



# HOPEWORKS

The efficacy of a trauma-informed methodology for Hopeworks ‘N Camden, New Jersey

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# THE EFFICACY OF A TRAUMA INFORMED METHODOLOGY FOR HOPEWORKS ‘N CAMDEN

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes research conducted by the Center for Urban Research and Education (CURE) at Rutgers University-Camden on the efficacy of a trauma-informed organizational methodology, The Sanctuary Model (SM), for a nonprofit youth organization in Camden, New Jersey. Specifically, this study examines how the methodology has been implemented at Hopeworks ‘N Camden (HW), a nonprofit organizations working to train youth in workforce development and life-long success. The authors hope that this report is useful for HW and other organizations operating in vulnerable or *trauma-infused* geographic spaces by elucidating a) the past and present organizational culture, b) what processes are effective and not effective, and c) suggestions for improvement. This project was generously funded by a grant from the New Jersey Health Initiatives, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

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## BACKGROUND

Like many other cities in the Northeast, Camden transformed from a once thriving industrial city that was home to various industries including Campbell's Soup, RCA Victor, and New York Ship Building to a city in severe economic distress. The city's infrastructure is crumbling as evidenced by dilapidated housing and poor road conditions. More than 40 percent of city residents live at or below the federal poverty line (almost triple the national average). The rate of homelessness, high school dropouts, crime and incarceration is high, as is the percentage of residents who suffer from poor physical and mental health, as well as drug addiction. The city is also the regional dumping ground for low-income housing, municipal sewage treatment, and waste processing.<sup>3</sup>

Although decades of disinvestment in Camden can be felt throughout most of the city, some are cautiously optimistic at signs of economic development in certain city neighborhoods (ones that offer comparative advantage, i.e. the waterfront, downtown). Businesses such as the Subaru headquarters, Holtech Technology, and the Philadelphia 76ers practice facility, have entered tax-favorable agreements to relocate their businesses in the city. Despite these and other select economic development projects, the fact remains that many residents lack real opportunities or training to participate in Camden's skilled labor work force.

## HOPEWORKS' N CAMDEN AND THE SANCTUARY MODEL

To address the dearth of economic opportunity for Camden's young people, HW was founded in 2000. The organization "uses education, technology and entrepreneurship to partner with young men and women to identify and earn a sustainable future"<sup>4</sup>. Primarily marketed as a workforce development center, the program trains youth between the ages of 14 and 24 in the soft and hard skills required for success at school and in the workplace.

While HW programming is geared towards workforce preparation, the organization's staff learned long ago that Camden's youth face emotional and developmental barriers as a result of growing up in concentrated poverty and without substantive opportunity structures. The prevalence of violence, hunger, crime, poor performing schools and underfunded social services often results in youth experiencing psychological trauma from a very young age. When children are exposed to these chronic stressors, their attachments, and therefore emotional, mental and physical development, suffer. The HW founders realized very early on that in order to train Camden's youth to be professionally successful, they also had to confront their emotional trauma.

In the course of implementing a new organizational structure through adopting SM, HW leadership observed an improvement in programming outcomes. As the implementation of the model was the largest change since the improvement in organizational growth and success occurred, this research serves to establish an in-depth understanding of the organization and how the new model has influenced program outcomes. Specifically, this study determines the impact of the trauma-informed methodology on HW as an organization, on its members, and on the collective ability to meet and maintain the organization's goals.

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<sup>3</sup> Gillette, Jr., H. (2005). *Camden After the Fall: Decline and Renewal in a Post-Industrial City*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

<sup>4</sup> <http://hopeworks.org/>

## THE SANCTUARY MODEL

Recognizing the parallel process between stressed care-work organizations and the traumatized individuals they serve, SM was formulated by Dr. Sandra Bloom as an alternative organizational culture that is able to confront the outcomes of childhood trauma and organizational stress.<sup>5</sup> Fundamentally, SM does exactly what it sounds like: it assists an organization in creating a sanctuary, a safe environment where one is able to “relearn” attachment. It does this by literally recreating an organization’s culture, reforming its values and redirecting its systems to create a culture of community, safety, and self-care.

To implement this new organizational culture, HW has adopted SM’s core values in practical ways, creating a framework to help participants navigate their individual success in the organization.<sup>6</sup> The values have been purposefully integrated into every part of the organization and work to reinforce a new culture at every level of participation. The board and leadership have committed to practice the model just as intensely as the youth.

The core values are implemented through a set of practical tools for use during everyday work. These tools are used to help participants practice emotional intelligence, healthy work relationships, and creative productivity. They include group support, individualized safety plans, and democratic approaches to conflict and problem solving and are intended to foster individual and collective emotional management and program advancement.

## METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative case-study methodology<sup>7</sup> that includes primary data including focus groups, in-depth interviews, and observation, and secondary data such as organizational document review and social and print media material. In order to determine the efficacy of the new organizational model, the researchers collected original data that focus on the time period prior to SM implementation, the time period during implementation, and the time period following implementation. All data were organized using NVivo® qualitative research software, analyzed and examined for themes.

## FINDINGS

Data were grouped into five themes:

1. HW before SM
2. HW transitioning to SM
3. Post-implementation: staff and SM

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<sup>5</sup> Bloom, Sandra (2014). Creating, Destroying, and Restoring Sanctuary within Caregiving Organizations: The Eighteenth John Bowlby Memorial Lecture”. Found in *From Broken Attachments to Earned Security: The Role of Empathy in Therapeutic Change* by Odgers, Andrew. London: Karnac Books.

<sup>6</sup> Esaki, Nina, Joseph Benamati, Sarah Yanosy, Jennifer S. Middleton, Laura M. Hopson, Victoria L. Hummer, & Sandra L. Bloom (2013). “The Sanctuary Model: Theoretical Framework”. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*. 94(2), 87–95

<sup>7</sup> Yin, Robert K.(1989). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

4. Post-implementation: youth and SM
5. Organizational structure for workforce development

## HW BEFORE SM

- Before SM implementation, factors external to HW played a large role in determining a youth's success in the program;
- While further research on youth background is needed to fully understand the implications of external factors on youth success at HW, our findings suggest that SM has created an atmosphere that enables success for a wider spectrum of young people, despite individual extenuating circumstances.

## HW'S TRANSITION TO SM

- SM requires committed "buy in" from key staff; not all participants will be able to adapt to SM.

## POST-IMPLEMENTATION: STAFF AND SM

- While staff communicated differing levels of involvement with SM in their daily work lives, the commitment to SM by key staff created a culture that leads everyone to grow and adopt SM values;
- As a result of these strategies for addressing burnout, all staff report remarkable satisfaction with their jobs;
- While current leadership highlights the need for democratic management in order to avoid a singular personality run organization, the tendency to ascribe the recent successes to the current executive director is still prevalent among HW's staff;
- It is difficult for short-term volunteers to really understand SM and how it works at HW. Staff mentioned wanting a more consistent or strategic training program for these volunteers.

## POST-IMPLEMENTATION: YOUTH AND SM

- Youth experience SM as a set of tools to cope with stress and as a culture of acceptance and growth;
- Many youth express SM values indirectly and practice them unknowingly. Although they may say they do not utilize certain SM values or tools, they reflect them in their stories of growth and emotional management;
- SM values are internalized through immersion in SM culture at HW;
- Youth tend to selectively implement SM tools, picking and choosing what tools work for them;
- The environment of grace and warmth created by staff resonates positively on youth dynamics;
- Youth and staff relationships have improved dramatically, and the overall environment resonates understanding, mutual respect and trust. Youth do not feel judged by staff. Quite conversely, they feel respected by staff and, in turn, reciprocate that respect for the staff;



- While youth feel supported and encouraged by staff, the struggle to perform tasks in the midst of their own trauma is a source of stress for youth. There is frustration and a feeling of being misunderstood or disrespected when staff do not let up on the youth who fall behind due to external hardships;
- While staff discuss trauma as something from the present and/or past that may be influencing your current actions, the topic of recognizing past trauma and how that connects to current reactions is mostly absent from the youths' descriptions of trauma informed care or HW in general;
- Youth feel more open, less shy, like better communicators, like they have a voice, like that they can do something with their future.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- HW approach to workforce development is more sustainable within the SM culture;
- Even with the problems with the business model and internship structure, SM enables greater success for interns and their supervisors;
- Youth report that by the time they complete their internships, they were less shy, more confident, and more capable. They reported feeling like they had something to offer and feeling more confident in their communication skills;
- A clarification in mission and goals is needed within the business development programs. There is a tension between the goals of building a successful, quality business that supports HW financially versus the goals of training youth in workforce development;
- Some tension exists between youth development staff and business development staff. A clarification in job descriptions, roles and responsibilities is needed to ameliorate contention.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This in-depth, qualitative analysis of the trauma informed methodology as it is implemented at HW elucidates the organization's journey towards improving success for all its constituents. By examining the time period prior to implementation of SM, the transition period, and the resulting effects of the model in the post-implementation period, a nuanced understanding of the model's utility in facilitating emotional, professional and organizational growth and sustainability is uncovered. Specifically, staff experience less burnout and a more sustainable and effective work environment. Youth are learning, growing and adapting within the model of safety. Completion rates and numbers of youth who remain in college and attain gainful employment opportunities are rising. Furthermore, this study demonstrates the potential for SM as a useful model for other youth development organizations or nonprofits working in marginalized and disadvantaged communities.



## OVERVIEW OF HOPEWORKS ‘N CAMDEN

A Jesuit priest and Lutheran ministers founded HopeWorks ‘N Camden (HW) in 2000. Housed in a small row-home in the heart of a north Camden neighborhood, the organization “uses education, technology and entrepreneurship to partner with young men and women to identify and earn a sustainable future” (mission statement). Primarily marketed as a workforce development training center, the program accepts youth between the ages of 14 and 24. Currently, more than 45 youth participate in many of the training programs at a time. The organization has a staff of 10 full-time employees, 6 part-time employees, a range of regular volunteers, and a 13-member board.

The training center is a bustle of activity from morning to evening. The organization functions as a business, workforce training center, student housing program, and education center. By integrating professional, emotional- and life development curricula into the training approach, youth acquire both hard and soft life skills. While the programs are designed as separate departments built to help youth work towards their goals, in reality each program is dependent on the others and exist simultaneously.

## HW LOGIC MODEL

In a way, HW fills a place in the lives of Camden youth that the education system, family and government have not been able to. By equipping youth emotionally, academically, and technically, HW’s long-term outcomes shape not only the success of individual youth but also the success of Camden as a fully educated, productive and healthy community. The following logic model details how HW programming brings youth and the surrounding community along a continuum of health and success:



## TECHNICAL TRAINING

One of the unique opportunities HW offers is technical training that equips youth with basic web development training. Each youth begins with self-paced modules that teach basic coding and web design skills. The training room is housed on the main floor of the center, and youth interns who have previously completed the program are present to assist newcomers as they work through the modules. In order to allow youth to train full time, HW guarantees a financial stipend for each module completed. Divided by age group or schooling, older youth and youth who did not finish high school work on their modules during the day program. Younger students still attending high school work on their training after school.

