



City of Brooklyn Park Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

**Increase opportunities
Decrease crime
and victimization**

IMPACT REPORT



**September 6th 2011
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ANNUAL REPORT

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Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (YVPI) overview:

In the summer of 2009 the Brooklyn Park City Council began its fight against youth violence. Leaders knew that waging this war would mean building a new initiative focused on redesigning city resources. Mayor Lampi took the lead and created the Brooklyn Bridge Alliance; Council member Gates traveled to Boston's National League of Cities conference on youth and families. Each council member was and continues to be a key champion in leading this initiative. From the onset the strategy was clear: Reduce youth violence by increasing opportunities.

Initiative leaders scanned the country for best practices in youth violence prevention. Their search resulted in adopting the city of Minneapolis “Blueprint for action” framework for reducing youth violence. This framework recognized that youth violence is a disease – one that can be fought. The medicine for youth violence has four elements: connect youth to trusted adults, intervene at the first sign of risk, restore youth who have gone down the wrong path and unlearn a culture of violence.

The YVPI team developed an evaluation plan and mapped out new programming that would focus on building youth assets and implementing a community-policing model.

With the creation of the Youth Opportunities Coalition and the opening of Zanewood Recreation Center the YVPI was able to connect and intervene with thousands of youth.

Since 2009 the YVPI team has shared information, leveraged program resources and developed new approaches. They maximize current resources through collaboration. Parent engagement specialists and full time recreation staff and outreach experts have been hired. Police units are in full force at schools and focused on interrupting potential acts of violence and victimization. The impact of this work is evident in the excitement of young people when they come to the recreation center, or come to family events. Ultimately it looks like pride in their community, hope for their future and strong families.

After two years of measuring results on a month-to-month basis the YVPI is excited to make public our initial summative results. Not included in this report are the results of other assessments, stakeholder surveys and program evaluations. This report has key performance measures, statistics and community indicators that tell a story about how we are doing and what is happening in our community.

Over the last two years the YVPI has made several reports to the city council. Through these interactions that city council has demonstrated its support by asking tough questions, requesting evidence of YVPI results and providing critical resources to sustain YVPI operations.

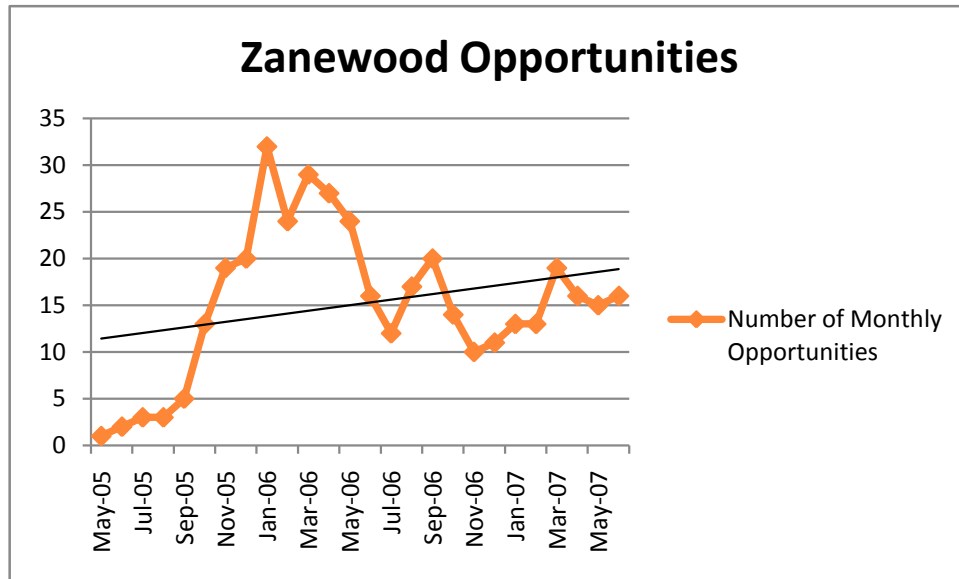
The following data demonstrates the efforts made by partners and the statistics and community indicators that help guide our intervention and programming efforts.

***“The YVPI helps youth
create a sense of pride for
the community they live in”***

-YVPI Stakeholder

Outcome: Increase opportunities

1. Zanewood recreation center opportunities



Why is this performance measure important?

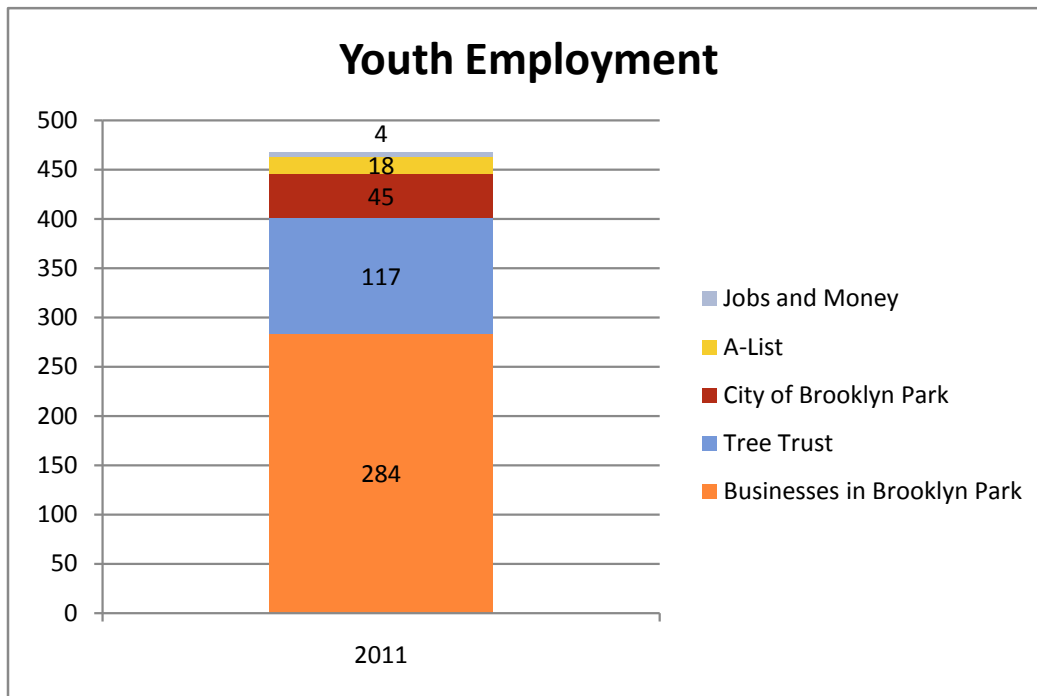
The Zanewood Recreation Center is located in the Zane Corridor an area of elevated juvenile crime, as identified by the police department. The recreation center is open year-round and at peak times such as afterschool, weekends, and school holidays.

