



University of Ottawa and the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

Key Findings and Recommendations Phase One Feasibility Study

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Executive Summary

Qualitative Research and Feasibility Study

University of Ottawa and the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

The University of Ottawa (uOttawa) and the Youth Services Bureau (YSB) of Ottawa wish to collaborate on activities aimed at developing a better understanding of the issues related to youth facing difficulties, and better approaches to designing, implementing and assessing intervention strategies and programs. The partnership will support educational, research and service activities involving representatives from the two participating organizations. Efforts will be made to include youth from the University of Ottawa and among those served by the Youth Services Bureau in all of the activities that emerge from this collaboration, and to support the opportunities for youth to pursue a university education.

The process for establishing educational, research and service activities involves undergoing a feasibility study of both organizations. This report focuses on the needs and opportunities assessment of the YSB.

Over the period of a month, we met with each director of services at the YSB in order to gather insight into their department, identify potential opportunities for uOttawa students and explore the roles the universities administration would play in this relationship. The five departments that were subject to a needs/opportunities assessment were Quality Assurance and Evaluation, Youth Judicial Services, Youth Employment Services, Community Service and Engagement as well as Mental Health Services.

Major findings and key recommendations of these meetings are:

- Opening up uOttawa's online library service to the YSB
- Assisting the YSB with database management
- Providing staff of the YSB training sessions on various topics
- Undergraduate and post-graduate student placements with established links between the YSB, student and the students' professor.
- Connecting specific YSB departments with uOttawa Career Strategies
- Training YSB youth clients through workshops and special credit programs, aimed at integrating clients into the university community.
- A wide range of specific research studies for each YSB department

The following report offers a comprehensive look at the YSB, its governance structure, funders and services. Furthermore, the results for each department are presented as well as feedback from the student researchers. The fact that this project was able to achieve what it did, demonstrates the power of good ideas being actualized by people who felt connected to the work at hand. This connection, so profound in its simplicity, acted as a catalyst to bring two vastly different institutions together with a common vision where we witnessed an incredible capacity to make ideas, reality.

Initiative and YSB Overview

This initiative is a joint project between the University of Ottawa, through their 'In Service of the World' Office, and the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa, supported by the Memorandum of Understanding signed on March 11th, 2009 (see appendix). The primary goal of this project is to develop and carry out a feasibility study that could assess the potential practicality and outcomes of a formalized relationship between the University of Ottawa and YSB.

This volunteer position consists of being a liaison between the two parties involved and researcher. This includes completing the Youth Services Bureau's needs and opportunities assessment, as the first phase of a multi-phase project, which will be presented here. Dr. Ross Hastings, Acting Director of the Institute for the Prevention of Crime, has been guiding this process, in collaboration with Alex Munter, Executive Director of the Ottawa Youth Services Bureau and part-time professor at the University of Ottawa. It is supported by an undergraduate degree research course called the 'Theory and Practice of Community Service Learning', led by Professor Paula Speedvak-Sladowski, who is allowing this initiative to be a placement for students as part of coursework.

The University of Ottawa's Vision 2010 Mission, Vision and Values Statement indicates that the University should aspire to be "a university that is an integral part of its community" (www.uottawa.ca/vision2010). Through this feasibility study, we will be working towards indentifying sustainable options for University of Ottawa to become more active in the community, specifically in partnership with the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa. Furthering Vision 2010's values, this research course will assist in establishing a framework of new and innovative ways the University can fulfill its self-identified social responsibilities through the creation of productive ties with local government and the Ottawa community.

There is clear potential for the University to play a greater interactive role in the lives of local youth even before they are of university-age. It is our hope that through the efforts of this research course the University will be presented with new options on how best to strengthen its leadership in the community while engaging young people on a meaningful level. By placing students at the core of its vision, the University can foster a relationship of community building, which we are hoping to extend to the Ottawa community through mechanisms that can create positive change for youth.

The Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa's mission statement indicates that the organization focuses on youth 12 years and older, who face difficulties both physically and emotionally, which impedes on their life development. Their areas of focus include mental health and community services, youth engagement and employment as well as youth justice services. These different departments offer services from youth and family counseling, job connect, work place Ottawa, resource centres, anger management, community reintegration programs, downtown services drop in centres, HIV/AIDS prevention services, health clinic, transition housing for men and women as well as youth housing. Youth engagement programs include education, harm reduction, advisory committees, and various events and activities that harness the potential of many youth and offer constructive opportunities to be active within their community of Ottawa.