## LITERACY TRAINING

One of the organization's requirements is training in literacy and math. Designated volunteers and coaches meet with each trainee on a weekly basis to ensure their academic growth and to assist in homework. For those who have not acquired their high school equivalency, GED test preparation is required.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

HW houses 3 business departments that provide both revenue streams and internship opportunities for youth: a geographic information system (GIS) department, a Salesforce department and a web development department. Each department functions as a non-profit business and is responsible for securing external client contracts. Once youth have completed their initial web development training, they may apply to intern in one of these departments. In addition, youth may apply to work as a youth trainer intern, assisting incoming youth in the initial training modules. These paid internships last between 3 to 6 months, after which youth may apply to be placed in an internship with a company outside of the organization. Youth have been placed in local hospitals, government offices and community organizations. To date, youth have developed over 400 websites and worked with over 60 GIS clients.

## LIFE COACHING

During their professional and academic training, HW's youth meet weekly with the director of formations. Formations is a type of life coaching and counseling program that teaches youth how to establish and meet their short-, mid-, and long-term goals, as well as work through challenges along the way. More than life coaching, the formations department allows youth to recognize their emotional and life patterns that prevent them from reaching their goals.

## THE C.R.I.B.

Once youth have completed the training modules and are attending a higher education program, they are able to apply to live in the organization's housing. The C.R.I.B., short for Community Responding In Belief, is a recently remodeled 3-story home a few doors down from HW where youth can rent a room. As many of Camden's youth struggle to find affordable housing, the C.R.I.B is the proverbial carrot that encourages youth to complete their technical training at HW. Although the C.R.I.B is structured to facilitate a safe community, youth live as independent adults, often for the first time in their lives. The only weekly requirements for residents are preparing one meal per week for everyone residing in the house, several housekeeping chores, and regular scheduled study time. This program has been particularly alluring to youth aging out of the foster care system.

Integrating professional etiquette, technical skills and emotional intelligence into their training program gives HW youth a holistic training opportunity. Paired with an organizational culture of community based support and personal responsibility, youth are injected into an environment that teaches them how to get to where they want to go while providing the tools to get there.

While web development and other technical skills may be the tools HW uses, one lead staff reminds us that “the reason why we exist and our purpose really is about helping young people in Camden, between the ages of 14 and 23, get their life on track, in terms of job-training skills, professional development, education goals and really help them develop a plan to work towards their future and their dream...whatever that may be”.

## THE SANCTUARY MODEL

Developed through the research of Dr. Sandra Bloom, The Sanctuary Model (SM) is based on the gathered findings within constructivist self-development theory (CSDT), burn-out theory and organizational change theory. The model creates a framework to address organizational culture and the effects of trauma in order to improve the quality of service delivery and client outcomes at care work organizations<sup>8</sup>. Following is a simplified summary of the Sanctuary Model as it is described in Bloom’s chapter “Creating, destroying and restoring sanctuary within caregiving organizations: the eighteenth John Bowlby Memorial Lecture”<sup>9</sup>.

## CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND TOXIC STRESS

When children are exposed to toxic or traumatic stress, their attachments, and therefore emotional, mental and physical development, suffer<sup>10</sup>. Bloom identifies toxic stressors as ongoing structures that cause prolonged and intensive activation of the body’s stress response<sup>11</sup>. She explains that ongoing exposure to poverty, exposure to violence, caregiver neglect, the imprisonment of a family member, exposure to community violence, or physical or sexual abuse can actually change a child’s brain development and structure, causing long-term effects<sup>12</sup>. Traumatic stress, on the other hand, is a highly individualized response to an experience that causes feelings of extreme danger or helplessness<sup>13</sup>. Physical and sexual assaults, attacks, disasters, automobile accidents, illness, or witnessing deaths and violence may all result in post-traumatic stress. Compounded with what Bloom refers to as an allostatic load, or the ongoing effects of a life lived in poverty, these stressors have detrimental effects on a child’s development<sup>14</sup>.

Bloom has found that the consequences of childhood trauma are long lasting, resulting in a series of developmental harms that she groups into seven themes gathered from the literature on attachment<sup>15</sup>. When children experience trauma and toxic stress, they enter into a state of hyperarousal, where the body’s central nervous system creates a significant threat response when exposed to even minimal amounts of everyday stress. As brain development is

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<sup>8</sup> Esaki et al, 2013; 87

<sup>9</sup> Bloom 2014

<sup>10</sup> Bloom 2014; 64

<sup>11</sup> Bloom 2014; 60

<sup>12</sup> Bloom 2014; 64-66

<sup>13</sup> Bloom 2014:60

<sup>14</sup> Bloom 2014:64

<sup>15</sup> Bloom 2014:64-68

inhibited by stress, emotional management becomes inhibited, cognitive functions are threatened and internal and external communication is stifled. As these functions deteriorate, abusive power relationships patterns and a skewed sense of morality and justice often develop. Finally, people who experienced childhood trauma and toxic stress often fail to develop the ability to grieve and accept loss, which makes them resistant, or maladaptive, to change. In conjunction, these developmental injuries create barriers to growth and optimal functioning as an adult.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS AND THE PARALLEL PROCESS

Bloom theorizes that the care giving and social service organizations that serve populations highly affected by trauma are in turn affected in a parallel process<sup>16</sup>. As these organizations experience limited resources and complex work environments, chronic stressors erode organizational health and their ability to meet the needs of their clients. Bloom describes this as a mirroring of stress and coping between organizational systems and clientele, suggesting that the combination of the chronically stressed individual and the chronically stressed organization can produce similar and parallel patterns of dysfunctionality<sup>17</sup>. The connection between the two systems, the individual and the organization, are both direct and indirect. While the trauma of the individual affects the chronic stress of the organization, it is the maladaptation of the organization that leads to the erosion of organization health.

These patterns are worth mentioning, as our research indicates that HW had been through a similar experience. Indeed, as trauma and toxic stress inhibit a child's development in seven key areas, chronic stress similarly breaks down organizational health and productivity (summarized from Bloom, 2014).

1. An overworked and under resourced organization functions in a constant state of emergency, or hyperarousal, and safety between all actors is threatened, causing an erosion of trust.
2. It is the job of the organization to manage distressing environments while maintaining empathy for clients; however, this state of hyperarousal, constant crisis, and potential conflict diminishes emotional management.
3. In turn, organizations develop *learning disabilities*. Service delivery becomes fractured and disconnected, and the systems that assist in learning are broken down.
4. Miscommunication and conflict then ensue. The ability to give and receive feedback breaks down, simple problems are escalated, and chronic conflict is left unresolved.
5. As a result of unresolved chronic conflict and lack of control, organization leaders often become controlling and authoritarian while the organization itself becomes more staunchly hierarchical. In turn, staffers become risk averse and silenced.
6. A culture of authoritarian, controlling and coercive leadership leads to a culture of punitive systems among both staff and clientele.
7. Eventually, burnout and failure sets in. Program standards are lowered, and the mission struggles to be accomplished.

## RECREATING SANCTUARY: THE VALUES AND TOOLKIT

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<sup>16</sup> Bloom 2014; 68

<sup>17</sup> Bloom 2014; 69

Recognizing this parallel process between stressed organizations and the traumatized individuals they serve, Bloom has formulated the SM as an alternative organizational culture that is able to confront the outcomes of childhood trauma and organizational stress. Fundamentally, the SM does exactly what it sounds like: it creates a sanctuary, a safe environment where one is able to relearn attachment. It does this by literally reforming an organization's culture, redirecting its values and restructuring its systems to create a culture of community, safety, and openness.

To start, 4 “pillars of Sanctuary” (see table 2) are established in order to fully reform an organization's culture and create a healthy functioning community<sup>18</sup>. These pillars are a type of commitment to a new, shared knowledge base, values, language and practice within the organization.

In direct response to the 7 areas of dysfunction that emerge under trauma and stress, 7 commitments are made (see table 1)<sup>19</sup>. Each commitment mirrors the individual and organizational stresses directly: the commitment to non-violence responds to the hyperarousal and lack of safety and trust in traumatized individuals and organizations. A commitment to growing emotional intelligence gives structure for those who have lived in a system of overwhelming emotions and little emotional management. The commitment to social learning allows every individual in the organizations—from the top down—to take part in growing, changing, and learning. Open communication directly confronts the conflict, miscommunication, and inability to know oneself. The commitment to democracy recognizes the need for every member in an organization to fully shape, participate in, and navigate the organizational environment. A commitment to social responsibility seeks to reshape punitive, defensive thinking of leadership, peers and clientele into an agreement to work for the common good of the organization and every individual in it. Finally, a commitment to growth and change allows the organization to let go of whatever systems, behaviors or patterns that are destructive, and accept change.

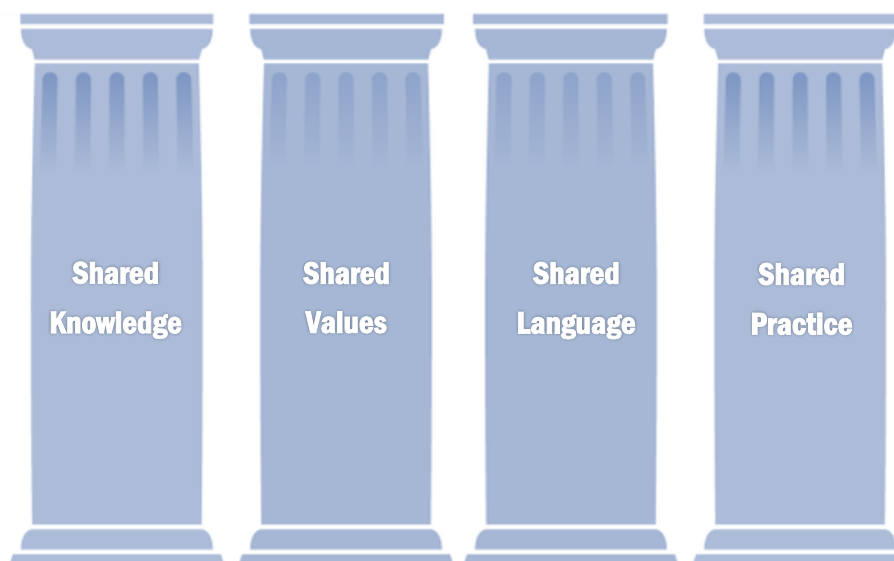
Table 1: The 7 domains of trauma and sanctuary

	Results of Childhood Trauma	Sanctuary Commitments	Results of Chronic Organizational Stress
1	Chronic hyperarousal	Non-violence	Lack of Safety
2	Lack of emotional management	Emotional intelligence	Loss of emotional management
3	Learning problems	Social learning	Organizational learning disabilities
4	Alexithymia (failure to communicate)	Open communication	Organizational miscommunication, conflict
5	Abusive power relationships	Democracy	Authoritarianism, learned helplessness, silenced dissent
6	Skewed moral development	Social responsibility	Punishment, revenge, organizational injustice
7	Failure to grieve, foreshortened future	Growth and change	Unresolved grief, decline in success

<sup>18</sup> Esaki et al 2013; 87

<sup>19</sup> Bloom 2014; 73

Table 2: The 4 Pillars of Sanctuary



## THE SANCTUARY MODEL AT HOPEWORKS ‘N CAMDEN

HW integrated the SM between 2013 and 2015. To confront growing strife, staff burnout and the increasingly punitive environment towards youth participants, the HW director (and co-founder) at the time created a mental health commission. The commission acted as a place where staff could voice concerns and receive support. However, the ongoing conflicts and lack of progress led staff to push for greater organizational change. Eventually, the board presented the SM as an option for restoration. While the values and pillars are integrated into the essence of the organizational culture through careful visioning and language, there are a handful of practical tools that help every member of the organization to participate in those values in a tangible way.