This chart highlights the rapid growth in opportunities at Zanewood at the beginning of the YVPI. In January of 2010 Zanewood programs went through a quality assessment. This assessment revealed that the number of programming opportunities had grown too fast and needed to improve their quality. Since this time the number of opportunities has become a more stable upward trend.

Zanewood is committed to providing high quality opportunities and currently trains all staff and develops new programs using four quality indicators: Safe environment, supportive environment, youth interaction and youth engagement.

Outcome: Increase opportunities

2. Youth employment



Why is this output important?

This measure is important because jobs can make a real impact on a youth's future outlook. Measuring the number of employed youth is critical to understanding whether there are adequate employment opportunities in the community.

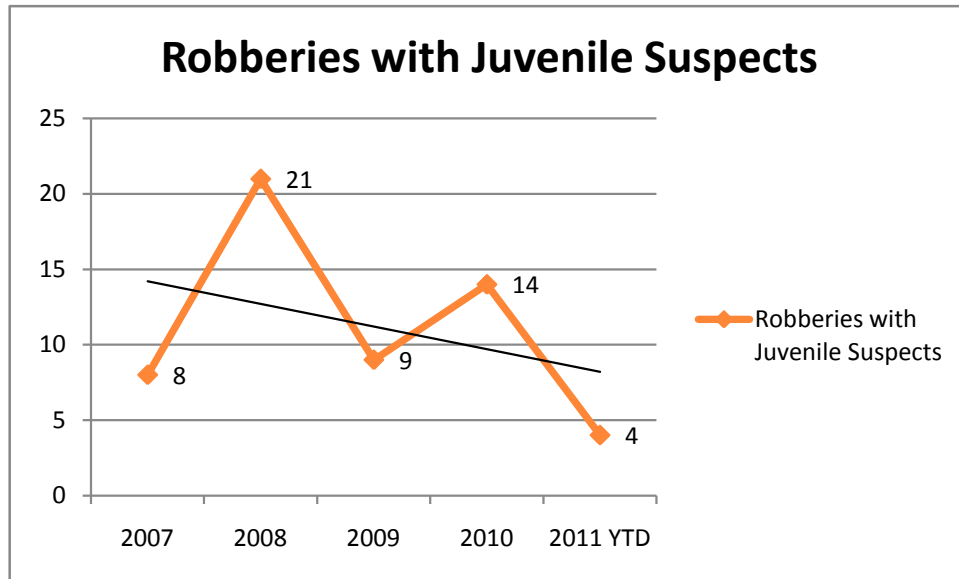
In 2011 there were 468 jobs for teens. Every year the YVPI will track this output to understand what opportunities for gainful employment are available.

Without access to employment youth may resort to crime to meet their needs. For some youth living in poverty, the lack of employment resources only furthers their disparity and hopelessness. Youth need opportunities to develop skills, self-discipline and accountability that will bolster their self-esteem and hope for their future.

This output measure includes those youth employed by Tree Trust in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center, City of Brooklyn Park, Police Department Jobs and Money program, the A-List and businesses listed on the youth website.

Outcome: Decrease crime

3. Robberies with juvenile suspects



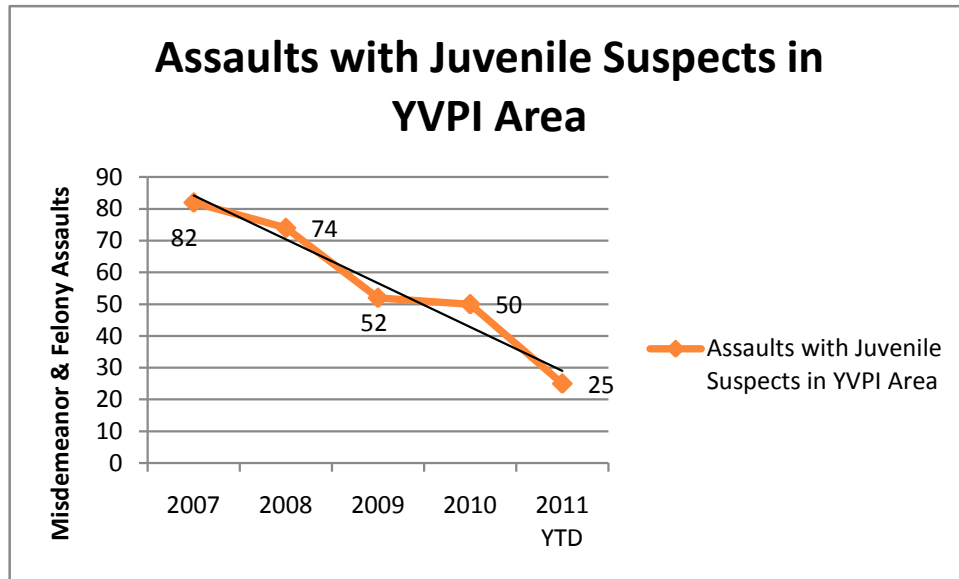
Why is this statistic important?

The YVPI focuses on improving relationships between youth and police officers. Thus, there has been an unprecedented level of community interaction and people are now providing information to police officers because they trust us. This willingness to share information has assisted in the identification of juvenile suspects and has led to increased success in the solving a broad array of crimes. With tips provided by teens, officers are also seizing more weapons from juveniles that otherwise may have been used to commit robberies or other crimes.

This statistic is important because it is related to people's personal sense of safety. Overall the number of robberies is decreasing as indicated by the overall downward trend.

Outcome: Decrease Crime

4. Assaults with juvenile suspects



Why is this statistic important?

