

BRISTOL YOUTH SERVICES

INTENTIONS

The hope is that we walk away from this day

Feeling reinvigorated! With excitement and energy to plan and implement next school year
Knowing the value of the experiences they have previously offered and open to the new directions that Youth Services may take.

Being able to release programs that no longer serve the community and reorient towards what is possible and needed now.



Attendance: Sarah, Raven, Josh, Aly, Steve, Mike, Aubrey

Facilitator: Kristianna

GUIDING PRACTICES OF THIS SPACE

Practice Reveals Values

Practice is the *how*, values are the *why*.

These are the *hows* I invite you to move with in our time together.

Each practice is accompanied by a statement and a question.

Before we meet please read these aloud to yourself.

- **Embodiment**
 - I can hold all of me. I notice the needs of my body, mind, and spirit. How might I adjust/rest/set boundaries so I remain engaged and embodied in this time?
- **Curiosity**
 - When I encounter something I don't know, I acknowledge my shame (if it appears). How might I orient towards creating the impact I desire?
- **Productive Conflict**
 - I can tussle with those around me to find a better way. How do I approach this with those around me who share my vision to find the best path forward?
- **Compost for Pleasure**
 - Not everything feels good. How might I use my grief to bring forward more pleasure?
- **Harvest from the Chaos**
 - Change can happen today. What is possible right now? How might the people in this room use our power to move us towards repair, joy, and changed behavior?

After you set an intention- name a practice!

A collection of practices leads to next steps and changed behaviors

An intention is something that

- You can total control over
- You can hold yourself accountable to

Practice

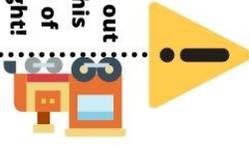
- How will you practice this intention in your thoughts?
- How will you practice this intention in your speech?
- How will you practice this intention in your actions?

Commitments for to step us closer to these ideas...

- Sarah
 - I can facilitate collecting and circulating people's communication styles
 - I can integrate more into YCS's daily operations
- Raven
 - I can share my calendar
 - I can continue to ask questions (loudly)
- Josh
 - Organize the next steps with staff and youth commission workshop to fine pillars
- Aly
 - Help with outlook calendars
 - Provide input for pillars
 - Add value/info for improved supervision
- Stephen
 - Review format for supervision
- Mike
 - I can react better to other communication styles
 - I can share updates on BEST with department
- Aubrey
 - Share my calendar



Watch out for this train of thought!



"THE WORK"

SURVEY RESULTS

Challenges of 2022-2023----->Central Reason

- Getting kids to get involved with my program. ==>• It's unknown to them. Committing.
- Lack of staff and level of commitment from staff. ==>• Staff Burn out? Too much on plate? No buy in from the top. I think a lot of reasons contributed to the challenges we faced with our team.
- Aftereffects of COVID-19 on the mental health of youth ==>• Large number of youth and staff shortage.
- Mental health, emotional regulation, pro-social interactions with peers ==>• Covid pandemic and the lack of social interaction with peers during the pandemic
- Group recruitment and resource allocation ==>• Not sure (I think it is worth a program needs assessment, the time and place of the programs, etc); vision and direction of the division
- Connecting with school administration around programs, events and active communication among building staff. Meaning the true understanding of what the programs are and what youth should be referred. ==>• The Bristol public schools have so many additional staff and support services now available. My question is how do they see us and how we can be most beneficial to them.
- Maintaining services while balancing the transition of 2 staff members in the division, recruitment and onboarding of new employees all while trying to meet increasing demands especially in the area of community services/mental health ==>• Recruitment processes take time, acclimating new employees to the community to build relationships and trust also takes time.

Challenge of 2022-2023----->Central Reason (cont.)