The YSB is governed by a Board of Directors, and has a staff of 350 including an Executive Director that run all aspects of the organization. Funding to the YSB comes primarily from the Government of Ontario, including the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (& Youth Justice Services), Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and the Attorney General. The Government of Canada, City of Ottawa, United Way of Ottawa and the Trillium Foundation provide further funding. To support their activities within primarily francophone schools in Ottawa, through the Mental Health Services branch of the YSB, funding is provided by le Conseil des écoles publiques de l’Est de l’Ontario, le Conseil des écoles catholiques de langue française de Centure-est and le Councel scolaire de district catholique de l’Est ontarien.

The YSB provides bilingual services to high need, high risk, low-income youth and their families across the City of Ottawa. Their operations focus on: “poverty, ethnicity and race, physical, sexual and emotional abuse perpetration and victimization, sexual orientation, life skills development, including housing, education, and employment; crime, depression, self-destructive behaviours, including suicide, self-injury, and substance abuse; self-esteem, family conflict and dysfunction and parenting” (2007-2008 Year End Report).

Giving context to the amount of individuals served by the YSB, from 2007 to 2008 the YSB had an increase of around 10% in terms of raw numbers of clients. A snapshot, provided by the Quality Assurance and Evaluations Department, indicates that between April and June 2008, the YSB served 2007 Unique Clients and received 1569 Visits. For the same period a year earlier, there 1992 Unique Clients, 1596 visits and 751 contacts (which were not included in the 2008 measurements). (Table 1)

	Unique Clients	Visits	Contacts
April – June 2007	1992	1596	751
April – June 2008	2007	1569	-

Table 1

Feasibility Study Methodology

This study was conducted to explore the possible overlap between the needs and assets of the YSB and uOttawa. The present feasibility study concerned an evaluation of the YSB's needs and assets. This involved discussing different research, education and service opportunities which each director of YSB departments. These departments, and their corresponding directors, are:

- Executive Director, Alex Munter and Associate Executive Director, Jane Fjeld
- Community Services, Dan Sabourin
- Mental Health Services, Francine Gravelle
- Quality Assurance and Standards, Michael Tross
- Youth Justice Services, Gordon Boyd
- Youth Employment Services, Jeff Burry

As much information as possible was gathered to help qualitatively identify what the YSB needs, and what it can provide in terms of opportunities to the University. The second phase of this process will be a feasibility study of the University of Ottawa, which will be completed by another research student. The third phase of this initiative will involve establishing short-term achievable, as well as more medium and long term goals. Some of the goals for the University are to allow students opportunities to volunteer for the YSB, as part of their educational experience, to take on research studies, which is costly, as well as volunteer in different areas of the YSB structure. The University of Ottawa could gain access to the incredible amount of information, statistics and real life experiences of clients and staff of the YSB. Furthermore, the University could play a role in developing an education course for clients of the YSB who are part of the youth engagement section of the YSB.

Summary of Results

The following is a summary of the results of each departments' needs, and of the types of resources the University of Ottawa might be able to provide. To establish further credibility of this qualitative research study, each director reviewed and approved the documents developed from the meetings with them.

Michael Tross, director of Quality Assurance and Evaluation, was our first meeting. Immediate projects in this department could include opening up the library services to YSB staff as part of our MOU, thus allowing access to a wide range of resources, which the YSB could not otherwise afford. Furthermore, giving some access to computers at the University equipped with expensive data software (SPSS) could also be a short term achievable. Medium to long term achievables include student placements, detailing specific placement opportunities and opening up staff to training sessions.

Gorden Boyd, Director of Youth Judicial Services, presented us with an understanding of youth justice that is rooted in establishing relationships with individuals and partners. He emphasized that a strong and active relationship with the University of Ottawa would be necessary in order to maintain any agreement. Key areas of interest that came out of this conversation include research and placement opportunities, as well as 'career pathing' for staff. Essentially, the conversation with Mr. Boyd emphasized that a partnership between the YSB and uOttawa would have to ensure that relationships at the ground-level were being well maintained so that needs and interests could be properly accounted for and addressed.