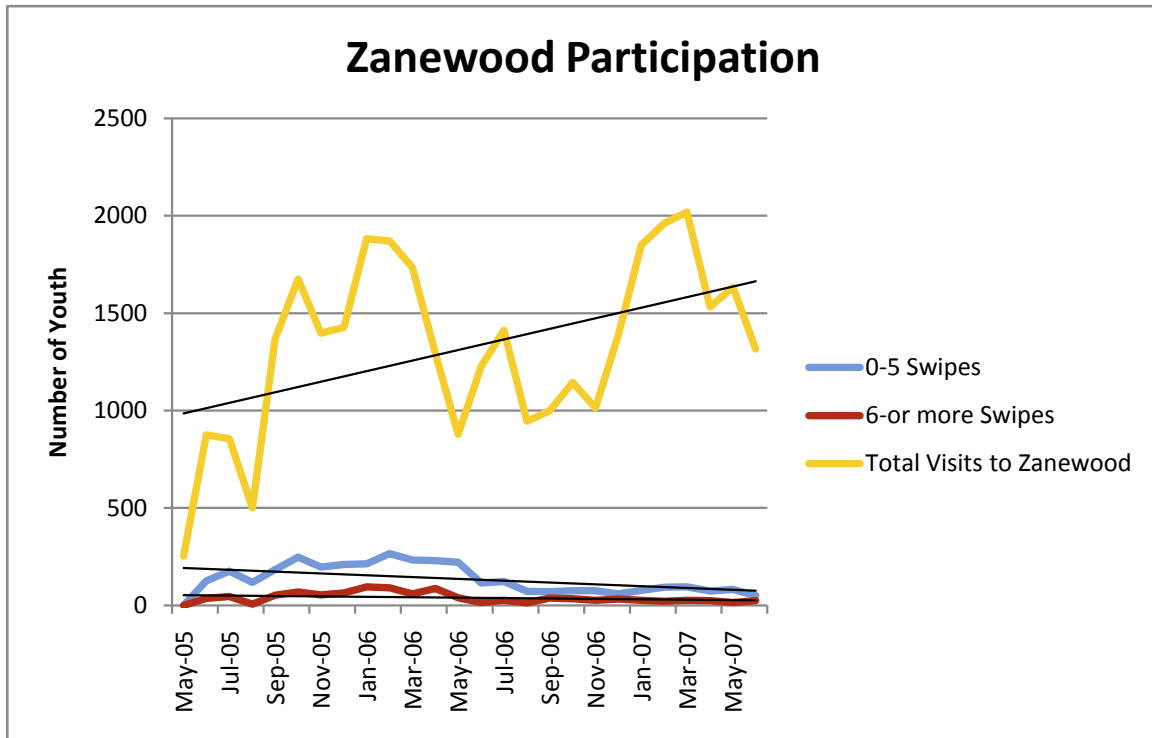
The YVPI has focused on the Zane corridor – an area that has historically been considered ‘high crime.’ According to recent statistics the Zane Corridor, which encompasses only 3% of the land area in Brooklyn Park accounts for 25% of all reported crime.

Since the YVPI’s inception complete crime statistics in this area for the years 2007 through 2010 show that misdemeanor assaults have dropped 23% and assaults by nearly 32%. Statistics for the first half of 2011 suggest that we will continue to maintain this significant decrease.

These statistics support what we have heard from youth and other interested adults in the Zane Corridor - that the perception of crime is improving and a feeling of safety is more widespread. The YVPI will continue to monitor these statistics in an effort to focus policing efforts.

Goal #1: Connect youth to trusted adults

5. Zanewood participation



Why is this output important?

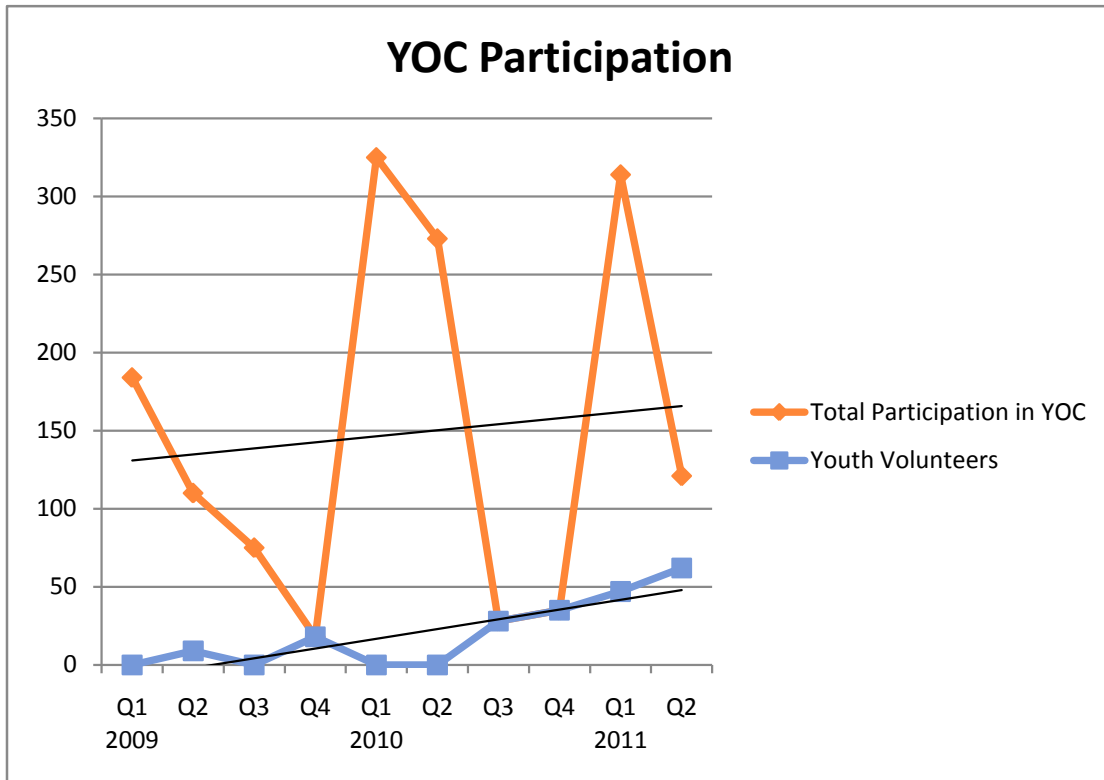
Drop-in and formal programs provided by Zanewood exist, in part, to connect youth to trusted adults. With over two-thousand hours of discretionary leisure time each year teens need places in their community that provide high quality programs with caring adults.