The model was launched with a staff retreat, where intensive training introduced the goals and culture of the model. The model is now sustained with a series of training sessions that reiterate and further train the staff in Sanctuary values and methods. Every new year at HW begins with a renewed focus on the SM, symbolized by a launch party and sanctuary activities. Staff participate in a monthly training meeting, where material highlighting Sanctuary values is taught, discussed and implemented into routines. When new staff are hired, they are trained in Sanctuary values as soon as they begin. Staff also participate in peripheral professional development opportunities, including an annual external SM conference and a monthly book club series within the organization. These structures and opportunities culminate to reinforce ongoing development in Sanctuary informed methodologies and intelligence.

The framework of supervision HW has integrated into its weekly functions is the most substantive way the SM shapes the organization’s culture. Because staff experienced burnout with intensive responsibilities but little supervision in the past, the new model has been adapted to provide a platform of staff accountability and assistance in an environment that helps them grow and perform. Every staff member, including the organization’s youth interns, has a supervisor that they meet with on a weekly basis to discuss their goals for the week and what they need from others and themselves to reach those goals. During these meetings, staff are encouraged to address any struggles, problems or self-care needs. This framework has created a space for open communication with

supervisors and a place for safe expression of concerns. During these meetings, the values of Sanctuary are reinforced and put into practice.

## THE TOOL KIT

**The Huddle.** Key practices are implemented into the daily routine to ensure that the SM stays an active part of the organization's culture. For example, each day begins with a "huddle", where everyone in the building gathers together to individually answer a series of questions: how are you feeling at the beginning of the day? How do you want to feel at the end of the day? What can you use in your safety plan to accomplish this? Goals for the day are discussed, and each member is asked to identify who is present that can help them reach their goals if they need assistance. Another huddle takes place at the end of the day, where members debrief their accomplishments and how they feel emotionally.

**The Safety Plan.** To further encourage emotional intelligence and growth, every staff, volunteer, and youth are required to develop an individualized safety plan as a 3-point strategy for emotional management. Specifically, everyone writes on a piece of paper 3 "images" or activities that have an individualized calming effect. Every safety plan is different and personalized to individual needs. For example, a safety plan may be as simple as 1. deep breathing *or* praying, 2. picturing a peaceful place such as the beach *or* thinking of loved ones, and 3. taking a moment to stand up and stretch *or* go for a walk around the block. Everyone carries their safety plans in badge holders around their necks, and when staff or youth feel overwhelmed, frustrated or otherwise emotionally triggered, they are encouraged to turn to their safety plan to calm down and refocus. This tool is meant to create pause between heightened emotion and response.

**The Systems Check.** To create a culture of open communication and trust between staff, youth, leadership and even the board, HW utilizes systems checks. A system check is a tool used to confront a conflict or concern that needs to be addressed. Any person can call for one, be it a youth, a volunteer, or staff. It can take place between a small group of people, or it can be an organization wide systems check, requiring all members to participate in discussing a problem and strategizing a solution. This tool gives every person in the organization the power to deal with problems, creating an equal playing field that levels out structural hierarchy and encourages individual ownership of their part in the organization. For example, if a staff member or youth has a conflict or complaint with the organization director, the systems check creates a space for open communication.

**Self-Care.** Finally, while the previous tools serve to integrate the model into the organization in a structural way, a shift in organizational attitude has been implemented through the value of self-care. Self-care is systematized by each staff member working from home one day a week and taking the breaks and the time off that they need. More importantly, staff are now encouraged to set boundaries on their emotional responsibilities to the organization. Where staff formerly acted as rescuers to the youth, constantly putting out fires for the youth, today they have re-envisioned their positions as life-coaches and co-strategists with the youth. It is no longer their responsibility to solve youths' problems as much as help the youth strategize how to solve their own problems. While this structure does not negate staff from meeting their responsibilities and improving their performance, it creates a culture that acknowledges the limitations of every individual.



Table 3: Sanctuary Tools and Results

Pre Sanctuary Problems	Sanctuary Tools	Post Sanctuary Results
<input type="checkbox"/> Diminishing numbers <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of student enjoyment	<input type="checkbox"/> Huddle <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plan <input type="checkbox"/> Community of care	<input type="checkbox"/> Stabilized numbers <input type="checkbox"/> Full capacity <input type="checkbox"/> Improved efficiency <input type="checkbox"/> Increased student enjoyment
<input type="checkbox"/> Punitive environment <input type="checkbox"/> Mission-killing punishments <input type="checkbox"/> Poor treatment of youth (“why are you late?”)	Ask: “What happened, what can I do to help?” and “is this helping you reach your goals?”	<input type="checkbox"/> All youth accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgment of emotions
<input type="checkbox"/> Authoritarian leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Silencing of dissent <input type="checkbox"/> “Elephant in the room”	<input type="checkbox"/> Democratization of organization <input type="checkbox"/> Shared responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Change in leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Youth formations <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisory meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Happy staff <input type="checkbox"/> Lower burnout <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged youth
<input type="checkbox"/> Gossip <input type="checkbox"/> Venting <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict among staff/leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Systems checks <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly check-ins <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly staff meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Open communication <input type="checkbox"/> Direct problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency of problems
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff burnout <input type="checkbox"/> Work termination <input type="checkbox"/> Work resignation	<input type="checkbox"/> Systems check <input type="checkbox"/> Self-care <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Work from home <input type="checkbox"/> Needed time off <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional intelligence

## METHODOLOGY

This research employed a case study protocol<sup>20</sup> to examine how SM has affected HW. According to Yin, a case study protocol is suitable when the studied object presents unique features that are worthy of documentation as it allows for extensive descriptions to be provided. Indeed, our in-depth investigation into the organization includes particular aspects of the trauma-informed methodology as it was implemented in 2012, the change for the organization before and after implementation, challenges and weaknesses of the organization as a whole, and challenges of implementation.

This study moves beyond a program evaluation. It seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What did the time that led to trauma-informed care look like? What are characteristics of the period that predated SM?
2. What was the period of transition like?
3. What does it look like now, with SM firmly in place?
4. Can the recent success at HW be attributed to the integration of SM?

<sup>20</sup> Yin, Robert K.(1989). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

As the organization has historically recorded only limited demographic data on program outcomes, a full quantitative analysis of the organization was not possible. Alternatively, an in- depth, qualitative review was chosen as an appropriate methodological approach.

Primary and secondary data were collected to answer the research questions. The evaluation was conducted over the course of 4 months, during which time data were collected through participant observation, document review, focus groups, and in-depth interviews. In order determine the effects of the new organizational model, data and interviews addressed the time period prior to the model implementation, the time period during the implementation and the time period following the model's implementation. The qualitative software program NVivo facilitated the qualitative data analysis of all data elements collected.

## WHAT WE DISCOVERED: INTRODUCTION

The question of whether or not SM is the cause of HW's recent successes cannot be answered with a simple yes or no explanation. Instead, the answer is more easily understood by examining the nuanced process of the organization's adoption of, and commitment to, SM. This adoption and commitment creates and sustains an environment that captures the hearts of the youth participants. However, alternative explanations for the organization's success must be considered, as organizational, leadership and staff adjustments have been made simultaneously. In addition, it should be noted that the environment of welcome, encouragement and hope created by staff is not particularly unique to SM. Indeed, some HW participants experienced it prior to SM implementation. However, the ability of staff and youth to sustain such an environment has proven more successful with the implementation of SM.

In addition, and most tellingly, the ability to sustain such an environment for ALL youth attending HW seems to be dependent on SM values and related structure. In other words, while the prior organizational model at HW created opportunity and healing for particularly motivated youth, more problematic youth were less likely to succeed in the program. Conversely, SM values and tools create a safe space for failure and struggle, providing staff and youth the emotional and organizational tools to recover from failure, thus avoiding burnout and high youth attrition.

Our definition of success here is drawn from the available measured outcomes at HW, as well as the reported sustainability of participation among staff and youth. We specifically identify the following as indicators of success:

- program completion rates,
- number of educational and professional goals reached,
- reported emotional growth and satisfaction,
- staff and youth retention.

To more fully explore why and how SM has been an impetus for success at HW, the following section offers a descriptive narrative of this study's findings. By examining the major themes that emerged from interviews with past and present HW youth, staff, volunteers, and leadership, we discovered key insights into the strengths and weaknesses in the current practices.

## WHY THE SANCTUARY MODEL? A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS

Due in part to diverse funding sources and resulting robust funding stream, HW has not needed to track organizational data in depth. As a result, although we can draw information from past revenue amounts, participation rates, and completion rates, our analysis is limited to the years between 2008 and 2015. This analysis demonstrates a few key findings:

1. Fluctuations in revenue and staff salary allotment between 2010 and 2012,
2. A drastic increase in training completion rates from 2011 to 2012, but enrollment was down by 36% compared to previous years.

Enrollment rates, completion rates and revenue began to decrease between 2010 and 2011, which, as elucidated in graph 1, led to the hiring of new staff and the adoption of SM. It since has taken a few years to regain the number of enrollees; however, since 2012, a larger portion of youth are completing the program—a much larger portion, in fact, than pre-SM numbers. Records also indicate that the increase in salaries paid, caused by the addition of new managerial staff, coincided with the increase in youth completion rates.

\*It is also worth noting that the increase in revenue in 2012 was due to a large one-time grant.

