability due to funding cuts as another reasons that hinders the success of programs and stability of services available to youth.

4.2.4 Gender-specific intervention strategies

Stakeholders were asked to reflect on the need of gender-specific interventions. Very few stakeholders commented on the need for gender-specific programs and services. However, more number of stakeholders at both locations favoured gender-neutral services for youth. One Calgary stakeholder provided the statement, “... yes they all have the same issues. They all have sex-trade issues, they all have addiction issues, and they all have problems of mental health. I
think there could be a better balance of services for both, and actually incorporating both sexes into placements. I’ve worked in co-ed and strictly female and male placements, and the co-ed placements worked the best.” Likewise, a stakeholder in Saskatoon said, “…there’s definitely different factors but there’s a lot of similarities of things that need to be dealt with.”

4.2.5 Opinions on risk assessments of youth

We were interested in exploring stakeholder’s perspectives on the use of common risk assessments at various levels of youth’s involvement with the justice system. Interestingly, majority of stakeholders at both locations were skeptical on the use of numerous risk assessments. Below is the comment by a stakeholder in Saskatoon:

“It’s always dangerous when you’re labeling sometimes it helps the situation so you know what you’re dealing with and into the future but with kids especially you know really young kids it concerns me when you’re labeling somebody a certain way because that stigma and I think that’s pretty well what the whole pretext of the Youth Criminal Justice Act is also built on too, you don’t want to stigmatize the kids that’s why you can’t release their names …because how are they ever going to change over if right from they’re 14 or 15 they’re already labeled so you have to be very, very careful with that.”

One stakeholder in Calgary reflected on the process of doing risk assessments:

“People doing assessments don’t really know the kids. I find by reading the files that kids sound lot more worse in the file than they actually are in real life. They should be done by people who actually know the youth and have taken time to know them.”

4.2.6 Directions for future research with resilient youth

The stakeholders felt positively about the future research with resilient youth and even outlined the list of questions that they would like to ask youth (i.e., what worked for youth; what did not work for youth; what changes youth would like to see and so on). Saskatoon stakeholders talked about Aboriginal cultural sensitivity to be included in any future research endeavours. However, most Calgary stakeholders felt that cultural sensitivity has to reach out to all cultures.
Focus group discussions echoed the themes identified in the interviews. Five stakeholders in Calgary and six stakeholders in Saskatoon, who participated in the focus group discussions, expressed the need for more venues like the focus group where stakeholders can share their experiences and interact with fellows who are work with youth. They mentioned that this will facilitate better integration and collaboration much needed to fill the gaps in the services. Focus group participants expressed their enthusiasm to participate in a larger research project with resilient youth.

4.3 Comparison across research sites to identify system barriers and opportunities to resilience

Data from the two sites was compiled and analyzed. This enabled us to compare stakeholder’s perspectives on youth crime and resilience (i.e. explore similarities and differences) across the sites. It was interesting to note that there were more similarities in themes across sites than differences. Stakeholders from both Calgary and Saskatoon shared understanding with regards to positive resilient factors and defining youth resilience. They outlined common concerns with prevention and intervention programs in their communities like lack of collaboration between different agencies and organizations that work with at-risk youth. Stakeholders at both locations also agreed with many themes surrounding the barriers to resilience among youth. Only theme that stood out as different among Saskatoon and Calgary’s stakeholders is racism as the risk factor for youth crime. Saskatoon stakeholders who deal largely with Aboriginal youth offenders recognize systemic racism as a risk factor, whereas Calgary stakeholders who view their clientele as more multicultural, does not recognize racism as a major risk factor for youth crime. This corresponds with the incarceration rates for Aboriginal youth that are lower in eastern and western Canada and higher in central and northern Canada.
Saskatchewan and Alberta are powerful examples of these trends. For example, in Saskatchewan, 88 percent of incarcerated youth are Aboriginal whereas in Alberta, only 36 percent are Aboriginal.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings from this research draw attention to risk and resilience as arising outside the individual. Focusing solely on individual traits limits understanding of resilience and leads to the conclusion that some people have it while others simply do not (Lalonde, 2006). Identifying and documenting stakeholders’ perspectives surrounding youth resilience are essential to developing community based practices, programs, and policies. An environment scan of programs and services highlight that there are numerous programs available to youth at-risk of criminal involvement in Alberta and Saskatchewan. However, the stakeholders from both Calgary and Saskatoon expressed significant concerns around a lack of collaboration between agencies, schools, families and communities towards successfully working with youth at-risk towards increased resilience. Stakeholders argued strongly that youth resilience is enhanced when we focus on collaboratively supporting resilient communities, families as well as youth. In resiliency research, community members are viewed as experts in their own lives, and the focus is on acknowledging community strengths and on rebuilding strategies (Anderson, 2008) rather than on individual or social problems (Ledogar and Fleming, 2008). This research contributes to the lack of literature with stakeholders regarding youth resilience. O'Dea and Loewen (1999) suggest that the research on youth crime and violence can guide better policies if it emphasize the themes defined by local stakeholders.
6. FUTURE RESEARCH