- Higher behavioral and mental health needs of the students attending programs and services. ==> • Schools/parents more aware of the services we provide registering or being referred. Increased need in the community. Untrained staff (subs) not equipped to manage behaviors.
- Lack of communication ==> • Different staff styles, different involvement in the program(s), lack of desire to collaborate, or difference in schedules (communication).
- Lack of staff ==> • Staff leaving (lack of staff)

The positive is that we have incredibly talented team members that have jumped right into their work and are already making a major impact.

Successes of 2022-2023----->Central Reason

- Building relationships with admin/teachers in the school ==> • My personality and drive
- Youth Recognition Awards ==> • All hands were on deck for this
- Very successful gift giving program during the holiday season where Bristol Youth and Community Services was able to assist over 500 families. ==> • Bristol Youth and Community Services collaborates and partners well with schools, police, community agencies, etc. to learn about the needs of youth and families and figure out how to support them. Bristol Youth and Community Services staff are dedicated to serving the youth and families of the community.
- One of our former youth program participants won CYSA's Youth of the Year Award. ==> • The Youth Service Bureau provides valuable connections, support, and opportunities for the youth we are able to reach.
- This school year we were active with events, prevention efforts, providing office hours for counseling at one of the High schools, supporting the tomorrow's leaders today program. ==> • I feel these programs had success due to being Board of education request for services and being either one day events or afterschool support programs that were grant funded.
- We do a great job leveraging interns to support the work of the full-time staff. We have a solid foundation of programs but staff have also been able to pivot to provide new services in our summer camps and at the parks which is reaching youth in need. Best has also made major strides since Mike started and has really become a program that's out there in the community raising awareness. ==> • Passionate staff that are committed to their work and making an impact in Bristol.

Successes of 2022-2023----->Central Reason

- Completing numerous programs at multiple schools across all grade levels. ==>• High desire to implement meaningful programs
- Providing FREE individual and family counseling services and programming to youth and families that support those of any income, especially those struggling financially. ==>• Ability to prioritize student needs
 - Flexibility in program implementation to adjust to the current participants.

What is something Bristol Youth Services should step back from?



- Any group that is struggling to get participation. I think there needs to be a "facelift" to programs that are struggling. Perhaps reinvent the program. It can be similar, but I don't see the need to keep watering a plant that's already dead.
- Counseling and clinical supervision. It often feels like a waste of time
- Can't think of anything
- Programs or groups that aren't effectively serving our the youth in our community but we keep doing because we always have.
- I'm not completely sure what we should step back from doing. I'm more concerned with services not meeting the needs of the community.
- Not necessary step back from but more clarity or marketing of our counseling/mentoring services. With so many providers in the community and directly in the schools like wheeler clinic we need to define and uplift what it is that we do with counseling and why it makes us a unique and important provider. Beyond just saying we "fill the gaps"
- In-school high school group programming: low referrals, low attendance, brings confusion for students and staff, referrals aren't always appropriate, school staff is often split for who/how they want to use the program, have other resources.

What is something Bristol Youth Services should try doing?

- I would like to see us invest more in mental health prevention. So many of the issues that we deal with stem from mental health issues. We focus on the treatment, but not enough on the prevention. The DFC grant focuses mostly on substance use and you can integrate mental health into it sometimes, but I'd like to see a focused effort on mental health prevention. We could have one program coordinator for substance use and one program coordinator for mental health. From my experience, Gen Z seems more interested in mental health than substance use. It's "cooler" to talk about. I think this would make it easier to implement a mental health prevention specialist. We would just need money to fund this.
- Counseling and clinical supervision. It often feels like a waste of time
- Not separate youth and community services so much
- Can't think of anything
- Hiring contractors or PT staff to facilitate groups under the direction of the Youth and Family Coordinators in order to diversify facilitators and expertise, and increase the number of groups that we are able to offer youth.
- Creating programs to support truancy, leadership programs, work programs.
- Really would love to see the utilization of the on the go van for more outreach in the parks or directly in underserved neighborhoods. We could make an impact reaching kids where they are and connecting them to services.
- Targeted group therapy (anxiety, grief, etc) or more intensive but brief group design (ex. 2-3 times per week for 4 weeks)

The youth of Bristol need _____.
Bristol Youth Services has the ability to _____ in order to help meet that need.

