



Supporting positive outcomes for youth involved with the law in Ontario

March 23, 2017
11:00am-12:00pm EST

Outline

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Research Snapshot
3. Case Study
4. Practice Perspectives
5. Research Key Findings
6. Recommendations
7. Q & A
8. Wrap-up

Poll #1

How does your work intersect with youth involved with the law?

- 1) I work with youth in the criminal justice system
- 2) I work with youth in the school system
- 3) I work with youth in the child welfare system
- 4) I work with youth in diversion programs
- 5) I work with youth in community-based programs (not diversion)

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

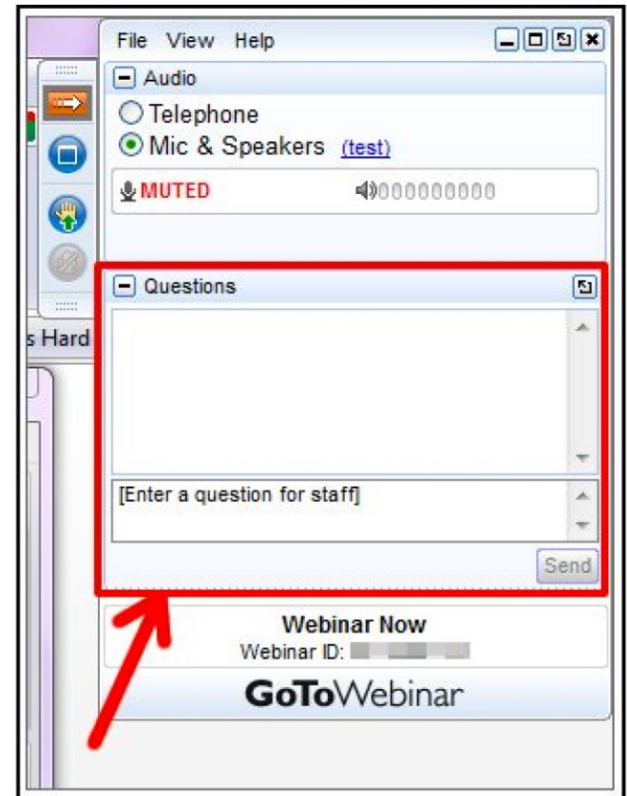
- We are recording this webinar and it will be uploaded to our websites
- If you have trouble with the audio quality today, please try calling in with a phone



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Ask a question or share a comment

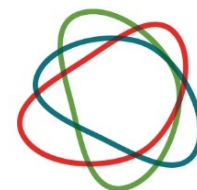
- Submit questions throughout the webinar using the box on the right side of your screen.
- You can also tweet us @REXforYouth