Jeff Burry from the Youth Employment Services discussed that in the short-term, attempts be made to connect Employment Services with Career Strategies at uOttawa in order to facilitate more student placements. In the medium-term, the university and YSB could revisit the research project to bring high school students a job-directory, which already had funds committed. With student placements, it may be of interest to review the possibly to proceed with re-committed municipal and provincial funding, as the project outline and proposals have been written and approved. A long-term project would be assisting the YSB in breaking down existing database-silos.

There some strong opportunities for different levels of collaboration between the YSB Community Services sector and uOttawa, Dan Sabourin, department director identified options such short-term workshops and opportunities for youth who are part of the engagement program in consultation with these youth. In the medium term, placements for students can be established after concerns about collective bargaining are alleviated and opportunities, of interest to students and relevant to their coursework can be identified. In the longer term an MBA program could be established for social services and non-profit organizations similar to the McGill-McConnell Master of Management for National Voluntary Sector leaders¹. Creating such a program would be beneficial for many YSB employees who are looking for strong professional development initiatives that are relevant to their work.

¹ McConnell Initiatives, 1994-2004 <http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/default.aspx?page=65&lang=en-us>

Francine Gravelle, director of Mental Health Services, discussed that in the short to medium time range; opening up research libraries to this department would be of great assistance to Mental Health Services. In the same period of time, this department would also re-visit their placement policy to allow for shorter-term student placements through ELS or otherwise. In the mid-long term, there are several identified key research studies that could provide a beneficial experience to students and possible financial and program related outcomes for Mental Health Services.

Given current economic forecasts and budget tightening for all levels of government, community based organizations and educational institutions, innovative community partnerships are becoming increasingly important for providing services to youth. We hope that through this research study, options have been identified for collaboration, which are reflective of the interests and values of both the University's and the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa.

Quality Assurance and Evaluation, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

On March 4th, 2009, a meeting took place with Michael Tross, who is the only staff person attached to Quality Assurance and Evaluation at the Youth Services Bureau. Essentially, this department is responsible for ensuring that the programs and other departments are achieving results the funding they receive is intended for. Several potential opportunities for the University of Ottawa were discussed, which can address current pressures and needs of the Quality Assurance and Evaluation department.

Department Introduction:

The following is an outline of quality assurance at the YSB: “Quality Assurance at YSB is driven by a key overarching goal: to provide programs of quality for our clients through ongoing development, evolution and improvement of services so as to assist them in becoming productive members of their community, attaining their full personal potential and making effective, positive and enduring health and lifestyle decisions. Quality Assurance at YSB is reflected in the data and analysis contained within 29 overarching report focus areas, each of which is issued at regular intervals during the year for a total of seventy distinct reports per annum. Each report summarizes available data for the reporting period, analyzes the data and puts forward recommendations designed to further develop service effectiveness, both within programs and across the agency.”¹

Educational Opportunities:

- Offer placements, ensure follow-up and build relationships between both students and the university. Each one of the 29 focused reports could offer a different experience for a student as a placement.
- Skills: A university student could bring a certain set of skills, which could assist them depending their area of reporting focus. Central to this understands how to collect, input, extract both qualitatively and quantitatively and analyze data using computer software.
 - In Social Sciences, there is a third year Research Methods course, which is mandatory for some, and it teaches these skills.

Research Opportunities:

- Research opportunities include everything from psyche MMPI on how clients have changed their counseling process, to how the occupancy rate is linked to client satisfaction. This would require students to have outcome/effectiveness measurement skills.
- An additional research opportunity focuses on high-risk clients, comprising of 5% of clients served at the YSB that come through the doors. 70-80% of these clients are active, while the remainder are not interested in the YSB services or are acquiring services elsewhere. Mr. Tross expressed the opportunities available to criminology students to help report on how these clients could be more connected, as they are currently ‘floating’.
- Having professors attached to student placements allows the YSB to do things that they currently do not have the funding or specialized skills to do; such as,

¹ Quality Assurance Report, 2008. Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa.

Quality Assurance and Evaluation, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

- when interviewing clients to gather information, many studies need a psychologist as the signatory on the study. This could be the role of an accredited psychology professor who is the University supervisor of a student undertaking the study at the YSB.
- Researching new and innovative program opportunities, whether that be creating or analyzing new programs to report on their effectiveness. This includes ensuring that the staff understands the data and research outcomes.
 - The process of a research project for Mr. Tross would be the following:
 - Get to know the staff on the front lines
 - Working closely with the departmental coordinator to develop the data gathering mechanisms
 - Meet on a regular basis with staff to ensure the data is being collected
 - Getting all the data collected, then inputting it
 - Analyzing the data, writing conclusions and recommendations
 - Meet with staff for debriefing.
 - Such research would be benefitted from uOttawa name recognition and legitimacy, and as such research is costly, it would be of further benefit to the YSB.
 - Additionally, constant research and literature reviews of incoming reports is something which staff do not have the time to do, but would benefit from.