We know that seeing a youth regularly, six or more times per month is a strong indicator of impact. Over the last two years 23% of all youth attended on average six or more times a month. On average 178 individual youth come to Zanewood every month to participate in drop-in and formal programs.

While the overall numbers of youth participating at Zanewood has increased, the number of youth attending six or more times has decreased slightly. This is the result of inaccuracies in swiping protocol and staff turnover. Efforts are underway to re-train staff in both swiping protocol and management of drop-in and formal programs.

Goal #1: Connect youth to trusted adults

6. Youth Opportunities Coalition (YOC) participation



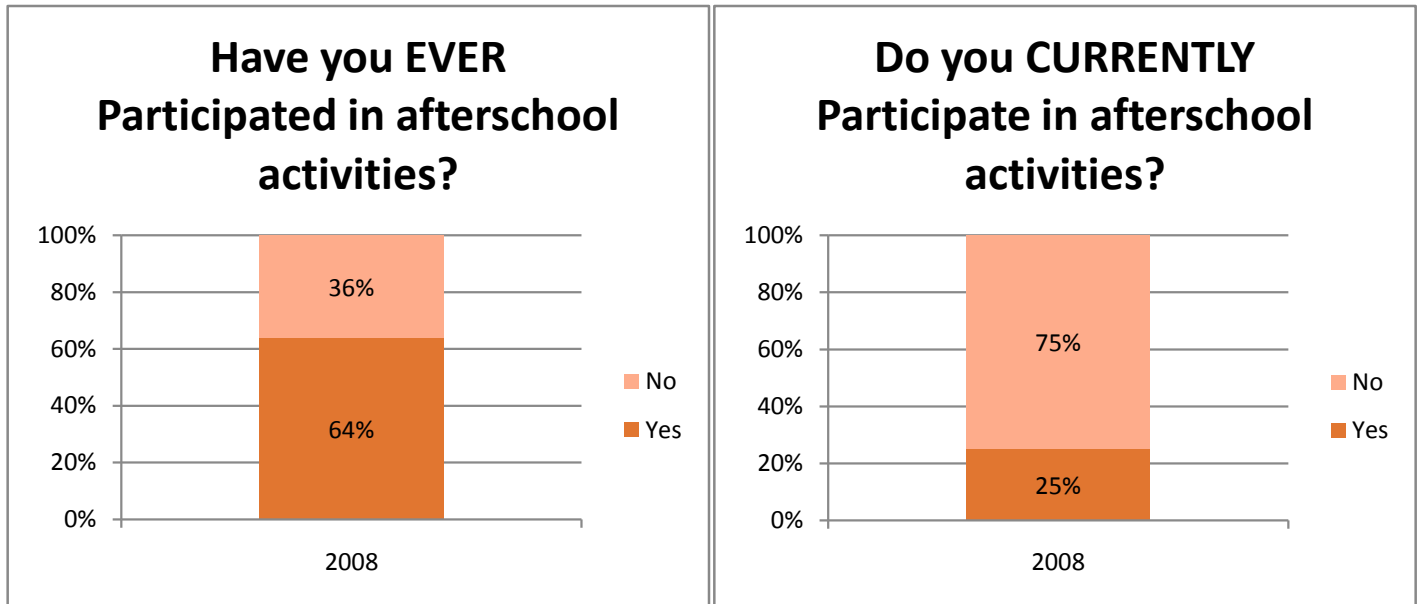
Why is this output important?

When young people participate and engage in their communities they gain ownership of the place where they live, develop skills and for some youth build their resume that may help them in pursuing higher education and employment. Both participation and volunteerism have an overall upward trend. Large up-surges are due to community wide events that provide youth opportunities to network, engage in city planning or community building events.

A community benefits when youth are engaged: Cross-generational relationships are strengthened, young energy and ideas are channeled into the cities betterment, and positive youth engagement increases. Measuring youth participation and engagement in the YOC is key to understanding how many youth in Brooklyn Park are benefitting from the advantages this program provides.

Goal #1: Connect youth to trusted adults

7. Citywide youth participation in community programs



Why is this community indicator important?

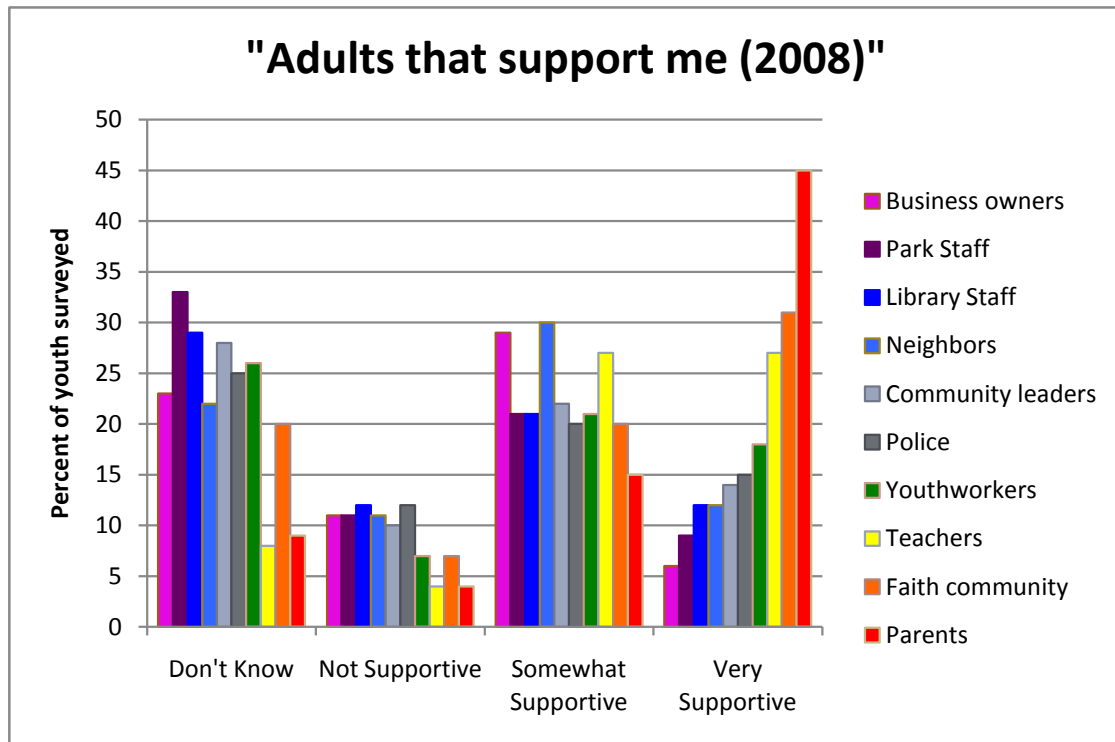
In 2008 over 1,000 youth in Brooklyn Park were interviewed – this study found that 75% of respondents were not currently participating in any kind of youth program. Furthermore, 36% of those who responded had never participated in youth programs “like at a park, community center, after-school or during the summer.”