Graph 1: staff salaries, 2008-2015 in USD



Graph 2: Total Revenue in USD. 2008-2014



Table 4: Annual Revenue by Type &amp; Salary and Wages Paid 2008-2014

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Grants/Gifts	565,438	819,756	734,995	609,510	996,483	637,654	864,564
Fundraising Events	102,835	99,613	109,105	132,356	302,573	149,171	93,005
Business	168,495	180,184	199,781	105,080	159,578	177,785	292,624
Investment Income	40,771	48,532	102,430	142,554	343,144	34,756	96,071
Federated Campaigns	64,953	44,000					
Gov. Grants		26,250					
Total	942,774	1,218,802	1,190,311	989,500	1,801,778	999,366	1,346,264
Salaries and wages paid	377,963	391,811	457,340	673,892	706,402	602,286	706,139
Staff #			New hires	New COO hired, C.R.I.B. built	9FT 4PT 2 fires, 3 quits, SM start, Danyelle hired	10FT 5PT 1fire, 2 quits, Jay hired	New Exec Director Kristen, Luis hired (Preston and Shane hired at end of year)

Table 5: 990 Tax form data. Youth Training Completion Rates, 2008 - Current

Fiscal Year	Training Completion Rate	Percentage Increase
2008	9.8	
2009	10.3	+5%
2010	11.1	+8%
2011	9.8	-1.3%
2012	18.3	+8.5%
2013	23.8	+5.5%
2014	26.8	+3%
2015	27.3	+5%
2016...	38.7	...

Graph 3: Youth completion rates between 2008-2015

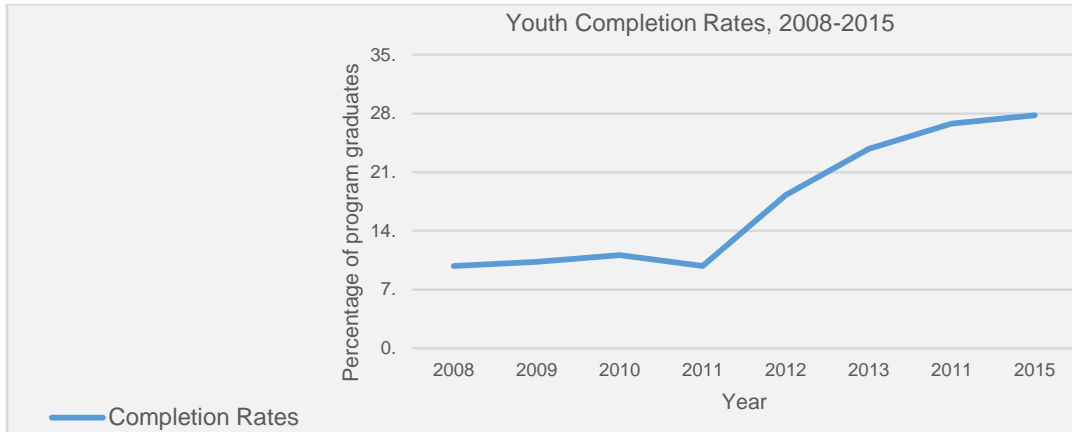
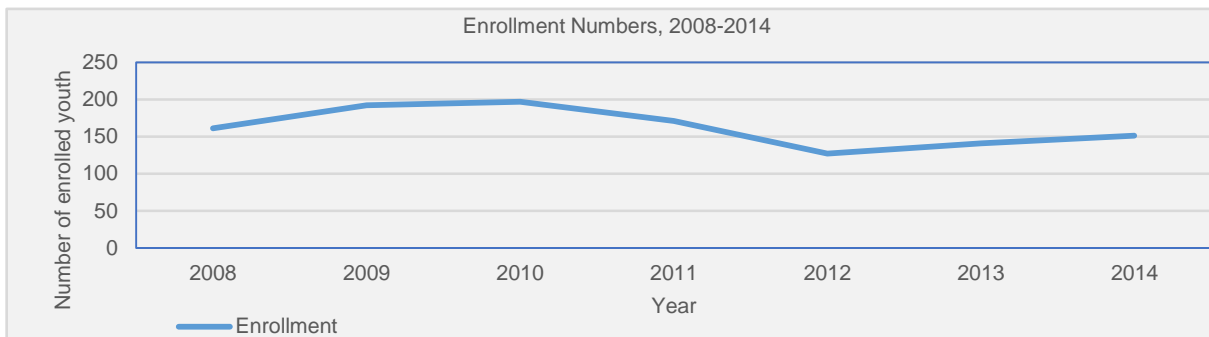


Table 6: Program enrollment by gender 2008-2016

Program	Gender	'08-'09	'09-'10	'10-'11	'11-'12	'12-'13	'13-'14	'14-'15	'15-'16 (to date)
HTS	Men	45	51	36	30	33	31	32	20
	Women	42	42	40	47	25	34	24	44
Day	Men	51	62	85	47	49	49	58	44
	Women	23	36	36	47	20	27	37	29
<b>Total</b>		161	192	197	171	127	141	151	

Graph 4: Program enrollment rates by year, 2008-2014



## ANALYSIS

All organizational data were triangulated with primary data attained through participant observation, interviews, and focus groups centered on the experience of HW participants before, during, and after the SM implementation, to better understand the fluctuations in inputs, participation and outcomes between 2010 and 2012.

### THEME #1: A LOOK AT HW PRIOR TO SM IMPLEMENTATION

**Finding:** Before SM implementation, factors external to HW played a large role in determining a youth's success in the program.

Over the decade that HW has been open, youth from all walks of life have benefitted from its programs. From web development training, to urban gardening, to international service learning, youth at HW have had opportunities that they would have never experienced without the dedication and hard work of the founders and staff. However, our research revealed that prior to implementing SM, external factors may have played a larger role in determining what youth succeeded at HW. This stands in stark contrast to our post-implementation findings, which suggest that SM has enabled HW to be successful with a greater proportion of youth, regardless of those youth's external circumstances.

In order to paint a full picture of HW prior to SM implementation, a brief snap shot of how youth experienced HW is helpful. Below are two stories of youth who attended HW before and after the SM implementation:

Tina\* was a Camden youth who had dropped out of high school. When she first came to HW, she had no job prospects and “absolutely nothing” to do. She joined HW in hopes of earning her GED. However, she struggled to stay engaged in the program. Although she remembered how she was excited to attend every day, once she was at HW she was uncomfortable, bored and unproductive. She felt staff were distant, disengaged, and somewhat unprofessional. In addition, she did not build friendships with other youth. Discouraged, Tina eventually stopped attending. However, after having her first child a few years later, Tina needed her GED and a job to support her family. She returned to HW after SM had been implemented for one year. The difference in her experience this second time around was astounding. She described the atmosphere at HW as fun and familial while maintaining professionalism, with staff and students highly engaged in her life inside and outside of HW. The assistance of HW staff in travel and safety was particularly important, as neighborhood safety in Camden had increasingly waned. She described the “grandmother-like” academic tutors as particularly encouraging. After earning her GED, this youth found a stable job and hopes to attend college once her child is older.

Tina's experience differed significantly from that of another youth, Cora\*. Cora's mother needed a safe place for her teens to spend the summer, so Cora and her siblings became regular summer attendees at HW. Cora loved everything about HW: the staff, the youth, the programs. Although she remembers the training presenting a challenge, she was highly motivated and became a youth leader, helping other youth through their training. Eventually, Cora interned at the local hospital. After moving away to attend college and earning her Bachelor's degree, Cora returned to HW as a part time staff member around the time HW implemented SM. She describes HW at the time as demanding but full of opportunities for learning and growth. The introduction of SM was viewed as positive and helpful, creating a leveling effect between staff and leadership and bringing cohesion and connection. Post-SM, Cora noticed increase satisfaction with the organization as compared to in the past.

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\* all names were changed to preserve anonymity of participants in this study

These two stories, paired with similar accounts in other interviews, suggest that factors external to the HW environment may have influenced youth perception of and success at HW prior to SM implementation. Parental support at home, neighborhood safety and city dynamics, school status, and family status may all be factors that influenced a young person's ability to succeed at HW. Tina's situation was directionless and absent of activity or hope of a future. The structure at HW prior to SM did not engage Tina enough to facilitate program completion. Cora, on the other hand, was actively attending school and had familial support. Her experience before and after SM implementation did not differ significantly.

**Finding:** While further research on youth background is needed to fully understand the implications of external factors on youth success at HW, our findings suggest that SM has created an atmosphere that enables success among a wider diversity of young people, despite their extenuating circumstance.

### **Pre-Sanctuary Model Implementation: Toxic stress and emotional depletion**

During 2010 and 2011, HW enrollment and completion rates had dropped, and the new student housing program, the C.R.I.B., struggled to retain youth residents at full capacity. Although the training programs functioned at partial capacity during this time, staff felt overwhelmed and burnt out. They reported dissatisfaction with leadership and contention between staff and management. In turn, an atmosphere of stress and emotional depletion was pervasive among the former staff we interviewed. Staff struggled to feel supported and enabled by the organization's structure, noting that the lack of trust between staff, top down management structure, and overwhelming work load inhibited their success. Leadership was described as unstable, inconsistent and unapproachable. At the same time, leadership became concerned with the increasingly punitive responses to youth that had developed among the staff.

In the midst of toxic stress and the pressure to improve programmatic outcomes, the culture at HW had become punitive and intolerant. Instead of bringing youth into the organization, disciplinary repercussions barred youth from moving forward or receiving the help they needed. For example, a youth who arrived to their training times late would be sent home and told to return when they were ready to be punctual. The tendency among the staff to blame each other—either leadership, management, or other staff—for difficulty was then reproduced in staff/youth relationships. Youth were blamed for their failures. This hard line tactic used to teach responsibility did not lead to youth success but instead led to loss of attendees.

At the urging of staff and leadership, the board of directors began searching for a solution to HW struggles.

What was effective?

- Although some youth fell through the cracks before SM, the youth who were able to succeed noted the love and care of the staff.
- Extra-curricular programs, such as the opportunities to travel to Mexico and Washington DC for community service related projects, or holiday events, were a favorite among past youth. These extra programs created a feeling of community.

What was not effective?

- Punitive systems for youth who struggled to perform,
- expectations of staff to “rescue” struggling youth,
- authoritarian leadership styles and micro-management techniques.