Services and Training Opportunities:

- Student placements could also focus on teaching staff skills, which would benefit them in doing their jobs more effectively.
- This includes: teaching staff on how to use data software, training session on how to analyze data, workshops created by students on developing reporting frameworks for staff and helping programs become research literate.

Outcomes:

Immediate projects could include opening up the library services to YSB staff as part of our MOU – allowing access to a wide range of resources, which the YSB could not otherwise afford. Furthermore, giving some access to computers at the University equipped with expensive data software (SPSS) could also be a short term achievable. Medium to long term achievables include student placements, detailing specific placement opportunities and opening up staff to student-led training sessions.

Reviewed and Approved by Michael Tross, Director, Quality Assurance and Evaluation

Youth Judicial Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

On March 6th, 2009 we met with Gordon Boyd, Director for Youth Justice of the YSB, at the William E. Hay Detention Centre. This meeting was the second meeting a series of interviews conducted for this feasibility study. With Mr. Boyd we discussed areas where a partnership with the University of Ottawa could be useful in the youth justice sector. We were given a better understanding of the operation of the detention centre, the people who run it, and the needs of the youth who live at the centre. Our discussion with Mr. Boyd was almost two hours in length and covered the following topics.

Department Introduction:

- Youth Justice Network (35 agencies)
- Hay facility is automatically (Remove automatically) for high-risk offenders. Offenders come to the centre because they must be detained there for pre-trial Detention or as a judicial sentence.
- The facility brings (Remove brings replace with catchments- area) is your from Peterborough / Durham , parts of Northern Ontario, to the Quebec border – it is an all male designated youth Secure Custody Centre.

Education:

- Offer placements/ ensure follow-up/ build a relationship with students and the University
 - Core placements are on the floor, at the centre (good for undergrads)
 - Masters students could research counseling/ forensics/ re-integration/mental health/ work in the courts
- Directors offering to come to the University as guest lecturers

Research Opportunities:

- Examine ‘most-promising-practices’ in criminology – program design, which programs produce the best outcomes
- Conduct risk/needs assessments
- Building mechanisms for sharing data (technical)
- Program evaluation – how to measure and doing the measuring
- Program Day – study whether or not the organization follows its procedures
- Templates for programs, thinking ahead
- Crafting a vision for programs in youth justice (in the fall 2009 Mr. Boyd is pulling together a think-tank on this issue)
- How to preserve institutional memory/ how the institution has changed

They hope that the William E Hay Centre will be a Centre for Excellence on Youth Justice within 5 years

Teaching and Service Opportunities:

Career-pathing:

- partnerships on generic courses
- mentorships with experts
- workshops for staff

Youth Judicial Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

- Courses for staff on – counseling/ psychology/ business administration, supervision, and leadership techniques
- Research access and someone to do it for them

Funding:

- partnership building
- dialogue creation, breaking down silos because, funding is tied to partnerships

CO-OP

- partnering at the front-end to meet needs
- ‘partnership in learning’

Outcomes

Mr. Boyd presented us with an understanding of youth justice that is rooted in establishing relationships with individuals and partners. He emphasized that a strong and active relationship with the University of Ottawa would be necessary in order to maintain any agreement. Key areas of interest which came out of this conversation include research and placement opportunities, as well as ‘career pathing’ for staff. Essentially, the conversation with Mr. Boyd emphasized the need to ensure that a partnership between the YSB and UOttawa would have to ensure that relationships at the ground-level were being well maintained so that needs and interests could be properly accounted for and addressed.

Reviewed and Approved By Gordon Boyd, Director, Youth Judicial Services

Employment Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

A meeting took place with Jeff Burry, Director of Youth Employment Services at the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa on March 18th, 2009.