- The youth of Bristol need support. Bristol Youth Services has the ability to be there for youth in order to help meet that need.
- Consistency...grow
- Every youth in Bristol needs a trusted adult (in school, Bristol youth services, coach, etc.) whom they trust and feel connected with and comfortable around. Bristol youth services has the ability to partner with schools and community agencies to help meet that need.
- The youth in Bristol need to develop a sense of connection to the Bristol community. Bristol Youth Services has the ability to provide civic focused programs that build a sense of community. The Youth of Bristol need mental health services; BYS has the ability to provide diverse programs that provide participants with avenues to improve their mental health. The youth of Bristol need behavioral prevention and intervention based programs; BYS has the ability to develop both types of programs to meet those needs.
- Mentoring programs, juvenile justice support programs, and more
- The youth of Bristol need positive opportunities to engage, grow, learn and develop into productive citizens and members of the community. Bristol youth and community services division has the ability to impact thousands of youth in order to help meet that need
- Supportive adults, safe spaces to learn, strong reinforcement. We have the ability to provide trainings to staff, collaborate with other agencies and schools, and implement programming or individualized services.

Not captured by the survey questions...

- I think we need to talk about coordination and working together as one in order to accomplish all of our goals. We can help each other succeed in our various roles.
- the intern program
- How do we ensure we are serving as many youth as our budget allows? How can Community Services initiatives (Parent and Child Program) be supported by the Youth and Family Coordinators. The scope of the Holiday Gift Giving Program.
- We have covered most but I expect that my staff will have great influence on the direction of this meeting as they are in the community doing the work.

Tensions Noted in the Survey

- "We should find our place" and "We need to be in more places."
- Where we are needed vs Where we've been vs Where we believe we "should be"

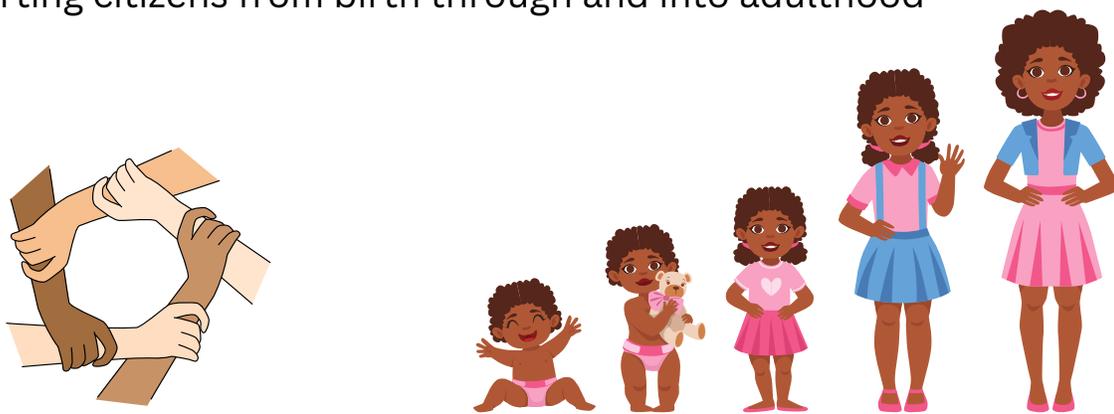
NOTES FROM OUR TIME

We would like our collective to release negative energy and embrace creativity.