The YVPI is focused on ensuring that youth in Brooklyn Park specifically at-risk youth living in the Zane Corridor have valuable opportunities to be involved and thus, are less likely to be involved in juvenile crime. Tracking youth participation in after-school programs is critical in understanding whether that goal is being fulfilled.

This study will be replicated fall 2011 to determine if the combined efforts of the YVPI have had an impact on the 36% of youth that had never participated. It is the goal of the YVPI to decrease this number and an increase in current participation.

Goal #1: Connect youth to trusted adults

8. Adults that support youth



Why is this community indicator important?

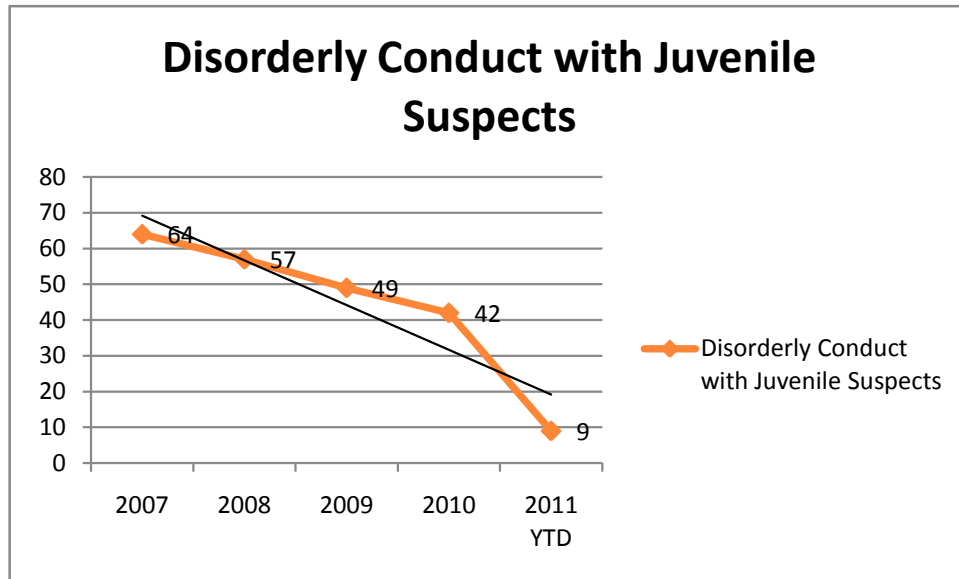
Feeling that “adults support you” is a protective factor for a young person. The YVPI encourages the entire community to actively support children and youth. It is our goal that young people know and believe that ALL adults in their community are “very supportive.”

In 2008 over 1,000 Brooklyn Park youth were interviewed – this study found that youth felt most supported by their parents, faith community adults and teachers. Surprisingly the majority of youth “didn’t know” if adults from businesses, parks, libraries, neighborhoods and community leaders support them.

This study will be replicated this fall to determine if the combined efforts of the YVPI have had an impact on the number of youth that “don’t know” if adults from the businesses, parks, libraries, neighborhoods and community leaders support them.

Goal #2: Intervene at the first sign of risk

9. Disorderly conduct with juvenile suspects



Why is this statistic important?

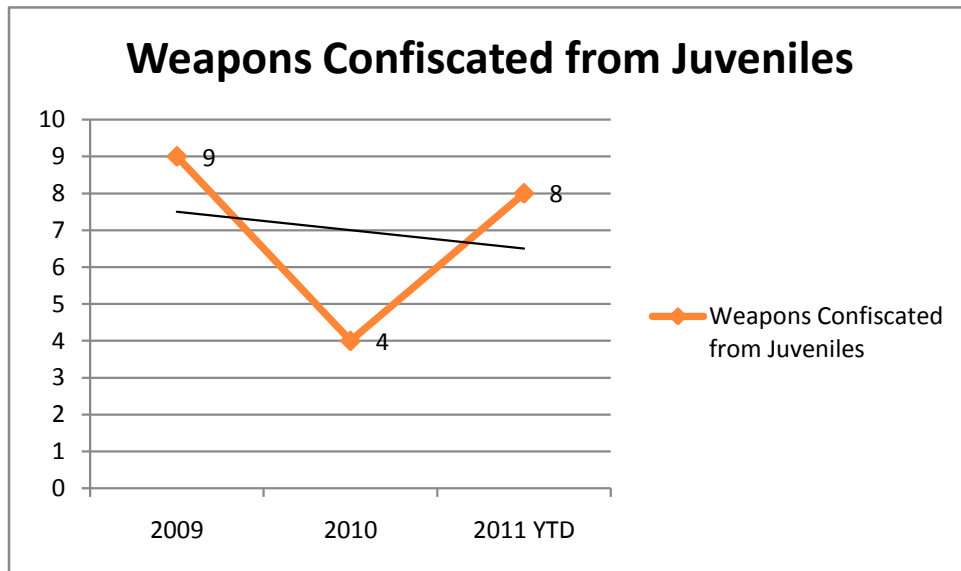
The behavior of bored, disengaged, and sometimes desperate youth will often result in acts of disorderly conduct. By definition, these acts are disruptive to others and contribute to a sense of reduced quality of life in this community.

This statistic is important because the YPVI's goal are not only to improve the lives of youth but to ensure that Brooklyn Park is a vibrant, safe and a quality city to live, work, play and go to school in.