Department Introduction:

As discussed in the 2006-2007 YSB Year End Report, “The Youth Services Bureau’s Employment Services unit is the largest provider of career assessment and employment services to youth in Eastern Ontario. Currently programming for community employment initiatives is provided across the City of Ottawa to displaced, unemployed and under-employed youth in four primary Ottawa communities - Orleans, Gloucester, Ottawa-south (two locations) and Kanata”. This unit is flexible in order to adapt to the various needs of the Ottawa community, such as establishing an Information Technology Orientation (ITO) as well as an ITO Adjustment Advisory Program action centre to handle the downsizing in Ottawa’s technology sector. Other programs include Job Connect, Summer Jobs for Youth, Orleans Employment Resource Centre, Northern Lights Vocational Services and Workplace Ottawa, which provides workshops to those who are unemployed to help reintegrate them into the labour market. Clients in this unit are not necessarily high risk, in fact only one of six programs works with high risk youth, but instead focuses on assisting already trained individuals.

Educational Opportunities:

- Looking to establish links with uOttawa Career Services to offer opportunities to students. Would like to set up a meeting and give a presentation to them on Youth Employment Services.
- Student placements: depends on the type of learning experience students would like, then matching them from there.

Research Opportunities:

- A specific research project presented is to establish a directory of entry level jobs available in Ottawa to be provided to guidance councilors at all high schools in Ottawa as a resource. This project did have \$10,000 committed from the City of Ottawa and \$20,000 from TCU but fell through due to lack of commitment from the federal government. This is a document all schools could reference, but the YSB would need it kept up to date, as they do not have a full-time research position filled at the moment.
- Interested in new programs currently in existence that the YSB may not know about, do not have the time to research, nor the funding or methods to do so.
- Youth Employment Services currently has seven different databases; all are operating as separate silos, which need to be individually referenced in order to submit one update report to Quality Assurance and Standards. Student researchers, who have the skills to collect, input and analyze data or being able to work on a longer-term project to break down database silos could be useful.
- Focus Groups with Clients: what do people want from Youth Employment Services, what speaks to them, how do they effectively deliver a program.

Employment Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

Service and Training Opportunities:

- Guest Speaker Meetings: Bring individuals in from Youth Employment Services to do sessions at uOttawa for students. Also, bring individuals from uOttawa to present to YSB Employment Service clients. Client oriented meetings would be more geared towards recruitment, explaining why they should attend uOttawa as a long-term employment strategy.

Outcomes:

In the short-term, connect Employment Services with Career Strategies at uOttawa in order to open substantive dialogue between the two bodies to facilitate more student placements. In the medium-term, the university and YSB could revisit the research project to bring high school students a job-directory, which already had funds committed. With student placements, it may be of interest to review the possibly to proceed with re-committed municipal and provincial funding, as the project outline and proposals have been written and approved. A long term project would be assisting the YSB in breaking down existing database-silos.

Reviewed and Approved By Jeff Burry, Director, Youth Employment Services

Community Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

On March 20th 2009 we met with Dan Sabourin Director of Community Services for the YSB, at the Downtown Services and Drop-In. Our discussions with Mr. Sabourin focused on ways in which a partnership between U Ottawa and the YSB will better the service delivery capabilities of Community Services, in particular, those services geared towards high risk youth. Much of our discussion focused on opportunities for youth who are a part of the youth engagement program as well as the large potential research opportunities that exist for the organization.

Departmental Introduction

Community Services provides a continuum of services which ranges from basic needs to housing. It operates under a harm reduction model addressing the social determinants of health to support youth on their journey to independence. It works with key community partners interested in providing a central access point for young people who are homeless or living in poverty.¹ In particular, Mr. Sabourin specified that Community Services is responsible for transitional housing (apartments and shelters), the drop-in services, collaborating with health partners, youth engagement and facilitating youth advocacy.

Educational Opportunities

There was some concern voiced by Mr. Sabourin on what impacts any student placements would have on the collective agreement between Community Services and its employees. As this issue came up in other discussions with directors it is something the partnership as a whole may need to address.

- Mr. Sabourin proposed the potential for longer-term volunteer opportunities for students, rather than placements which may be too short to develop a sufficient relationship with high risk youth, and thus too short to make a meaningful contribution.
- There is potential for students to have placements co-facilitating groups however, this would depend on the need and the education level of the students.
- There is also potential for placements for students in an administrative capacity to assist in documenting practices of the organization, building new marketing strategies (pamphlets), enabling fundraising, building the technological capacity of the youth drop in centres

Research Opportunities

Mr. Sabourin identified the topic of homelessness and youth as an under-researched subject which has the potential to be a fruitful area of research for students and Community Services. Potential research questions include:

- What are the predetermined social issues surrounding homelessness and youth, what are the gender differences?
- What are the best practices for intervention in youth homelessness?
- How do the social determinants of health differ from city to city?
- What drives youth engagement after intervention and in what ways are the motivators different for these youth than youth who are not high-risk?