## THEME #2: IMPLEMENTATION OF SM

**Finding:** SM requires committed “buy-in” from key staff; not all participants will be able to adapt to SM.

One of the important findings in our investigation is that SM implementation requires a full buy-in and commitment by leadership and key staff. Instituting SM as the basis for a new culture at HW was a difficult transition. As SM was introduced to address toxic stress and organizational turmoil, it arrived during a time when many staff were on the edge of burnout. In turn, staff struggled to fully adopt the additional responsibility of model and cultural change on top of their already full workload. The model’s implementation meant addressing the sensitive tensions and conflicts that often cause burnout. For some staff, the change arrived too late in the burnout process. Others considered relational conflict among the staff as beyond the scope of SM: these staff questioned whether or not personnel change would better serve HW than a cultural shift. As a result, HW experienced a large staff turnover during the period of SM implementation, through both forced and voluntary staff departure.

Indeed, many at HW struggled to implement SM values and tools in their everyday work life, as it required addressing personal habits and mindsets. For example, while staff encouraged youth to examine their histories for explanations of their current behavior, many reported that staff did not consider their own histories of trauma when confronting their own conflicts in the organization. In addition, it took time for staff to cultivate empathy for youth instead of reactively blaming or shaming youth when confronting their shortcomings and mistakes. Perhaps most importantly, changing the staff’s former position as rescuer of the youth, as opposed to SM value of mentor and colleague to youth, took time.

During the transition, staff also struggled to consistently implement the model with the youth. This was in part due to the workload and level of burnout that staff were experiencing at the time. SM brought additional requirements, activities and processes that were time consuming. For example, all supervisors had a once a week supervision requirement to meet with the staff or youth under them. This proved difficult at first, and meetings occurred closer to once a month. The inconsistency and lack of follow-through in the midst of continual crisis management left many staff feeling like SM was burdensome: one more thing they did not have time to implement.

Although leadership played a primary role in bringing SM to HW, they struggled to trust the staff with delegated responsibility. This is an integral part of SM framework: a more democratic form of leadership, open communication and trust for one another are required to create a safe and vulnerable space for growth and change. Although many of the divisions between staff and leadership were diminished through SM restructuring, leadership change had to occur to successfully implement SM.

The variable of staff turnover and leadership change is important to note, as it suggests an alternative to our argument that SM has enabled HW to succeed and remain sustainable. Indeed, the following account of how the staff and youth experience HW today attributes much of the organization’s success to SM. However, with only a handful of staff continuing through the implementation process until today, we cannot know which of the problems previously encountered were the result of particular staffing personalities and which resulted from toxic stress. Either way, SM has proven to be highly a successful organizational model at HW today.

What was effective?

- Bringing in new staff: new hires brought fresh perspective and much needed energy to the organization—for both youth and existing staff,
- being heard: staff expressed the relief and strength that came with the spaces for listening and hearing created by SM.

What was not effective?

- Timing: SM introduction came too late for many staff, who had already experienced burnout and were not able to adopt the model,
- staff-leader relationships struggled to adjust to the requirements of SM. Keeping present staff and leadership was not always successful, as not all participants could properly adjust to the new model.

### THEME #3: POST IMPLEMENTATION

Although the implementation of SM is a long-term and ongoing process, HW participants have become well versed in the pillars, values, and tools of the new organizational structure. The model permeates all parts of daily activities, and each participant recognizes the model's importance in their personal and professional lives. In the following three sections, we turn to how HW functions within SM structure today. Part one has an overview of how the model creates a sustainable environment for HW staff and volunteers. How SM affects youth participants at HW is described in part two. Finally, the third part of this section examines how relationships are shaped and influenced under SM structure.

## PART 1: STAFF AND THE SANCTUARY MODEL

Summary of Section Findings:

**Finding:** While staff communicated differing levels of involvement with SM in their daily work lives, the commitment to Sanctuary by key staff creates a culture that inadvertently forces everyone to adopt SM values.

**Finding:** As a result of SM strategies for addressing burnout, all staff report remarkable satisfaction with their jobs. Even in the midst of problems, transition, and growth, staff feel thankful to have a workplace that has open communication, reliable structure, and supportive top leadership.

**Finding:** While current leadership highlights the need for democratic management in order to avoid a singular personality run organization, the tendency to ascribe the recent successes to the current executive director is still prevalent among HW staff. On the other hand, while the youth hold all of the leadership in high praise, they take more personal ownership of their success within the organization.

**Finding:** Despite the strong volunteer involvement, staff has found that it is difficult for short term volunteers to fully understand SM and how it works at HW.

HW staff work in a physical and emotional environment where there are little boundaries between staff and youth. The organization's building has no space for individual offices, staff lounges, or places to "escape" and be alone. Due to programming structure, work days are long, with staff arriving by 9am and finishing around 6pm. In light of this intensive environment, staff sustainability has become a primary goal of SM at HW. Structures have been implemented to sustain longevity and satisfaction among staff, and those structures tend to address the following processes:

1. How staff view students and therefore their responsibility to the students
2. How staff take care of themselves in the midst of their work
3. How the relationship is managed between staff and leadership
4. How buy in from key staff creates environment for growth
5. How volunteers invest in SM

## 1. HOW STAFF VIEW STUDENTS: ELIMINATING THE TRAUMA TRIANGLE

The most profound change brought about the SM has been a shift in how HW staff frame their perception of the youth. When asked what SM is at its core, staff referred to the question that frames their approach to youth development: “What happened?”. Behind the “What happened” question lies the assumption that when we act in a way that appears counterproductive, there is often a past experience that has taught us to react that way. Staff see youth as acting within a personal history of trauma that influences how they respond today. When they ask “what happened”, they avoid the common accusation of “what is wrong with you?”. In this way, the youth’s action is viewed not as a threat or a flaw, but as a logical outcome of individualized experience. “What happened” avoids pointing the finger at the youth as someone who is “wrong”; but is instead experiencing hardship and reacting accordingly. Once the root of those actions is identified, youth and staff can work to adjust their behavior to help them accomplish their goals. Most importantly, the goal is to help youth recognize their own trauma and begin to heal from it.

This shift from “what is wrong with you” to “what happened to you” reframes the staff/youth relationship as staff approach their own reactions similarly. Staff recognize that their own actions are steeped in a history with its own sets of trauma. This recognition places staff in the same developmental arena as youth: the assumption is that everyone needs to address their individual trauma. This leveling effect creates empathetic ties in staff/youth interactions, creating a platform of mutual understanding from which to work through problems. It also works to reduce the punitive reactions, blaming, and intolerance that the HW community experienced during times of toxic stress.

Most importantly, the trauma informed care model relieves staff of the responsibility of solving the youth’s problems. Healing from past trauma, and dealing with the consequences of how that trauma is actualized in everyday life, is not forced through punitive or disciplinary action on the part of the staff. Instead, healing must be owned by the individual, with staff playing the role of facilitator and advisor. This adjustment in perspective is enormously important in care work, as the weight and responsibility to fix youth’s problems are no longer placed on the staff. Instead of staff swooping in to rescue a youth in the midst of very real and very troubling life circumstance, staff work alongside the youth to strategize reasonable solutions. SM addresses the trauma triangle of victim, persecutor, and rescuer by forcing care workers to see problems as a result of individualized trauma that cannot be healed by simply fixing one of the problems.

Instead of staff acting as rescuers of youth who are experiencing a reaction that is rooted in past trauma, they act as facilitators who help youth identify and address the reenactment process. This comes out in the way staff speak and interact with youth. Instead of accusing youth, being punitive, or judging youth as falling short of their expectation, staff use language that places the responsibility of action on the youth. When a youth is struggling to meet goals, staff ask “what is your plan” instead of “you need to do this”. If youth struggle to come up with a plan, staff ask “do you want me to suggest something?”. The responsibility for changing the outcome then is not on the staff but on the youth. Although it takes time to master this relationship with the youth, it allows staff to remain emotionally and professionally sustainable in the organization.

This SM perspective on care relationships is not foolproof, but it has allowed HW staff to avoid burnout in the last few years. While staff admit that they still struggle, that they still experience stress, disappointment and hurt in their relationships with the youth, they report remarkable abilities to cope by drawing from the set of SM tools, such as self-care, to address those reactions.

## 2. SELF-CARE AS PRIORITY

In order to avoid the burnout that is common in care work organizations, HW uses SM tools to create a system of self-care among the staff. Self-care at HW is based on the idea that staff as individuals have a limit to what they can handle, and they need to take care of themselves for their work to be sustainable over time. Staff employ a number of strategies to accomplish this. Using SM tools like safety plans, staff work to identify their emotional state and deal with daily stresses. While the programming structure and physical space at HW does not allow for alone time while at work, the ability to mitigate stress is particularly important. When staff are feeling overwhelmed or frustrated, they have the tool of the systems check to ask for help from other staff or superiors. This type of open communication is both invited and expected by leadership. While the open communication does not necessarily lead to an alleviation of duties, it creates a support system.

Self-care also takes place in the form of time-off from work. When staff are feeling particularly in need of a break, they are allotted retreat days, or structured time to spend focused on rejuvenation. In addition, staff described times when personal issues, such as a death in their family, required them to take time off. Leadership is supportive and flexible in these times. However, while this flexibility is helpful, there is not a system in place to fully relieve staff of their responsibilities when they take time off. For example, when a business staff may need to take unexpected time off, they are still responsible for meeting their revenue goals for the month. So while this flexibility in time allows for individualized self-care, the work-load continues to be intense.

Finally, in order for staff to complete the administrative work that they do not always have the space or time to complete at the HW training center, youth development staff work from home one day a week. This allows them to step away from the building, focus on weekly tasks, and manage their own lives more carefully. While this arrangement requires staff who remain at the HW center to take over additional duties, the staff see it as a worthwhile way to stay on top of their work and take care of themselves.

## 3. STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN SUPERVISION

SM values of democratic leadership, transparency and open communication within supervision and management structure have facilitated an environment for healthy staff relationships. Since the model's implementation, HW has restructured its management to facilitate communication between leadership and staff often and comfortably. On top of staff meetings and monthly training times, every staff person, from youth interns to the executive director, meets with their supervisor on a weekly basis to go over their goals for the week, address needs, and discuss any problems that have arisen. It is expected that staff are open and communicative with their supervisors, sharing concerns as they arise.

This open communication leads to strong relationships and a more productive workplace. Staff gratefully pointed out the lack of gossip that existed among them, remarking how different their communication is from past work place experiences. The formations director, who acts as a life coach and advisor to the youth, mentioned often having the opportunity to act as a sound board for staff struggling through an issue. While staff go to each other for support, the access to leadership and other staff helps them avoid negative talk. When discussing the problems that still exist at HW, staff remarked over and over again that all of the problems are common knowledge, openly discussed with leadership on a regular basis. The ability to approach the director with transparency was mentioned by almost all staff members as a valuable part of staff happiness.

This transparency is reinforced and exemplified throughout the organization as well. In the huddle, staff are encouraged to be vulnerable, honestly communicating their needs and goals for the day to other staff and to youth. In addition, systems checks are regularly used to confront issues between staff or between staff and youth. There are set rules for systems check, requiring “I feel” statements, addressing body language, and using safety plans to avoid triggering moments during a systems check. In this way, open communication is partnered with emotional responsibility and mutual respect as a means to addressing problems.