About YouthREX

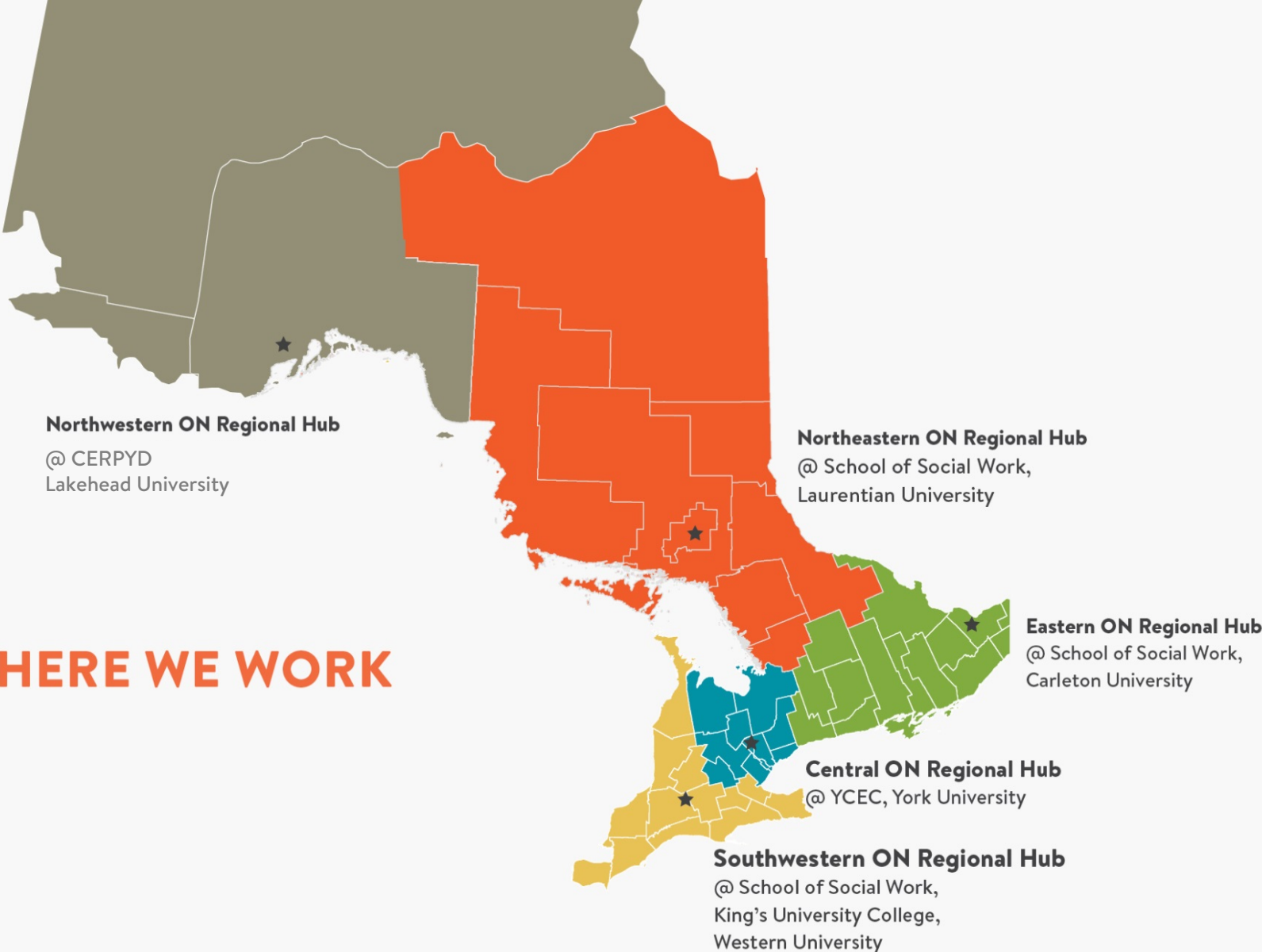
OUR VISION is an Ontario where shared knowledge is transformed into positive impact for all youth.

OUR MISSION is to make research evidence and evaluation practices accessible and relevant to Ontario's grassroots youth sector through knowledge mobilization, capacity building and evaluation leadership.



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WHERE WE WORK



Northwestern ON Regional Hub
@ CERPYD
Lakehead University

Northeastern ON Regional Hub
@ School of Social Work,
Laurentian University

Eastern ON Regional Hub
@ School of Social Work,
Carleton University

Central ON Regional Hub
@ YCEC, York University

Southwestern ON Regional Hub
@ School of Social Work,
King's University College,
Western University



**KNOWLEDGE
MOBILIZATION**



**CUSTOMIZED
EVALUATION SUPPORTS**



**CAPACITY
BUILDING**



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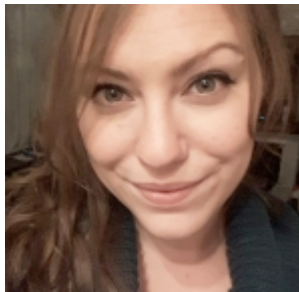
GUEST PRESENTERS



Siu Ming Kwok
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Faculty of Social Work
University of Calgary



Heidi Heavyshield
Social Worker (MSW)
Aboriginal Program
Coordinator
Lethbridge, AB



Rebecca Weatherstone
Social Worker (MSW)
Ministry of Community Safety &
Correctional Services
London, Ontario



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Setting the Context: Youth involved with the law



Dr. Siu Ming Kwok

Professor
Faculty of Social Work
University of Calgary



Context

- Youth crime rate has dropped over the last 2 decades
- History of Youth Criminal Justice Legislations:
 - Juvenile Delinquency Act (JDA) (1908)
 - Young Offenders Act (YOA) (1984)
 - Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) (2003)
- YCJA - from custody to non-custody approach (Diversion – extra-judicial measures).
- The concept of recidivism in measuring program success