Creativity is the ability to connect things that do not normally connect.
-Kristianna

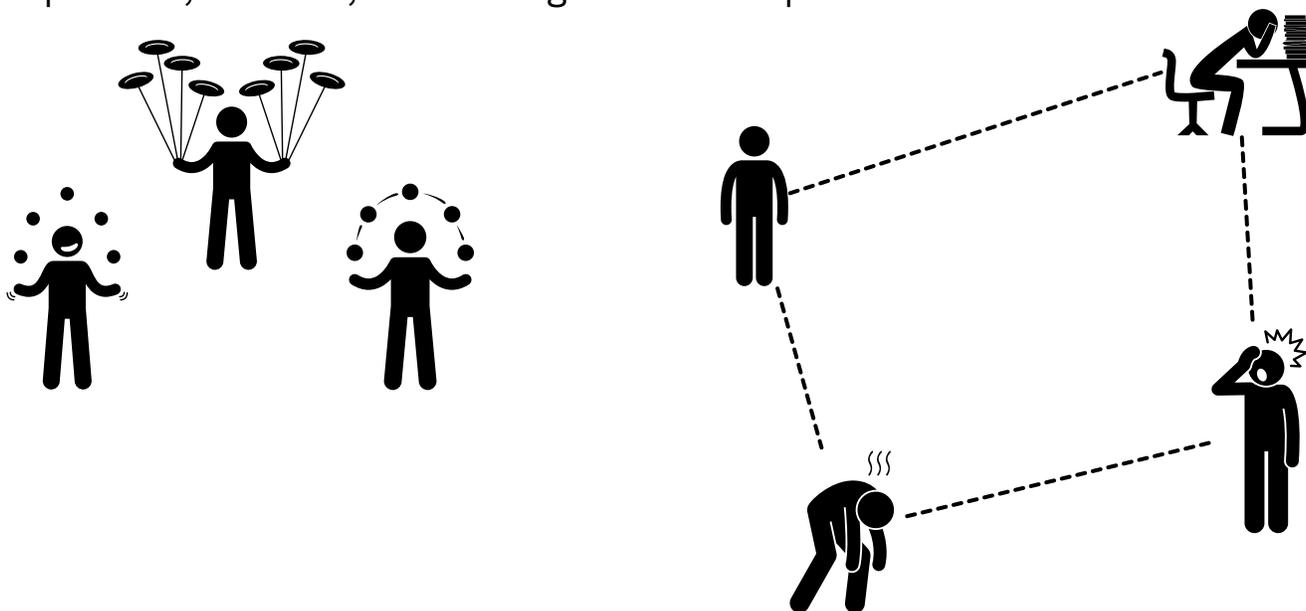
What do we look like ideally?

- Connected/offering a helping hand
- Supporting citizens from birth through and into adulthood



What do we look like internally?

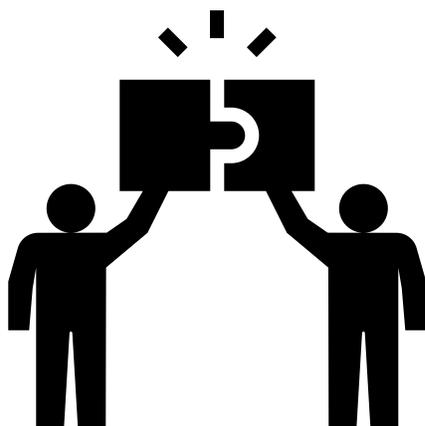
- Juggling a lot
- Separated, Isolated, and Having different experiences