#### 4. BUY-IN BY KEY STAFF FOSTERS A SUCCESSFUL SM ENVIRONMENT

**Finding:** While staff communicated differing levels of involvement with SM in their daily work lives, the commitment to Sanctuary by key staff created a culture that inadvertently forces everyone to grow and adopt SM values.

Staff in different departments implemented SM tools to varying degrees. Some were well versed in the ethos and language of SM, having spent considerable time implementing the values and tools into their daily practices. Others, however, reported less of a concentrated focus on the model, and they only selectively utilized the tools and strategies in their daily routines. Despite the variation in tool adoption, the pervasiveness of SM culture among a quorum of staff has led to the adoption of SM values by all participants.

For example, one business staff, who did not feel confident in their explanation of SM values, demonstrated the effects of working in an SM environment. When discussing personal hurdles at work, s(he) says

“Initially, my reaction would just be to like: Oh god, this is too hard. I don’t know what to do. I’m just going to freak out and wait for someone to come help me. And now I’ve kind of been like: even if this is really hard and I have no idea what I’m doing, it’s just going to be waiting for me until I get it done, so it’s a short freak out...even when I’m freaking out, it’s still going to be there. So I can skip the freak out and then just kind of, like, just try your best. Just start trying stuff; in an hour, [his/her supervisor] would be here so you can ask him questions...”

By recognizing his/her emotional patterns of past “freak outs”, and adjusting his/her thinking and actions accordingly, this staff embodied the emotional management and de-escalation tools promoted by SM.

**Finding:** As a result of these strategies for addressing burnout, all staff report remarkable satisfaction with their jobs. Even in the midst of problems, transition, and growth, staff feel thankful to have a workplace that has open communication, reliable structure, and supportive superiors.

Staff report fulfillment in the work that they do, even in the midst of struggle. Interestingly, staff also report the benefits SM has had on their personal lives. When they are done at the end of the day, staff go home without feeling an overload of stress. They also bring SM tools home to their marriages and children. The general consensus is that the SM has allowed a naturally hectic and stressful environment to become manageable, enjoyable, and sustainable. This, of course, differs drastically from pre-SM days, when staff were overwhelmed, unhappy, in conflict, and making themselves ill from the stress that their jobs created.

For many staff who have worked in youth organizations for years, SM offered a welcomed way to address the root causes of trauma. SM came as a relief to burnout, a relief to penalizing youth, and a way to acknowledge the hardships youth in Camden go through without blaming the youth for their failures. One staff noted that they had been looking for a way to address the root causes of the problem instead of always putting out fires and dealing with crisis. HW is described as the opposite of authoritarian or “top-down”. They describe it as a place to restore dignity to youth instead of stripping them of it. SM perspective of every individual having their own personal history was seen as giving dignity back to not only the youth, but also to the staff. They are no longer a “worker bee who has to

put out everybody's fires and fix everybody's problems". Instead, they were also individuals with personal histories of trauma that are acknowledged. This is actualized through the priority of self care. It is actualized through the feeling of mutual participation from all staff as co-builders in the organization. The priority has shifted towards creating a feeling of safety for yourself in HW.

**Finding:** While current leadership highlights the need for democratic management in order to avoid a singular personality run organization, the tendency to ascribe the recent successes to the current executive director is still prevalent among HW staff. Interestingly, while the youth hold all of the leadership in high praise, they take more personal ownership of their success within the organization. While they acknowledge and appreciate HW staff as part of their success at HW, youth refer to their own actions and decisions as the primary predictor of their accomplishments.

## 5. HOW VOLUNTEERS INTERACT WITH SM

The access to outside volunteers is one of HW's strengths. There are several dedicated volunteers working with youth on a daily basis. Many of these volunteers have participated in HW for more than a year. A small handful of volunteers have been participating since the early years of the organization. Long-term volunteers have an in-depth grasp of what SM is and how trauma affects everyone in the program. These committed volunteers were able to describe SM root principles, and they gave examples of their own histories and traumas to describe and compare to the lives of the youth. Thus informed, they have been able to recognize the injustices that youth face in comparison to their own privileged backgrounds. This process makes these committed volunteer invaluable to HW, as they act as pseudo staff members, providing support to youth and staff.

**Finding:** Despite the strong volunteer involvement, staff has found that it is difficult for short-term volunteers to fully understand the SM and how it works at HW. There is a need for a more consistent or strategic training program for these volunteers. Similarly, staff struggle to implement SM values among youth who only attend the program for short lengths of time. Strategies and plans for facilitating a deeper understanding of SM among temporary participants in needed.

What is effective?

- Staff appreciate the open and honest communication. They are not afraid of gossip, reputation, or ego. They trust and depend on their co-workers, and they are invested in each other's growth.
- Staff feel very satisfied with their jobs. While they acknowledge the issues they still face, they have confidence in the future of their jobs.
- Staff feel affective. They believe in the work they are doing.

What is not effective?

- Not all staff are as actively engaged in SM as others.
- The Safety Plan: everyone said they were supposed to have their safety plan on them, but hardly any of them did.
- Feeling overwhelmed with the amount of work they need to accomplish: most staff said they have more work than they can complete in a day.
- Personality led organization: HW is at risk of becoming successful because of the leadership personalities. Should the directors or head staff leave, will HW be able to sustain SM?

- Short-term volunteers and short-term youth are not fully grasping SM values or culture in the short time they participate.

## PART 2: HOW CURRENT YOUTH EXPERIENCE SM

Summary of section findings:

**Finding:** Youth tend to selectively implement SM tools, picking and choosing what tools work for them.

**Finding:** Many youth express SM values indirectly and practice them unknowingly.

**Finding:** This internalization seems to be created through an immersion into SM culture at HW. They describe HW as a safe, warm and welcoming environment where youth take ownership of the space.

The values and culture of SM are reflected in actions of the youth, both explicitly and implicitly. While youth are able to identify the tools of SM as useful within the organization and their private lives, they do not often verbally relate SM tools to their own trauma experiences. However, when discussing their current emotional hardships and traumatic reenactments, they demonstrate emotional intelligence and describe personal growth that reflects their immersion in SM culture. During interviews, youth regularly attributed their personal growth to the values, skills and techniques learned through the HW SM. The following sections describe:

### 1. How youth understand and interpret SM

### 2. How SM creates a safe place for youth

## HOW YOUTH UNDERSTAND AND INTERPRET SM

When asked to describe SM and trauma-informed care, youth refer to it as a coping mechanism that helps everyone through their professional day. One youth explained that because so many different people come together to work in the same place, trauma-informed care is needed to help get through their individual personal challenges in the workplace:

*“...you’re dealing with different people and different personalities. You never know what you’re going to get, so you have to approach that situation understanding that people might need trauma care to cope—period. Because at the end of the day, they’re going through things at home and when you come to a place trusting that they’re going to get you a future, you have to, like, give them tools to cope. Because a lot of people don’t have that out there.”*

Other youth view SM as a strategy for successful collaboration with others. SM tools, such as the huddle, allow them to understand how another person feels or what their mindset is in a given day. In turn, youth report reacting to another’s actions with empathy and patience. Finally, many see SM simply as a supportive community that helped people get out of their comfort zone and complete their training in a professional manner.

Upon initial introduction to SM, most youth remember feeling skeptical or uncomfortable with the daily tools. For example, many initially doubted the effectiveness of the safety plan. Other youth expressed discomfort with the huddle upon arrival at HW, thinking how odd it was that the entire community shared their emotions with each other. However, after experiencing SM tools and practices first-hand, youth easily admitted how effective they have been in their own lives.



**Finding:** Interestingly, youth tend to selectively implement SM tools, picking and choosing what tools work for them. For example, many saw the safety plan as a tool used by people with bad tempers instead of a tool to help create a feeling of safety when experiencing any range of emotions. A number of youth said things like “I haven’t had to use mine in a while” or “I lost mine” about the safety plans. By far the most favored SM tool among youth is the huddle. In fact, while all members participate in the huddle, those that have been in the organization longer see their role in the huddle as more of a listener than a sharer. Staff confirmed that youth selectively use SM tools according to individual personality, perceived need, and length of time at HW. Despite their selectivity with tools, youth demonstrate SM values as they are increasingly immersed in trauma-informed care.

**Finding:** Many youth express SM values indirectly and practice them unknowingly. For example, many youth express personal struggles that reflect emotional trauma. However, they do not always acknowledge their SM training as a means to deal with those struggles. One particular youth did not envision SM tools or values as useful for these emotional experiences; yet, in the same breath, this youth brought forth insightful analysis that reflect her SM training:

*“When I first did the tours I was a nervous wreck. [Now] it has built confidence. Before here I didn’t have much confidence, ‘cuz my family wasn’t so supportive, but here everyone was so supportive. I’ve built more confidence.”*

Here, this youth connects their lack of confidence to their lack of familial support. This insight is exactly the type of emotional intelligence SM is intended to create. While youth do not always see themselves as necessarily engaging in SM tools or values, they reflect them as they discuss their progress, place, and success at HW.

## HOW SM CREATES A SAFE PLACE FOR YOUTH

**Finding:** The internalization of SM values and growth is created through an immersion into HW as a safe place. They describe HW as a safe, warm, and welcoming environment where youth take ownership of the space. It is a place where adults are available to be encouraging and directive, without telling them what to do. HW is a place where anyone can come, be accepted, and experience safety:

*“The support you get—you come here and everyone is available, if you don’t want to talk to one person you can talk to another person. Community”.*

*“At first I was shy, but now [I know] a lot of staff and trainees. If you don’t have no friends, you can come and start making friends.”*

*“Internships, training, also how they have formation and the huddle—all that intertwines to make almost a therapeutic environment.”*

*“This is like a dream job—support structure—having this type of community, support is like a safety net. Such a nice atmosphere. The people do care and will do the best to help you.”*

Even when discussing the building itself, youth describe it as a home, with a comforting atmosphere that would not exist in an office type of building. They discussed their ability to utilize different rooms in order to meet their different emotional needs or daily goals. They even expressed that they would prefer a new building to be a bigger home rather than an office building.

This welcoming environment is often initially encountered as uncomfortable, strange or weird. Feelings like shyness, boredom, or skepticism dominated youth upon initially starting at HW. Some felt so uncomfortable they planned on not returning, but the friendliness of the atmosphere kept them going. Others said that the unfamiliarity of a supportive environment (as compared to their unsupportive home/community life) felt strange and foreign. However, the openness of the huddle, the acceptance of individual’s dreams, and the support to reach those dreams made youth keep coming back.