Since 2008 these disruptive acts have steadily declined in the YVPI area. Between 2008 and 2010 disorderly conduct arrests have dropped 15%. This reduction could be attributed to varying degrees of enforcement or to the increased practice of early intervention. Either way qualitative evidence from monthly YVPI team reporting suggests that early intervention and presence of School Resource Officers and Community Response Unit and street outreach staff have contributed to the reduction of disruptive behaviors.

Goal #2: Intervene at the first sign of risk

10. Weapons confiscated from juveniles



Why is this performance measure important?

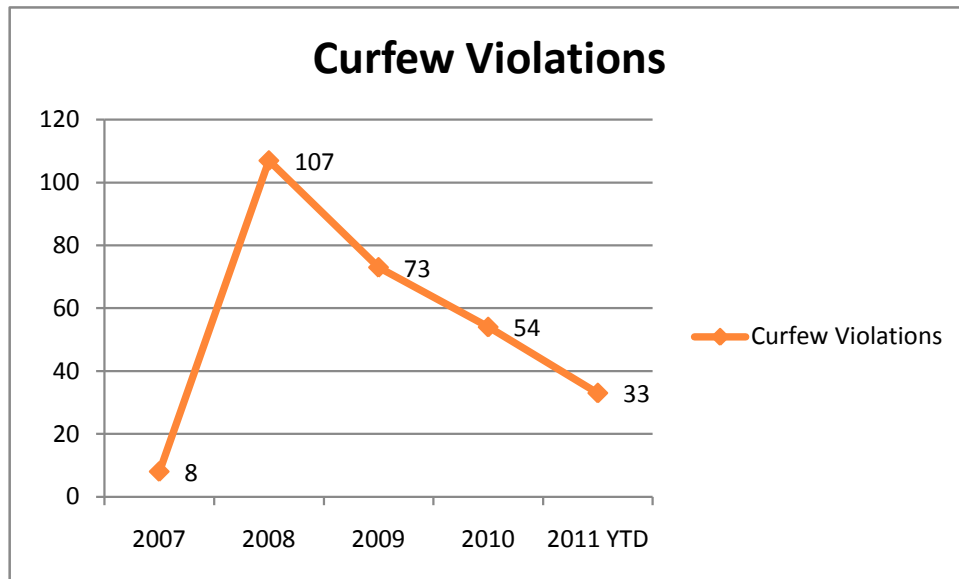
Since the YVPI began the Police have observed an increase in gang involvement. Coinciding with this are shootings in the metro area involving youth suspects or victims to these crimes.

The police department has focused on recovering guns as a way to prevent violence. An increase in guns being recovered from juveniles is a good thing, as Sergeant Bursted has stated, "it is proof that the we are getting better at how we do business."

These guns have always been around, but because of the YVPI's improved relations and positive engagement with the youth our officers are receiving better intelligence on who has the guns and where they are being kept. Every gun we recover has the direct potential of saving lives and certainly makes our community safer.

Goal #2: Intervene at the first sign of risk

11. Curfew violations



Why is this performance measure important?

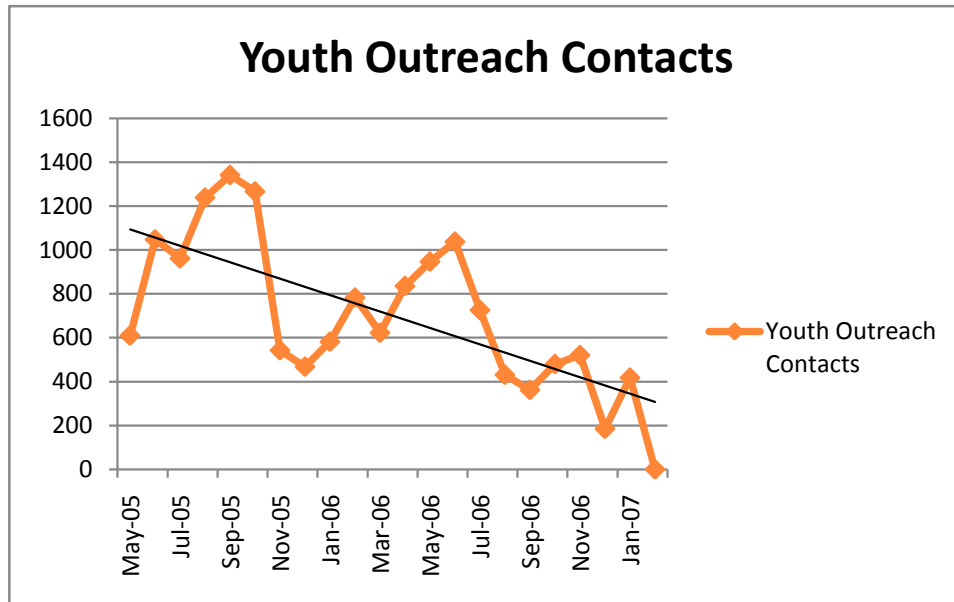
The YVPI team knows that when teens are wandering the community late at night they are at-risk for making poor decisions, committing crimes or becoming victims.

With the assistance of Zanewood Recreational facility the BPPD has opened up a curfew center each summer. The number of sweeps varies annually.

When a juvenile is picked up they are brought to the curfew center where they are checked through our in house computer system along with Hennepin county probations. After going through the initial intake they are then brought to a separate room where our youth outreach workers start talking to them about how they got there or see if they need anything. Our police officers are also talking to them during the entire time making those positive contacts with them and to intervene at this first sign of risk.

Goal #2: Intervene at the first sign of risk

12. Youth outreach contacts



Why is this performance measure important?

Fundamental to accomplishing the YVPI's goals of connecting all youth and intervening at the first sign of risk is the effort to get to know every youth in the Zane corridor. We keep track of these face-to-face interactions and referrals because this data gives insight into the scope of our street outreach in connecting with youth.

Over the last two years there have been a total of **16,137 youth contacts**, **6775 hours on-site** at Zanewood, **4004 referrals** and **182 outreach events** at Zanewood.

Initially *The Guys in Green* street outreach made on-the-ground connections. At this time the YVPI street outreach operated in full force as demonstrated by the large number of contacts in the beginning of 2009 and 2010. As the Community Response Unit (CRU) formed the street outreach team was reduced as demonstrated by the downward trend in youth contacts. As the outreach effort shifts between YVPI partners it will be critical in 2011 and 2012 to ensure that the number of individual youth contacts does not continue to diminish must be monitored.