NOTES FROM OUR TIME

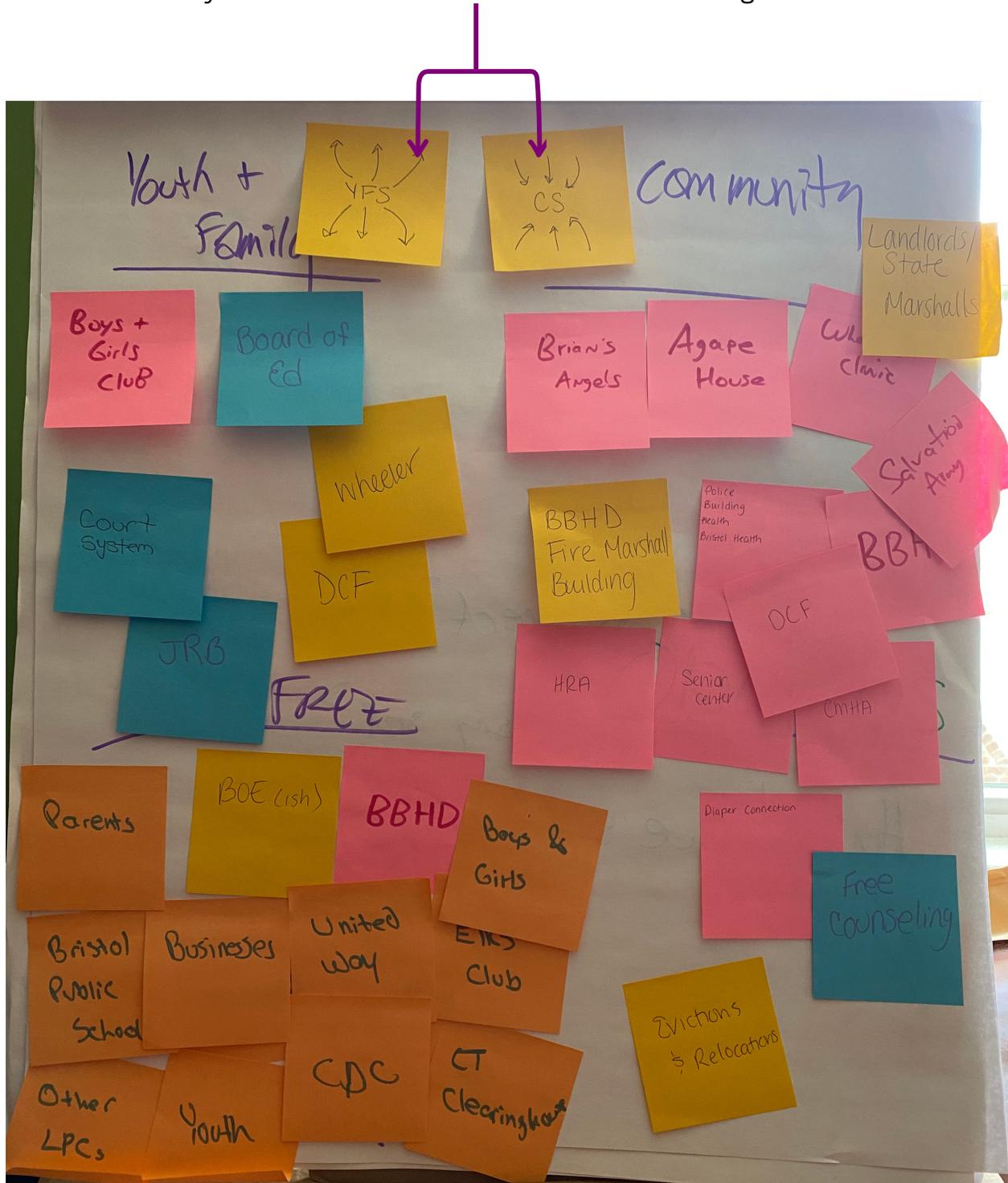
What do we look like externally?

- Only some of us seen. Some of us ignored. Some of us observing
- Some folks see us as a partner, some see us associate us with the horrible thing we are assisting them through or out of.



WHO DO WE PARTNER WITH/DUPLICATE SERVICES OF?

Observation by Sarah: YFS tends to refer out. CS tends to get referred to.



Questions that arose after looking at all of this...

- How do we set/keep boundaries as a division?
- How do we redirect when things go awry?
- How do we remain relevant?

What are some tactics to start setting Division Boundaries?

- Check in with one another
- Internal Role Clarity/Responsibility
- Contractor vs Part Time vs Professional Staff
 - Where do we need the expertise of our staff?
- MOUs or Written Agreements
 - How do we practice saying "No" beyond what's agreed to?