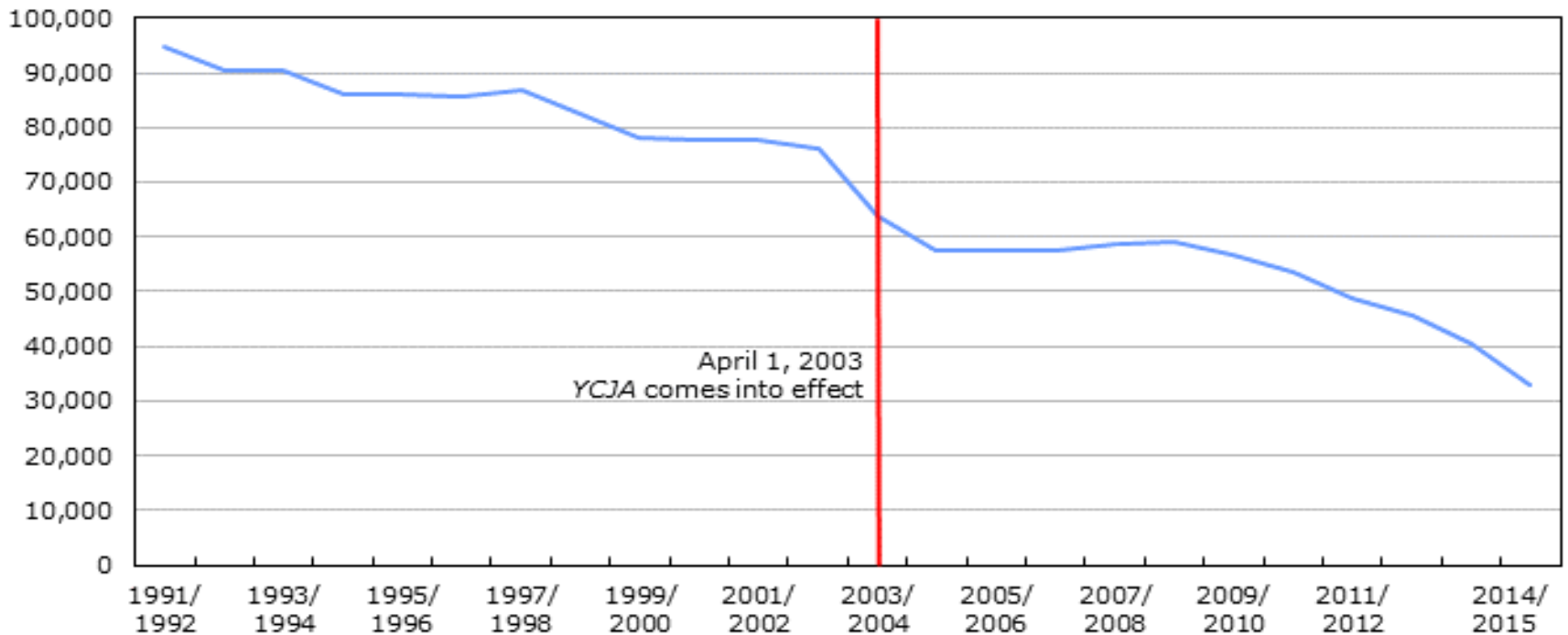
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Youth Court

Youth courts completed 32,835 cases in 2014/15.
The lowest number since 1991/1992.