¹ Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa, Fall 2008 Pamphlet.

Community Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

- How identity perceptions impact high risk youth, ei do: immigrant youth, GLBT youth- what services are there for these youth (and francophone youth) and how could they be ameliorated?

Training and Service Opportunities

- Certificate programs for staff are useful, but Mr. Sabourin indicated that it would be more useful if staff could take courses which could be attributed to a university degree at a later date
- Workshops for staff are also a useful and less time consuming
- Initiatives which could contribute to the youth engagement program would also be valuable because youth could assist in research project which has a fixed deliverable and allows them to build their CV
- Potential MBA program for social service organizations

Outcomes

There some strong opportunities for different levels of collaboration between the YSB Community Services and U Ottawa. In the short-term workshops and assistant opportunities for youth who are part of the engagement program could be established through consultation with youth on their interests. In the medium term, placements for students can be established after concerns about collective bargaining are alleviated and opportunities which would be both interesting to students and relevant to their course work can be identified. In the longer term an MBA program could be established for social services and non-profit organizations similar to the McGill-McConnell Master of Management for National Voluntary Sector leaders². Creating such a program would be beneficial for many YSB employees who are looking for strong professional development initiatives, relevant to their work.

² McConnell Initiatives, 1994-2004 <http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/default.aspx?page=65&lang=en-us>

Mental Health Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

On March 25th, 2009 Francine Gravelle provided many insights into the opportunities for uOttawa to be involved with the Mental Health Services arm at the Youth Services Bureau.

Department Introduction:

Mental Health Services at the YSB is charged with the management of several programs including: Integrated Crisis Service (Mobile and Residential), Youth and Family Counselling, Multisystemic Therapy, Intensive Services as well as several school based and a day treatment program. Many of Mental Health Services clients are high risk, and many clients served out of the day treatment program le Centre Éducatif are long term clients (1-2 years).

Educational Opportunities:

- Offer placements/ensure follow-up/ build a relationship with students and the University.
- The Mental Health Services department will be re-visiting their criteria for placements in order to allow those students fit a placement in one semester (as it stands they are turning people away because they will only accepted two semesters worth of commitment).
- General research placements (similar support function other directors brought up)

Research Opportunities:

- A re-occurring theme, access to the uOttawa online research database and library
- Cross Departmental Study: Researching clients moving in and out of the various YSB departments, who are they, when are they being served.
- Trends: project to identify fluctuations in profile trends of clients as well as intervention models with them. What is impacting the establishment of trends (ADAH, FASD, Autism)?
- Provide a case study that proves that Correctional Services needs to invest in mental health for young offenders. Student researcher would take a three-month period to look at who these clients are, what literature is out there and where the clients go after they exit the system. Outcomes include reporting on how to establish healthy relationships, identify trends, develop focus and collaborate with other YSB departments (Judicial Services). Have the ability to present the ministry with concrete outcomes for program dollars.
- Client Impacts: What investment has Mental Health Service programs had on clients, researching how clients are doing years after they exited programs.
- School Program: Benefits to understanding learning disabilities and appropriate intervention strategies in screening processes to have a positive impact on students at school. Answer questions as to why students are not succeeding and how they can be engaged to prevent dropouts.
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: A current trend; identifying clients with this and evaluating why they do things or re-act to certain stimulus. Using this information to improve screening tools, effecting ways to intervene and developing an outcome measurements program. Help make the link between understanding

Mental Health Services, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

thoughts and resulting actions; answering why one cannot be helped through current cognitive therapy

- Francophone: school programs in this department are all in French. Research topics include cultural competency, how to reach out and engage francophone clients and the francophone community. Assistance needed in recruitment, translation, staff building, understanding specific franco-family needs as well as the politics involved in being a bilingual agency to prove that the YSB is effective in both official languages.