What are programs we can let go of?

- BST Program
- PV
- TLT
- Learning Through Books
- ASA (High School)

Programs mentioned without consensus

- Free Counseling
- "Event Planning"

Your Capability and Capacity may not always match.

- *How might we budget time for processing the referrals that are outside of our division's expressed scope?*
- *How do we track what our capacity is in real time?*
- *How might we create what we do with a wholistic view?*
 - *% Programs, % Services, % Events, % Referral Management*

Our Strengths

- We are Passionate
- We are Steve's Experience
- We are adaptable and responsive
 - (sometimes shows up as saying "yes" too much)
- We are Deeply community connected
- We are Relationship Builders

What might responsive evaluation and planning look like?

Positive Community

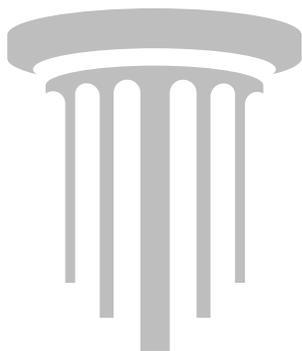
Supports Basic Needs

Empowering

Served in 2023-2024 by
Mental Health

Served in 2023-2024 by
Housing and Essentials

Served in 2023-2024 by
Mentoring



Create pillars that respond to the need of the community *right now*

Align programs, Services, Events and Resources/Education to the pillars

Programs

Services

Counseling

Evictions/Relocation

Events

Community Conversation

Resources/Education

Campaign

Planning all of this with capacity in mind!

Next Step: Workshop with staff and Youth Commission to iron out details

What might responsive internal communication look like?

- Shared calendars
- Sharing our communication styles and what works for us
- An all staff that is more productive
 - Is this a questions of structure of meeting or comfort in tense conversations?
- More time spent with Josh and Sarah
 - Possibly coming to supervision
- Wrap-ups on meetings with clear progress and goals
- Communication Standard across the department
- Direct Communication
 - How do we practice giving and receiving feedback?
- Boundaries
 - What are they?

What might responsive collaboration look like?

- Open communication
- Utilize Supervision time differently
- Understanding each other's roles, responsibilities, schedules, and the intersections between areas of expertise
- Sharing knowledge with each other
- Relationship- building within the department

Next Step:

Share how you like to receive communication.

Use the following guide to help.

ASK YOURSELF:

- How do I want to receive feedback?
- How do I want to receive information?
- Unless an emergency, you should expect my response in ____ days.

How might we be radically aligned in our communication?



Text

- No more than 2 short sentences.
- Quick FYI, Emergency, Yes/No
- If there is confusion offer a phone call or in real life meeting. Set broad purpose/length.



Email

- No more than 5 sentences
 - Can be more than 5 sentences *if* it is a recap with unquestionable info
- If there is confusion offer a phone call or in real life meeting. Set purpose/length



Phone Call

- Quick check in/Clarification
- Anything longer than 15 minutes: Set purpose of call at the front. If it hits 15 minutes- clarify purpose and clear stop time.



Zoom & In Real Life

- Start with something fun (entry music, game, silliness)
- Clarify purpose, stop time, where is the joy?
- Stop the meeting if people can't stay in it.
 - Presence > "Productivity"
- Use affirmations, gratitudes, and celebrations as fertilizer. Sprinkle it everywhere- water well (with good vibes)

Facilitator Notes

- Factor the known unplanned things into your capacity
- Take a steps towards something (even if it isn't perfectly planned)
- How might y'all step into tussles with one another more often?
 - Name silences even if you can't name *why* there's silence
- Intentionally drop some balls to maintain the quality of what you're juggling
- Create a short assessment for aligning decisions (*yes there is always nuance, short checks help weed things out*)

For Example:

- What's the need of the community?
- What are we being asked to do?
- What's within our capability?
- What's within our capacity?
- Is there room for joy?