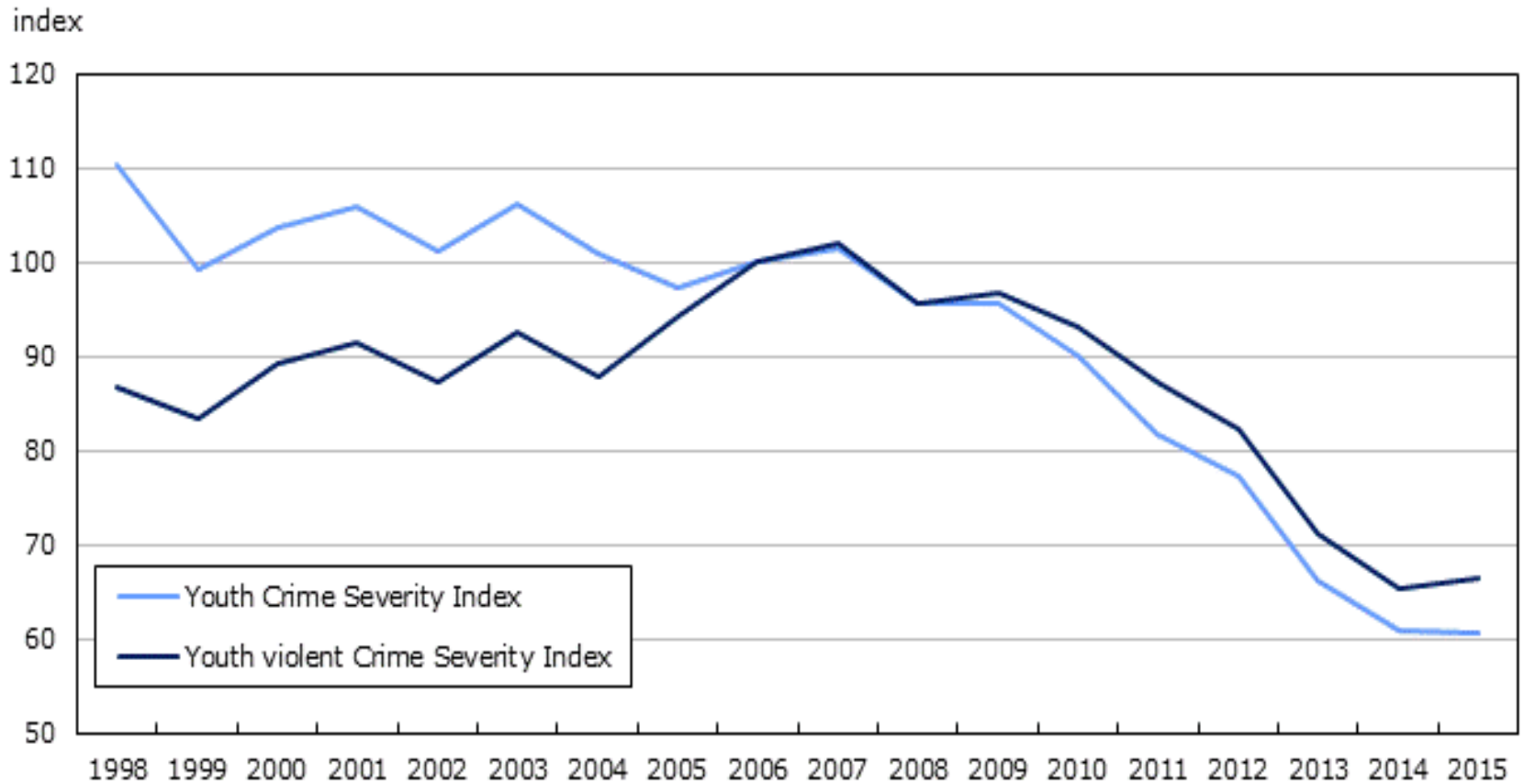
Cases completed in youth court, Canada, 1991/1992 to 2014/2015