*“When I first got here it was really interesting. It was different than I was used to: it was welcoming, very very welcoming, which actually made me uncomfortable, and I wasn’t really used to that. You come here to work and do the training, but everyone is so happy. Dan was so excited and happy.”*

The receptiveness of the leadership/staff creates an environment of comfort and warmth among incoming youth. Many expressed surprise at the level of joy and happiness that accompanies staff as well as youth at HW. Youth often pointed out the happiness and excitement exuded by Dan and Dannyelle specifically. They are seen as passionately encouraging, happy and loving. Youth were able to identify specific instances where they felt personally cared for as individuals, not only one of a group, without feeling parented.

This feeling of home is deeply internalized in many youth’s minds, and a feeling of jealous protection over HW was pervasive in the focus groups. When asked if they told others about the organization, youth acknowledged that while they did, they are not quick to tell just anyone. Instead, they viewed HW as their own safe space that they could invite only the most trusted of friends for participation. They analogized HW as something like their 4th grade clubhouse: exclusive and protected from outsiders. One youth called HW a hidden gem not to be shared with just anybody. When explaining how they felt about sharing HW with his wider community, one youth explained that “...this is my house, and I don’t tolerate disrespect”. When asked why they had these reservations, they recalled that the sanctuary tools used to create empathy and mutual understanding about each other also create vulnerability. This type of vulnerability requires a safe place, where all participants learn the tools that help avoid disrespect. They also mention the familial feeling within the organization, a cultural dynamic that creates a safe space for creating expression and mutual inspiration in their creative pursuits.

## PART 3: RELATIONSHIPS AT HOPEWORKS

Summary of Section Findings:

**Finding:** Interestingly, the environment of grace and warmth created by staff is reflected in the dynamics between youth as well.

**Finding:** Youth and staff relationships have created an understanding of mutual respect and trust.

**Finding:** While youth feel supported and encouraged by staff, the struggle to produce in the midst of their own trauma was a source of stress for youth. There was frustration and a feeling of being misunderstood or disrespected when staff would not let up on the youth who was falling behind due to external hardships.

As discussed under theme #3 Post-Implementation Part 1.3, SM values and tools have restructured the way staff relate to other staff. Similarly, youth report and demonstrate relating to other youth and staff through a lens of empathy and mutual respect. For many youth, this type of relationship building was unexpected upon their entrance to HW. To the contrary, many youth were surprised at the welcoming relationships offered by both staff and youth.

The following sections take a brief look at how SM plays a role in how youth relate to both staff and to each other.

### 1. How youth relate to each other

### 2. How youth relate to staff

## HOW YOUTH RELATE TO EACH OTHER

**Finding:** The environment of grace and warmth created by staff is reflected in the dynamics between youth as well. Relationships are seen as an open and available part of HW. It is a place to make friends and to build familial type of group relationships that help youth grow professionally. During the focus groups, youth demonstrated mature group dynamics that gave each individual room to express themselves. For example, during one group meeting, a particular youth dominated the discussion in a distracting way. In response to interruptions, although there was a slight air of annoyance, the group kept the disruptive youth accountable to sharing the public space through friendly reminders, jokes, or directive glances. In turn, the disruptive youth became aware of his faults, acknowledged them to the group in a light-hearted way, and worked to open the floor for others to comment.

In addition to mitigating negative behavior, the youth in the focus group also encouraged positive behavior among each other. They gave each other compliments, injected praise when a youth was being modest, and gracefully assisted in explanations when a youth struggled to express themselves. For example, when one youth struggled to fully communicate how he felt about a particular topic, one or two other youth would chime in and ask the struggling youth questions, elaborate on his comments, or offer their own perspective on the matter. While the focus group was structured in a relaxed and informal manner, their social dynamics revealed a culture of mutual appreciation, individual importance, and democratic participation.

Youth credit SM tools when they discuss relationship dynamics at HW. The focus group identified the huddle, in particular, as a time that created empathy and patience between the youth. The act of sharing one's emotions to the group within the context of a culture that attributes emotions and reactions to something that happened, either presently or in the past, allowed youth to avoid harsh judgment and cultivate patience. SM tools offer a type of insular process for practicing safe, encouraging and respectful relationships. A systems check is available for conflict management, the huddle acts as a sharing space that creates vulnerability and trust, and the safety plan teaches appropriate emotional reactions between individuals. By adopting SM tools and values, youth learn the tools they need to build safe relationships.

## HOW YOUTH RELATE TO STAFF

Youth view staff as friendly co-collaborators and respected authorities in their work at HW. They describe the balance between staff as friends and caregivers and staff as professionals with a particular purpose. Youth acknowledge that the presence of staff is necessary to help the youth remain focused, but they also appreciate that staff engage in fun-loving, goof-off times with the youth. When asked about the role of staff, youth describe staff as co-laborers in a joint project of creative production. They set the standard by running the business side of HW, while youth are the ones who do the work. Teasing, one youth remarked that staff "clean up our creative messes". Youth feel that they, too, are basically like staff. They consider their positions as interns, trauma care trainers, and tour guides as equally important to the functioning of the organization.

**Finding:** Youth and staff relationships have created an understanding of mutual respect and trust. Youth do not feel judged by staff. Quite conversely, they feel respected by staff and, in turn, reciprocate that respect for the staff. Comparing the staff to outside authority figures at work or at school, youth see HW staff as working for the good of the youth, instead of seeking their own interests. Youth recognize the desire and efforts of staff to help youth succeed. One youth described this reciprocal process: "I think the fact that they actually respect us makes you want to respect them". This respect is established as staff have high expectations for youth without placing overwhelming pressure on them to succeed. They simply expect that the youth will do what they need to do. This trust, in turn, creates mutual trust and respect.

**Finding:** This is not to say there is no contention between youth and staff. While youth feel supported and encouraged by staff, the struggle to produce in the midst of their own trauma can be a source of stress for youth. There can be frustration and a feeling of being misunderstood or disrespected when staff do not let up on the youth for falling behind due to external hardships. While staff offer a sympathetic ear to complaints, they also insist that youth continue in their work despite their complaints of mental, physical, and/or emotional disabilities.

A parallel process is occurring with the business staff but with different attitudes (see below). Staff have the desire to produce and do well, and they understand the need to reach their “numbers” despite the limitations of the organization. While staff appreciate SM as a tool to communicate and work through this stress, SM itself is not a solution to the pressure to produce. Similarly, youth feel the stress of producing in the midst of their trauma and self-limitations. However, some of them fail to recognize how that is connected to past trauma, and how SM tools can be used as a way to work through that stress.

What is effective?

- The huddle: each youth mentioned the huddle as key to their understanding of SM and their ability to work well in the organization. It creates a space for developing empathy and therefore patience, understanding, support and productivity.
- Community: youth have ownership of HW. They feel like it is theirs. They create relationships that they describe as familial.
- A feeling of safety and support: youth feel supported by staff and peers. They see HW as a safe environment where vulnerability, mistakes, and emotions are accepted and not judged.
- Inspiring confidence: youth feel more open, less shy, like better communicators, like they have a voice, like they can do something with their future.
- Creating opportunity: youth come to HW because they want something to do. They want to feel inspired. They want to make money and be productive. They want housing and an opportunity to go the school. HW provides these things.

What is not effective?

- Although youth readily identify and acknowledge how trauma-informed care helps them build empathy and understanding with those around them—allowing them to recognize external struggles that may be causing a peer to have issues or be difficult—youth did not directly identify past trauma as the core of the issue. While staff discuss trauma as something from the present *or* past that may be influencing ones current actions, the topic of recognizing past trauma and how that connects to current reactions was mostly absent from the youths’ descriptions and experiences with trauma-informed care or HW in general. The idea that the abuse a youth experienced as a child can cause her to get angry anytime someone ignores them, for example, has not been intellectually understood.
- The safety plan: for the most part, the youth we talked with see the safety plan as a way to deal with anger. While many use it, some youth abandoned their safety plan because they do not necessarily need anger management. When it came to emotions like depression, anxiety, or sadness, they did not reference the safety plan as a useful tool.

Recommendations:

- Develop a new way to explain the usefulness of the safety plan as something beyond dealing with anger.

- Develop a tool that helps participants recall, track or visualize their emotional growth.
- Integrate personal histories into the trauma informed methodology: develop a tool that helps participants connect their past to their present.

## PART 4: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

1. How does SM sustain workforce development?
2. Clarity of mission and goals in business development and internships: outcomes or outputs?

### HOW DOES SM SUSTAIN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT?

**Finding:** HW approach to workforce development is more sustainable within the SM culture.

**Finding:** Even with higher standards in the internship programs, the support created by SM culture enables success.

**Finding:** As a result of the training structure, youth report growth and empowerment.

**Finding:** HW approach to workforce development has become more effective within the SM framework. Upon entering HW, youth are trained in SM tools and values at the same time that they learn the soft and hard skills of job training. During this training process, staff and youth utilize SM tools to confront the difficulties inherent in the workforce training process. Since the introduction of SM, more youth have completed their initial training, completed internships, and moved on to acquire jobs outside of HW. This success has been realized and sustained because of the implementation of SM.

SM creates a framework for succeeding within HW training programs. For most youth, HW training is their first exposure to a professional environment. The basic skills of punctuality, appropriate communication, and productivity are hard won through practice, failure and second chances. SM culture of safety allows youth and staff to view failures as learning experiences rather than missed opportunities or penalties. For example, staff utilize the approach of “what happened” when youth fail to meet training requirements. Paired with the life-coach strategizing, this framework allows youth to repeatedly fail while providing them with the tools to try again. For example, if a youth struggles to complete a project due to anxiety, staff will help them strategize ways to alleviate anxiety, utilize SM tools, and create a plan for future success. While internships require higher standards, the initial training program is able to train greater numbers of youth utilizing SM values and tools.

**Finding:** The support created by SM culture facilitates successful internships. Staff who oversee the internships in HW business departments report that without the tools and values of SM, their work as professional mentors and revenue producers would be next to impossible. These staff are incredibly appreciative of the parts of the organization that work to instill SM culture into the youth, as they do not have the capacity to train youth in both business training and SM training. Of course, when issues do arise with youth, internship staff feel equipped to use SM tools to help the youth through their professional difficulties.

**Finding:** As a result of the training structure, youth report growth and empowerment. Youth describe their training time as confidence building. Many report that they were shy, unsure, and quiet at the beginning of their training. One described himself as “a nervous wreck”. These same youth report that by the time they reached their internships, they were “louder”, more confident, and more capable. They reported feeling that they had something to offer. Almost all youth interns report feeling more confident in their communication skills. Importantly, they report

an increased knowledge and confidence about how to move forward professionally. Networking, resume building, and realization of strengths and potential are all outcomes they ascribe to the training and internships programs.