Goal #2: Intervene at the first sign of risk

13. School resource officer's (SRO) intervention



Under Construction

Why is this work important?

Since the SRO program began it has provided a sense of safety in school buildings for staff, students, and parents. The YVPI recognizes police presence as an important function of the SRO program but recently the PD has observed that they might be missing the opportunity to intervene and prevent crime as youth transition from school to community and home.

SRO's are often the first people to intervene with the youth when they are having problems. Many times they are contacted by school officials and intervene before there is even a problem and help the youth come to a positive resolution.

The SRO program is in development – focusing on two strategies. First, SRO's connect during school hours and secondly; the CRU (Community Response Unit) connects these youth inside schools to outside resources that will help them get back on track.

Over the next year the police department will be developing this new way of working together, documenting how we work as a team and reporting what impact we make with youth.

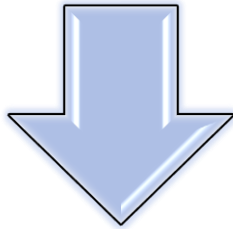
Goal #3: Restore youth going down the wrong path

14. Teen Opportunities and Programs for Success (TOPS)



Internal and External Assets

- Commitment to learning
- Positive identity and values
- Boundaries and expectations
- Constructive use of time



Risk Factors

- Academic failure
- Early signs of violent behavior
- Family conflict
- Community disorganization

Under Construction

Why are these measures important?

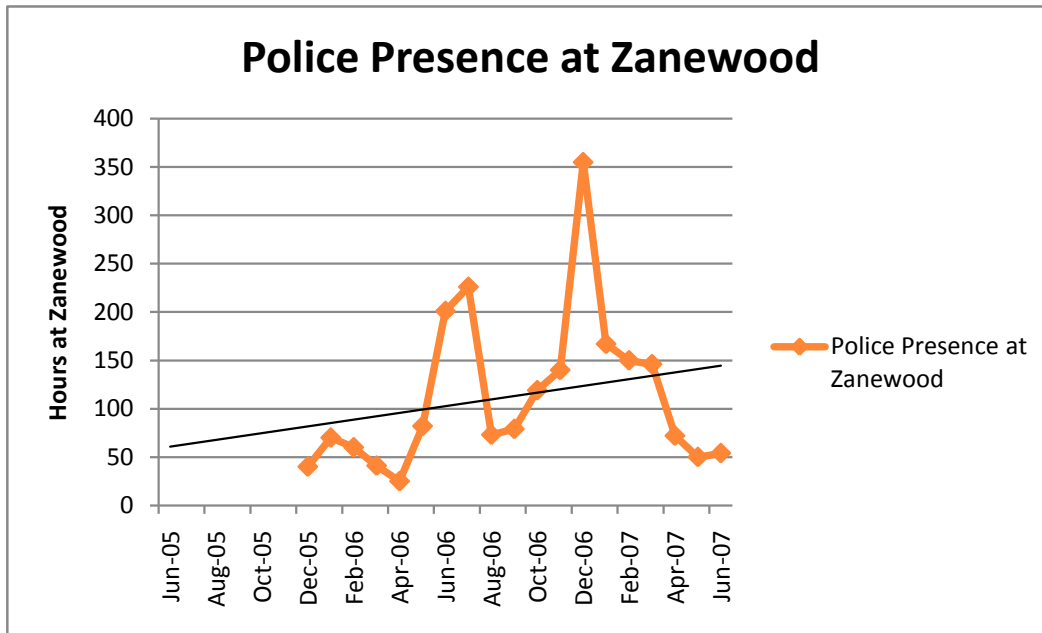
TOPS is a one-to-one, community based mentorship program that emphasizes using youth-adult relationships to build youth assets. Mentoring is seen as a life-changing strategy for assisting Brooklyn Park's at-risk youth to become productive and contributing members of society.

It is important to measure youth assets because there is evidence that increasing assets builds protective factors that can mitigate risk. Building assets can address several youth problems such as school dropout rates, youth violence, adolescent pregnancy, and drug and alcohol use.

Youth in the TOPS will use the Search Institutes 40 Developmental Assets Survey tool to measure the increase in assets.

Goal #3: Restore youth going down the wrong path

15. Police Presence at Zanewood



Why are these performance measures important?

When a police officer is on-site at Zanewood young people have the opportunity to build a positive relationship with an officer. Police presence not only ensures safety at Zanewood but also provides an additional mix of programs. These programs provide a critical opportunity for officers to engage youth.

To effectively restore a youth that is on the wrong path a police officer must already have a trusting relationship to a youth, and have access to opportunities that meet the youths developmental needs. The police have developed the following programs to engage and restore youth:

Police Activities League (PALS)

PALS program in June of 2010. PALS is a youth crime prevention program that utilizes educational, athletic and recreational activities to create trust and understanding between police officers and youth. The PAL program brings youth under the supervision and positive influence of a law enforcement agency and expands public awareness

about the role of a police. A few of the activities organized by PAL and YVPI staff include: Flag Football, Fashion 5-0, Cooking with Cops, Girls day, Skateboarding, and the Teen Police Academy.

Jobs and Money Solution (JAMS)

This is a 3-week program that teaches youth how to get a job and learn how to manage their money once they start getting checks. Each week is a different learning experience for our youth and was taught by our partners Rasmussen College, TCF Bank, and two community leaders Neda Kellogg and Derek Francis.