number of cases



Crime Severity

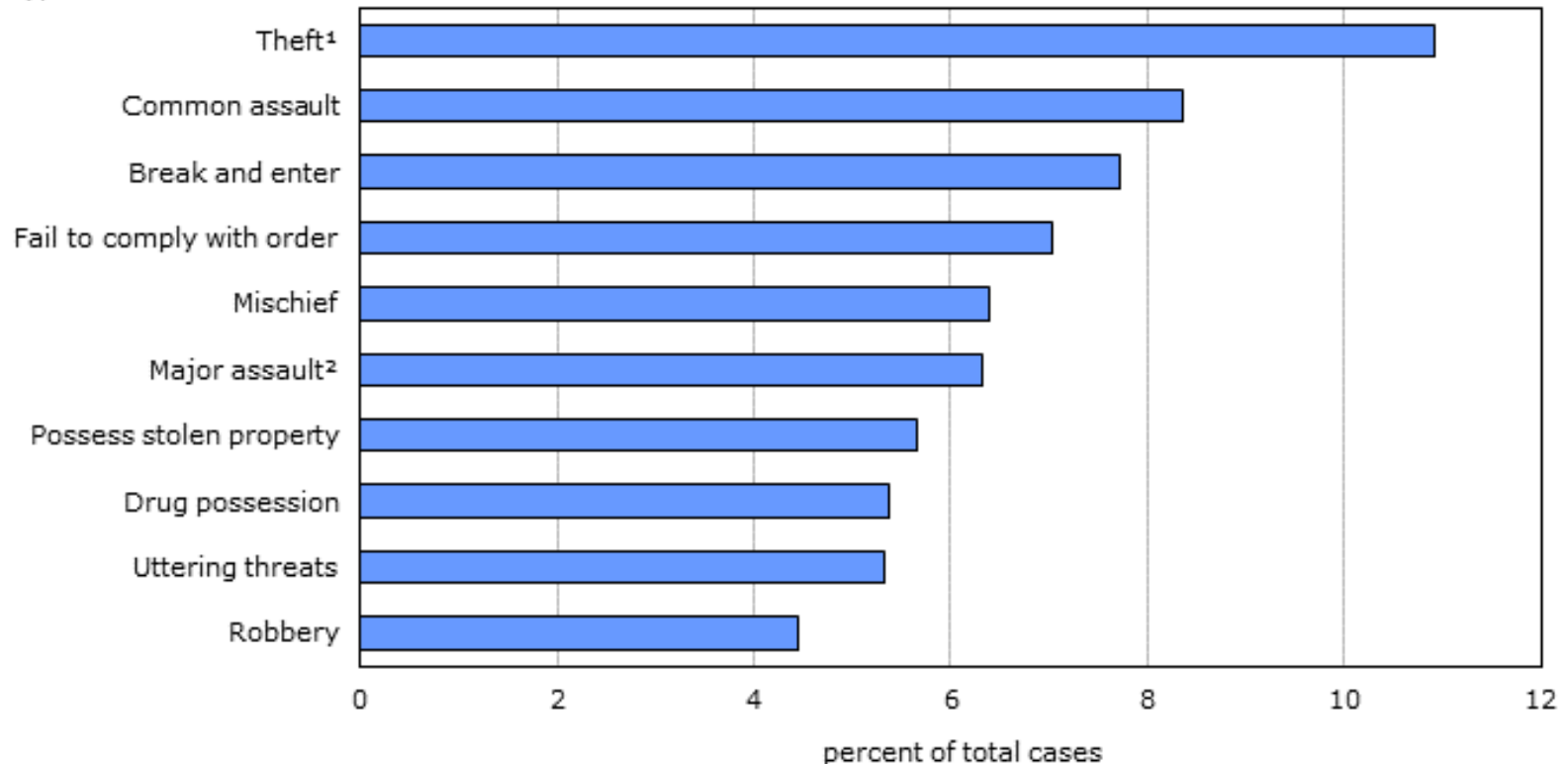
Police-reported youth Crime Severity Indexes, Canada, 1998 to 2015



Common Youth Offences

The five offences were theft (11%), common assault (8%), break and enter (8%), failure to comply with an order (7%) and mischief (6%) in 2014/2015