Service and Training Opportunities:

- Student placements could also focus on teaching staff skills, which would benefit them in doing their jobs more effectively. A focus was put on staff in day programs and special education programs that need the skills to bridge different approaches in engaging clients, interpreting assessments of clients as well as different disabilities clients may have.
- Culture of Outcomes: Coordinators will guide their decisions based on outcomes. Assistance is needed in the collecting and making sense of data. The database as it stands is geared toward giving the ministry, the 'funders', the information they need but also the YSB needs their data to be more clinical to analyze outcomes.
- Marketing: A communications project, this department would benefit greatly from marketing client stories through a business oriented approach; explaining what the YSB does to their stakeholders, funders and partners and discuss the impact of the YSB/Mental Health Services branch.
- How to write proposals, recruit staff and present the agency as a package to those who have never heard of it before (outside Ottawa).

Outcomes:

In the short to medium time range, opening up research libraries to this department would be of great assistance to Mental Health Services. In the same period of time, this department would also re-visit their placement policy to allow for shorter-term student placements through ELS or otherwise. In the mid-long term, there are several identified key research studies that could be addressed providing a beneficial experience to students and possible financial and program related outcomes for Mental Health Services.

Reviewed and Approved By Francine Gravelle, Mental Health Services Director



University of Ottawa and the Youth Services Bureau Formalized Relationship

Feasibility Study Key Findings (Phase
One)

Peter Cleary and Samantha Green



This initiative is a joint research project between the University of Ottawa and the Ottawa Youth Services Bureau. The primary goal of this project is to develop and carry out a feasibility study that could assess the potential practicality and outcomes of a formalized relationship between the University of Ottawa and youth services within the City of Ottawa.

Objectives



- What the organizations need and the opportunities they can provide one another
- Developing a better understanding of youth issues
- Better approaches to designing, implementing and assessing intervention strategies and programs
- Supporting educational, research and service activities

About the YSB

The Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa serves youth aged 12 and older. We focus on youth with difficulties affecting their physical and/or emotional well-being and development. We support youth in making positive health and lifestyle decisions.

- A staff of over 350, managed by an Executive Director and Board of Directors
- Providing bilingual services to high need, high risk, low income youth and their families across the City of Ottawa.
- The YSB focuses on issues related to:
 - poverty;
 - ethnicity and race;
 - physical, sexual and emotional abuse perpetration and victimization;
 - sexual orientation;
 - life skills development, including housing, education, and employment;
 - etc

Student Role



- Combined Experience: Student Engagement
- Student Researchers
- Liaison between uOttawa and the YSB
- Compiling information and analyzing
- Preparation for second phase

Areas of Focus

- Executive Director, Alex Munter
- Associate Executive Director, Jane Fjeld
- Community Services, Dan Sabourin
- Mental Health Services, Francine Gravelle
- Quality Assurance and Standards, Michael Tross
- Youth Justice Services, Gordon Boyd
- Youth Employment Services, Jeff Burry



Key Findings Quality Assurance and Standards

- Opening up the library services
- Giving access to computers at the University equipped with expensive data software (SPSS)
- Student placements, detailing specific placement opportunities
- Providing staff training sessions.
- Research: Cost Savings, Credibility, Legitimacy

- Placement potential for undergraduate as well as graduate students
- Several research opportunities importantly, research on 'most promising practices' for program design
- Teaching opportunities for staff development notably, in the areas of HR, leadership and business administration



Key Findings Youth Employment Services

- Connect Employment Services with uOttawa Career Strategies
- Guest Speakers at uOttawa and the YSB
- YSB should revisit the research project to bring high school students a job-directory.
- Assisting the YSB in breaking down existing database-silos.

Key Findings Community Service and Youth Engagement

- Proceed with research opportunities for graduate students in the area of homelessness and youth
- Potential placements for undergrads, notably on the administrative side
- Training for youth through workshops and special credit courses
- Professional development through the courses to be attributed to a future degree and creation of a social service MBA program



Key Findings Mental Health Services

- Opening up uOttawa research libraries
- Identified key research studies:
 - Culture of Outcomes; Marketing; Francophone Engagement; School Programs; Long-Term Client Impact Assessment; Mental Disability Trends
- Teaching day-program staff client-engagement skills

Summary of Findings

- Opening up uOttawa's online library service to the YSB
- Assisting the YSB with database management
- Providing staff of the YSB and youth clients with training sessions and workshops on relevant topics
- Strong potential for undergraduate and post-graduate student placements and research studies