Identifying and documenting stakeholders’ perspectives surrounding youth resilience are essential to developing culturally responsive practices, programs, and policies. By collaborating with stakeholders from Canada and England, researchers and stakeholders learn from other’s successes and challenges. This project will lead to the development of a larger funding proposal towards the development of a multi-site research team and study focusing on understanding interactive, contextual and social processes associated with youth crime and resilience from youth perspectives. This program of research will contribute to an understanding of the complex dynamics of youth crime, community processes, towards informing policies, practices and knowledge dissemination.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Key Stakeholder Interview (and Focus Group Guide)

*Introduce the study including the purpose: to explore their perceptions on youth resilience to offending.

Explain that the purpose for tape recording is to make sure that we are as accurate as we can be. Stress how important their words are. Discuss the consent forms in detail.

If they are reluctant to tape, let them know that we could start taping and if it really bothers them, we can stop.

Have the participants introduce themselves
Ask basic demographic questions – where appropriate

1. To begin, I’d like to know a little bit more about you:
   a. What is your history working with youth in conflict with the law?
      a. Could you describe your role?
   b. Do you work directly with youth who offend? Please describe this work.
   c. How long have you worked in this related area?
   d. What type of work have you done in the past?

2. How would you define youth resilience (youth doing well)
   a. How do youth avoid violence and crime, as well as excessive alcohol and drugs (both to others and themselves)?
   b. What are two or three important things that one can do to prevent violence and crime (as well as drug/alcohol abuse)?
   c. How then do you define youth resilience? (Youth doing well)
   d. Is there anything else you would like to add?
   e. Can you give us an example of a youth at risk who showed resilience? This could be loosely based on stories you have witnessed.

3. From your perspective, what are some of the precipitating/contributing factors that are related to youth at risk of criminal involvement?
   a. Systemic factors such as culture, family, socio-economics?
   b. Inter-generational factors?
   c. Age?
   d. Race and racism?
   e. Relational factors?
   f. Risk assessments?

   a. Do you believe more can be done to reduce/stop youth crime?
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b. If yes, what do you believe could be done?
c. How do you feel that people acquire their knowledge about youth crime?
d. What is your perspective on the development of programs/interventions?
e. Are intervention/prevention strategies different for girls and boys?
f. What are the barriers to services?
g. What are the strengths?

5. How do you feel we should approach our future research (interviews) with resilient youth who have been in conflict with the law?
   a. What kinds of questions are important to ask?
   b. What would you (as a stakeholder) like to learn from the research participants?
   c. In what environment(s) should we conduct interviews?
   d. What supports are necessary during and/or after interviews?
   e. How can we ensure that we are culturally sensitive in the research with Aboriginal participants?
   f. Are you interested in becoming a community team member or advisor for this future project?
   g. Do you feel there are important people within Saskatchewan who should become team members or advisors for this future project?
   h. Do you feel it is important to learn from youth and stakeholders in other countries? Why or why not?

6. Reflection on the study, focus group and interview process.
   a. Are there other questions or ideas that you think are important?
   b. What are your thoughts about the effectiveness of a project like this?
   c. How would you like to see the information shared?

Questions about youth crime (can skip these if it seems appropriate)

7. What is the nature of youth crime and resilience in your community?
   a. What, in your experience, is the nature of youth crime in your community?
   b. What, in your experience, is the impact of youth crime on youth, families, and communities?
   c. Have you witnessed any changes in relation to youth crime?
   d. What is the role of race in relation to youth crime?
   e. What is the impact of age?
   f. What is the impact of culture?
   g. Does youth crime by girls look differently than youth crime by boys?
   h. In relation to youth crime, how do you define youth resilience