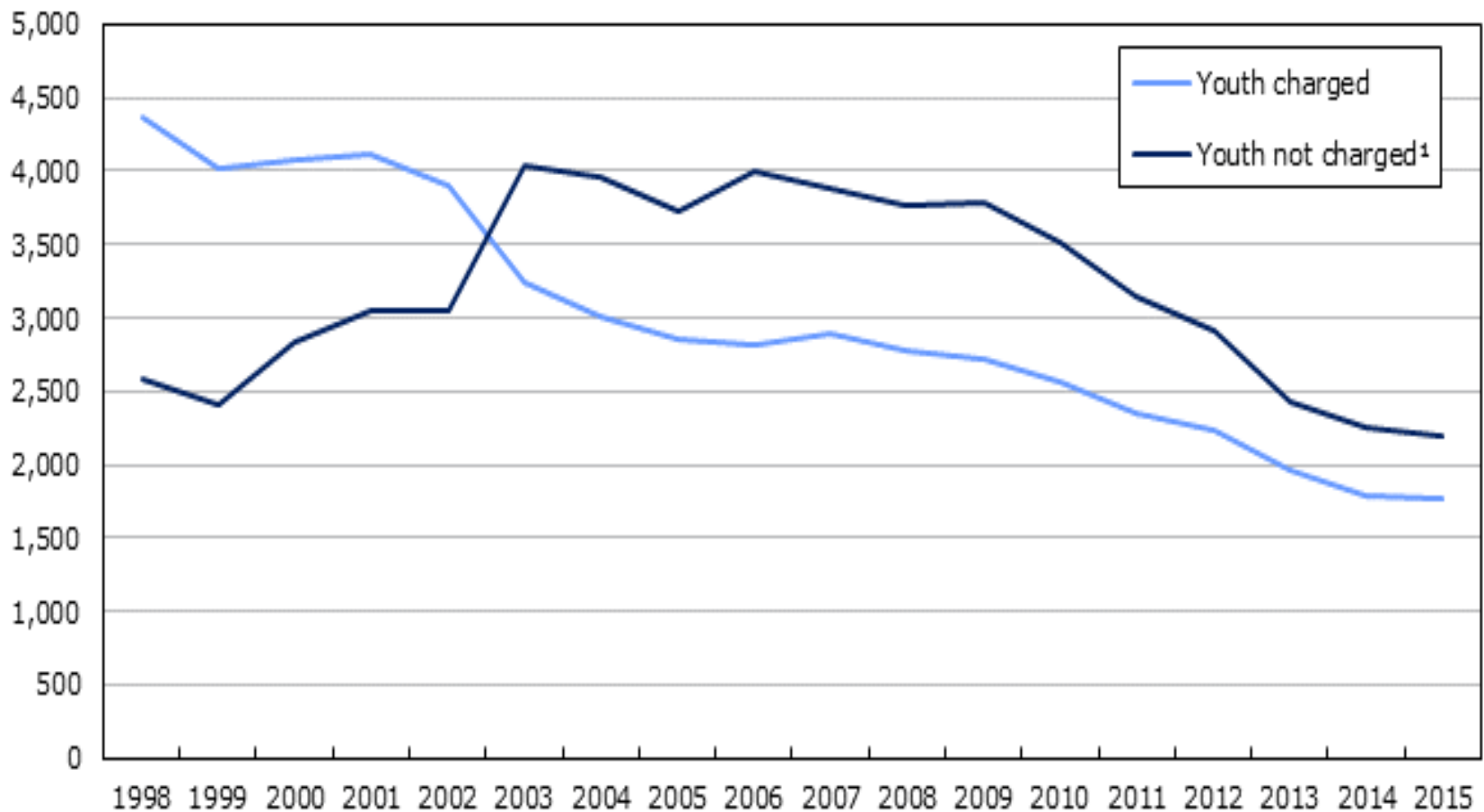
Type of case



Youth Charged vs not Charged

Youth accused of crime, by clearance status, Canada, 1998 to 2015

rate per 100,000 youth

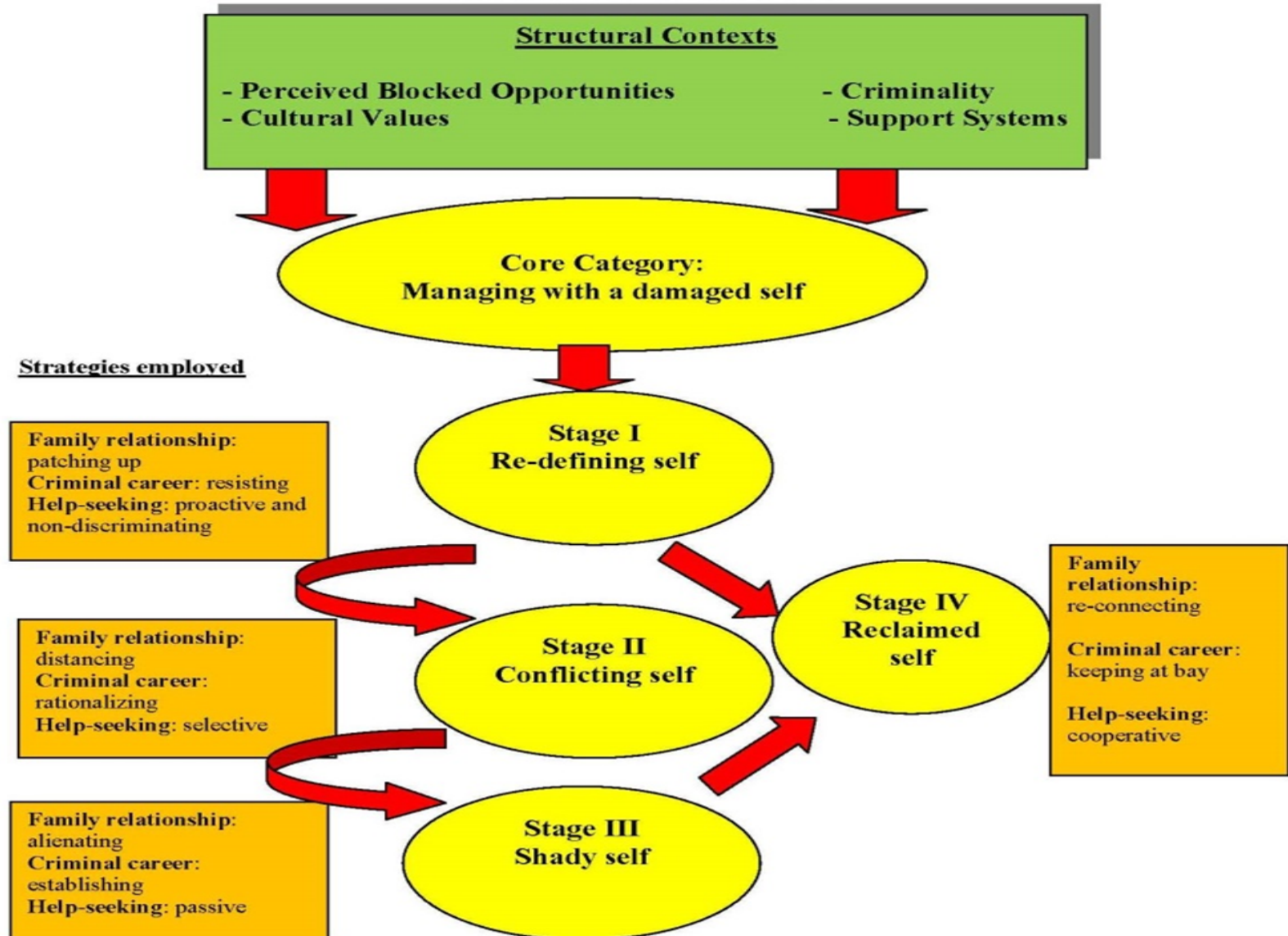


YCJA – a qualified success

- In 2014/2015 there were 5,700 indigenous admitted to correctional services in nine jurisdictions in Canada, representing **33%** of admission. This percentage from the year before. Indigenous youth aged 12 to 17 account for about **7%** of the youth population in the nine reporting jurisdictions.
- In 2014/2015, **52%** of Indigenous youth admitted to correctional services were admitted to custody whereas the comparable figure for non-indigenous youth was 42%. Conversely, **48%** of Indigenous youth were admitted to community supervision compared to 57% of non-Indigenous.

Criminal Pathway Model

THEORETICAL MODEL



CASE EXAMPLE

Meet Shane

Age: 16

Indigenous background: Yes

Reason for referral to Extrajudicial Measures
(Diversion) Program:

He was accused of theft and referred by police

Context for referral

Shane and another youth went into a large electronic retail store. A staff of the store witnessed the other youth have a conversation with Shane in front of the cell phone accessories aisle and then the other youth headed out of the store alone. Shortly