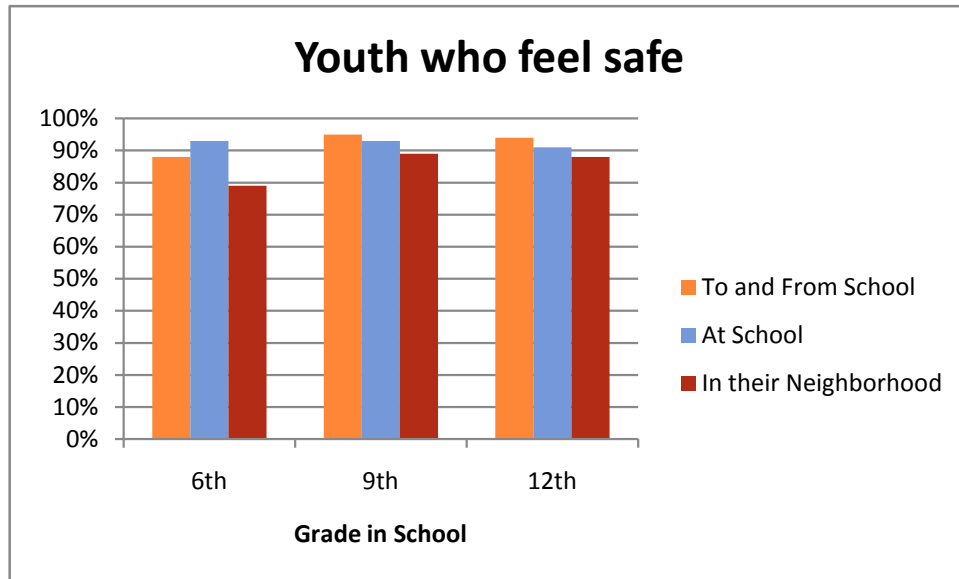
Cops and Kids Fishing

The event was started in 2009 by Inspector Bruley and is sponsored by Brooklyn Park PALS. In 2009 100 youth participated and because of its popularity this program has continued. In 2011 120 youth attended. Currently 46% of all Brooklyn Park Police officers participate in the Cops and Kids Fishing event. Events like this give youth and officers time to get to know one another while offering many youth the opportunity to do something they never would have the chance to do.



Goal #4: Unlearn the culture of violence

16. Youth who feel safe



Why is this community indicator important?

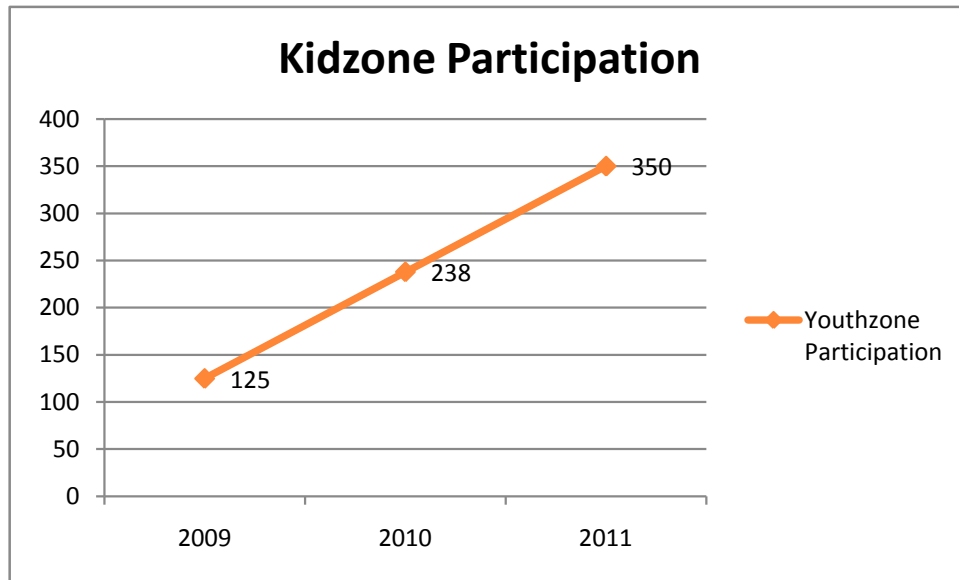
Brooklyn Park should be a safe place for all youth. The YVPI team is monitoring how young people feel about their own safety. Community indicators such as this help create a picture of what's going on at a broader level.

Analyses of the 2010 Minnesota Student Opinion Survey of students who attend Osseo Senior High, Brooklyn Park Junior High, Osseo Junior High, North View, Park Center and Zanewood (n=1574 for all grades) shows that the majority of youth surveyed feel safe to and from school, at school and in their neighborhood.

In the fall of 2011 the YVPI will implement a Zane corridor survey to focus on youth in this high crime area.

Goal # 4: Unlearn the culture of violence

17. Kidzone participation



Why is this performance measure important?

This measure is important because healthy behaviors are shaped at a young age. Kidzone intentionally engages children and their parents in healthy relationships that model non-violent conflict resolution. Programs for kids promote pro-social behaviors like sportsmanship, teamwork and self-expression.

In 2010 Zanewood started Art Zone and Sport Zone for youth ages 5-12. Since this time programming for ages 5-12 has intentionally been increased. Kidzone is a new Zanewood program and is led by the youth and family program specialist.

In addition to Kidzone have been family outreach efforts to help bring parents into the recreation center. Large family events have been well attended and Zanewood staff are encouraged by the increases in attendance and parent connections.

YVPI Next Steps:

For many initiatives the years following the initial start can be more challenging than the first. Sustaining initial work and developing new components can seem daunting. But growth is critical for waging an effective war against youth violence.

In order for the YVPI to capitalize on its initial success it is recommended that the YVPI designate one person to coordinate already existing and new work. Without this oversight the initiative cannot manage partnerships needed to develop media messaging, youth outreach and parent engagement. The next phase of the YVPI should include:

1. Designate one person to coordinate the YVPI

- Focus on developing systemic partnership to do “more with less.”
- Implement a dual management system between Police and Recreation.

2. Goal #1 - Connect youth to trusted adults

- Increase staff capacity for implementing quality programs.
- Increase the number of youth coming 6 or more times per month at Zanewood.
- Increase opportunities for parents to engage in activities with their children.

3. Goal #2 - Intervene at the first sign of risk

- Improve the design and quality of the SRO program.
- Measure the SRO program results.
- Work with parents to develop opportunities for building non-violent solutions to challenging behavior.
- Rebuild, monitor and increase the number of individual youth street outreach contacts.

“The YVPI should increase the amount of engaging and educating parents”

- YVPI stakeholder

4. Goal #3 - Restore youth who have gone down the wrong path

- Expand relationships with Hennepin county probation, diversion programs, churches and businesses so that youth in Brooklyn Park are offered a path toward graduation, employment and spiritual-physical-mental health.
- Measure the TOPS program results.

5. Goal #4 - Unlearn a culture of violence

- Initiate a multi-message campaign that shares critical information to parents, youth and community about how to combat youth violence.