after he left, Shane started putting some cell phone accessories in his backpack and went to leave the store. A security guard stopped Shane from leaving. Unpaid cell phone accessories amounting to \$500 were found in Shane's backpack. Both Shane's mother and the police were called.

Police Intake

Before charging Shane with a criminal offense, the police officer waited for Shane's mother to meet them and together with Shane they had a conversation about Shane's circumstances and life.

Shane's background

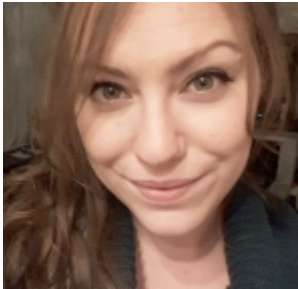
Shane and his mother live in social housing and the family is on social assistance. When Shane was 8 and his sister was 2, his family moved from their First Nations community to a nearby city in Southwestern Ontario. His father left the family when he was 10 and his mother has suffered from depression since then. His younger sister was in care at the age of 4 under a voluntary agreement with the child welfare system. Unfortunately, his sister died in car accident 6 months later. Shane has been self-harming since his father left and he lost his sister. He is struggling in school and claimed to be affiliated with an Indigenous urban gang as a fringe member. The young adult who went with Shane to the electronic retail store is his “big brother” in the gang.

Indigenous-focused Extrajudicial measures

After talking to Shane and his mother in the police station, the booking officer learned more about Shane's family background and life situation, the police officer decided not to press charges against Shane for his actions. During the intake interview, Shane shared that he still struggles with issues of loss over his younger sibling, the absence of his father, and displacement from this home community and culture.

The police officer offered Shane an opportunity to participate in an Indigenous-focused EJM diversion program. Shane agreed to voluntarily participate in the EJM diversion program and contacted the community-based agency accordingly.

Practice Perspective



Rebecca Weatherstone

Social Worker (MSW)
Ministry of Community Safety &
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London, Ontario



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Systems Theory

- Family unit – Shane’s mother
- School – Reintegration, creating new social network
- Police Services
- EJM Program – Elders, cultural education

Social Determinants of Health

- Class system – social assistance
- Social supports – friend group
- Education – reintegrating
- Physical environment – the home, neighbourhood
- Coping skills – self harming behaviours, unresolved grief
- Culture – Indigenous, reconnecting with culture
- Gender – expectations of men

Mental Health in Youth Justice

Significant Mental Health concerns

- Impact emotional and behavioural regulation
- Substance use as coping with deregulation

Focus on the cause of the crime instead of the crime itself

- Implement supports to reduce risk of reoffending

Forensic System

- Not Criminally Responsible (NCR) process

Practice Perspective



Heidi Heavyshield

Social Worker (MSW)
Aboriginal Program Coordinator
Lethbridge, AB

Working with Indigenous Youth

- Context of Indigenous youth in care and custody
 - Overrepresentation of Indigenous youth in custody: stats and trends
- Criminalization of youth in care
- Intersection of all our systems and Indigenous incarcerated youth

Working with Incarcerated Indigenous and “at-risk” Youth

- Early intervention, community services
- Look to community and systemic issues, family and environment
- Examine protective and risk factors: assessment
- Interventions can blend Indigenous traditional and cultural approaches
 - Ceremony, practices-overarching goal is to build healthy cultural identity
- Some youth are disenfranchised from their Indigenous identity
- Restorative justice principles and models can be adapted i.e healing and talking circles

Current context and trends

- Correctional programs, ex. Tapwe Warriors
- TRC-Truth & Reconciliation and Calls to Action
 - Justice, health, education, child welfare
 - UNDRIP-United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework to guide our approach to understanding the unique needs of these youth
 - Importance of addressing the link between youth in care and custody and adult incarceration

Additional Resources

- [TRC 94 Calls to Action Recommendations](#)
- [TRC Final Report and Findings](#)
- [UNDRIP United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Aboriginal youth overrepresentation in correctional services journal article](#)
- [Restorative Justice Practices for Aboriginal Offenders journal article](#)

Research Recap



Dr. Siu Ming Kwok

Professor
Faculty of Social Work
University of Calgary

Findings from Literature

- Over-representation of Indigenous youth
- Limited literature on best practice for Indigenous and racialized youth
- Not Working – incarceration
- What works
 - Programs targeted to youth's risk levels
 - Diversion program
 - Targeted intervention forms: multi-and family-focused
 - Treatment length (6 months) and dosage
 - Treatment Setting
 - Program Integrity

Recommendations

System Changes and Integration

1. Clear guidelines for extrajudicial measures
2. Collect disaggregated race-based data
3. Coordinate extrajudicial services and supports
4. Create data-sharing strategies

Recommendations


Program Design and Practices

5. Family-focused approach
6. Empower youth with a sense of program ownership
7. Create programs that respect the cultural background of youth

Recommendations

Program Integrity and Improvement

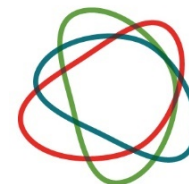
8. Develop a program manual
9. Establish an evaluation framework



**Ask Us
Anything!**



**Questions? Type comments in the
Question Box!**



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SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING WEBINARS

Part 2:

Supporting Positive Outcomes for
Youth Involved with the Law

End of April

Stay tuned for details