#### CLARITY OF MISSION AND GOALS IN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNSHIPS: OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS?

**Finding:** A clarification in mission and goals is needed within the business development programs.

**Finding:** A prioritization of outputs or outcomes in the business departments is needed.

**Finding:** Stress caused by duality in outcome goals is felt by the rest of the organization.

Despite its success in training interns, HW business department faces challenges that have carried over from before the implementation of SM. Prior to and during the implementation of SM, the business development department struggled to retain staff. Staff burnout and turn over occurred frequently. While the problem was partially due to personality conflicts and lack of management structures, the business model HW employs is particularly challenging in the midst of high demand and limited resources. As discussed above, while SM enables staff to work through these challenges in a productive way, impediments remain.

**Finding:** In particular, a clarification in mission and goals is needed for the business development programs. There is a tension within the work of the business staff between the goals of building successful, quality businesses that financially support HW as an organization versus the goals of training youth in workforce skills. Specifically, their dual roles as business managers *and* intern trainers create a strain on their ability to commit their full attention to either role. It is their responsibility to develop their branch of HW as a professional business that is both accessible to outside clients and meeting revenue goals each month. At the same time, these staff train youth interns for their particular business area. The two roles are often filled by only a single staff member.

The amount of intern training is particularly intensive for the GIS and Salesforce business departments. While the web development interns have received basic skills through the training program completed upon entry to HW, interns in the GIS and Salesforce departments have not been introduced to the respective software. Therefore, directors of these branches must take time to train youth from scratch. This creates a tension in resources, as time, personnel and finances are limited.

The duality of HW business model has left staff feeling overwhelmed. HW business departments are typically manned by only one staff director, who often has to choose between producing quality deliverables to his clients or providing a quality training opportunity for youth interns. In addition, staff build the business branches as a means to pay their salaries; however, they are not compensated for their time training youth. This, again, leads to a conflict in focus: staff desire to provide the highest quality training they can for the youth, but they are pulled away from this goal by their business responsibilities.

Indeed, some staff express frustration at the lack of resources available to train the youth to the level they would like. They note the need for more time working with youth interns if they are to truly prepare them for entry-level jobs in these software based fields. The youths' lack of knowledge on business principles and basic economics also inhibits skill building during the internship. Staff must take time to teach basic business principles and professional conduct, which takes away from their time to equip youth in marketable software skills.

While staff appreciate SM culture that provides open communication and self-care regarding their work loads, SM itself is not a solution to these dilemmas. However, SM culture has allowed business staff to openly discuss these tensions with each other and with leadership. In addition, when staff are feeling particularly overwhelmed, they are allotted time for self-care. However, taking down time for self-care often creates more stress for the business

development staff, as their responsibilities are not able to be put on hold, and there is no substitute capable of filling in for them. While business staff appreciate the awareness facilitated through SM, they express frustration with the idea that SM by itself is an answer to their workload problems. SM tools assist them in their interactions with youth and staff, but it does not help them meet their numbers. Instead of discussions and stress management as the primary tool to addressing these tensions, staff need the resources to meet their business goals.

In light of these tensions, a clarification and prioritization of the mission and goals of HW business departments is needed. Do the business departments exist for revenue production for HW, or do they exist primarily for workforce development training? If the mission is to remain two-fold, a prioritization of goals and strategic planning is needed among the departmental staff, leadership and other organization staff.

**Finding:** The limited resources and division in mission in the business departments have resulted in structural inefficiencies in the internships and confusion among the staff. Specifically, it has produced tension in identifying desired outputs and outcomes for the department.

For example, providing HW with sustainable revenue is an outcome, one that is actively strategized and measured at HW today. Additionally, the number of youth attending internships at HW business departments is a measurable output that is also measured. However, equipping youth with quality training and professional intelligence that will prepare them for future employment is a desired outcome that is neither measured nor strategized towards in the organization's current business model. If the only focus is on the output of internship numbers, then the outcome of quality training may be secondary given the stress of limited resources.

Due to the strength of the business department staff, the commitment of youth, and SM fostered environment, youth interns are still learning and growing in internships, despite the structural inefficiencies. However, the duality in outcome goals and the inadequate attention to both in a structured and systematic way creates potential for staff burnout and missed opportunity.

**Finding:** Finally, the stress caused by the confusion in mission and outcomes is felt by the rest of the organization. Youth development staff value and respect the business staff, acknowledging the amount of work they are required to accomplish; however, they admit a frustration with the divided roles that the two groups of staff fill. In particular, the division of responsibilities in every day organizational maintenance occasionally creates frustration.

While youth development staff are available for a wide variety of tasks and responsibilities within the organization, business development staff are more singularly focused on their departments. Although a youth development staff may assume the role of managing a singular department with specific responsibilities and goals, they also take on extracurricular activities outside of their job descriptions. For example, a youth development staff may have a position that has nothing to do with party planning or community outreach events, but they participate in preparation, hosting, and cleaning up for those events. In general, business development staff are seen as not participating in these needs.

This is reflected to some degree in the business development staff's attitude towards their own positions. They love the organization and depend on the other staff for a variety of resources, but they see themselves as primarily business people whose first priority is meeting their business goals.

What is effective?

- Youth enjoy their internships and learn important professional lessons from them.
- The work done in the business department is highly professional and recognized throughout the wider Camden area. Indeed, much of the positive media coverage of HW centers on HW youth attaining regional employment contracts in the fields they have been trained in.

What is not effective?

- Youth's level of preparedness for Salesforce, GIS, and business internships,
- staff's time and ability to train interns,
- the division in responsibilities between business staff and youth development staff.

Recommendations:

- Clarify individual job expectations and roles;
  - Are different staff responsible for different organizational maintenance?
- Clarify the mission, goals, outputs and outcomes for the business department;
  - What outcome is the priority? What amount of time should staff spend on each outcome? What are realistic goals? What is the difference between outputs and outcomes for this department?
- Strategize a plan to accomplish outcomes;
  - Set goals. Find and develop tools to measure success. Will outputs or outcomes be measured?
- Develop tangible incentives for outcomes without creating additional work;
  - Salaries provide an incentive for revenue outcomes. Develop staff incentives for quality of internship training.
- Develop additional resources for business departments;
  - Additional staff are needed to assist in youth training and development
  - Additional training tools or curricula may help streamline training process
- Create a Business, GIS and Salesforce track prior to entry into internships
- Require youth to participate in basic business, GIS or Salesforce training prior to entering an internship upstairs.

## SUGGESTIONS BY RESEARCHERS AND PARTICIPANTS

1. Streamline business processes to meet capacity. How to take on and deliver projects in a productive and efficient way that benefits interns while producing enough work. Address the tension between the business model and workforce development model experienced by the business directors.
2. Interns need more specific training before entering internships: while they get web development training, they do not get GIS or salesforce training before hand. A lot of what business development staff end up doing is training in skills, which takes away from producing projects. This is a conflict.
3. Dreams: expand--have more employers for youth to work with. More space. More computers. Branch out into other kinds of training: robotics, vertical gardens, etc.
4. Track what happens to youth after HW: what are youth struggling with in real workplaces? How successful are they? What are the long term outcomes?



5. Interesting: many youth mention prior involvement in other youth organizations. How does HW work with these organizations? How is HW more successful because of these other organizations? How can resources and relationships improve between organizations, and what kids are being missed by all organizations?
6. The need for structured processes: what happens when a staff member leaves and a department needs to be taken over? What is the protocol for when a staff member needs to go on leave?
7. Ensure that SM does not take the place of needed structures: just because you can use SM values and tools to discuss problems does not mean that those problems are solved.
8. Youth participating in outreach more--producing materials.
9. From Youth: They desire a space for play and relaxation: youth mentioned wanting a space to take a break and enjoy themselves in the midst of their training. A place to step away and relax after being on the computer for 6 hours.
10. Youth want an internship that is more creative: a training program that taught them to utilize their creativity for pay: an art, poetry or music program.
11. Random suggestion: temperature control. A few of the youth brought this up as a concern.
12. Mentioned by most staff: the divide between business and youth development staff creates tensions. A solution for business staff responsibilities/workload is needed, or expectations of role needs clarity.
13. SM for all youth: the revolving door of the youth population makes it difficult to truly train all youth in SM. Systems beyond individualized online learning about sanctuary are needed. How can each youth be taught about trauma in depth?
14. Both staff and youth desire more outings or fun times where everyone can put their responsibilities aside for a bit and have fun together.
15. Most staff mention expanded capacity of staff as a need: HW is bursting at the seams physically in their space, but that also means they are bursting at the seams in their individual staff load. There are too many youth per staff. Staff are helping around 45 youth a day, and they are feeling like that is a lot.
16. Question for future research: what happens after youth leave HW? Do they struggle without the structure? Do they continue to do well? Do they find alternative structure?
17. Dan discusses wanting to be sure that the success of the organization is sustainable with or without him: replicable and scalable. This may need more attention, staff and youth consistently attribute success to Dan and his characteristics and leadership style. This may be due to the contrast they saw with the past director, but either way, it is worth noting.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Sanctuary Model at HopeWorks 'N Camden has facilitated a period of successful change and growth for the organization. Although it cannot be examined apart from the staffing changes that have taken place over the last several years, SM has restructured the HW environment into one that changes the lives of all participants, not just the driven few.

Since the implementation of SM, the program outputs have improved substantially. Program completion rates have risen drastically since the introduction of SM, increasing by 20%. Similarly, youth enrollment rates are once again on the rise, recovering from a period of recession. These successes can be attributed to the new structures and systems implemented through SM.

Specifically, SM has facilitated an environment of openness, care, and sustainability. By adopting SM values of a democratic management, open communication and self-care, the organization's staff are happier in their jobs. They feel more taken care of, more heard, and more emotionally and mentally prepared to succeed in their positions.

Although the organization's staff and leadership encounter problems typical to any workplace, they have the necessary tools to solve their problems. As a result, levels of burnout have decreased and staff turnover has leveled off.

Moreover, SM has also created a more hospitable environment for success among youth participants. SM values and tools have led to restructuring how youth are taught, disciplined, and positioned as equal participants in the organization's functioning. As a result, youth are more likely to succeed in the programming because they are given second and third chances to succeed. They are given the space to learn, fail, and try again. The encouraging environment created by staff challenges youth to push themselves to success. In the midst of challenge, SM gives youth the tools they need to handle the hardships and stresses of growth and change. As a result, more youth are completing the program and moving on to internships and externships.

While SM has facilitated leaps and bounds of growth and success, there is still room for the organization to grow. As the leadership works to expand the organization's capacity, clear roles, outputs and outcomes need to be strategized and planned within every department. The business departments, in particular, need outcome clarity and strategic planning as the organization scales up its revenue, enrollment rates, and internship opportunities.

Finally, further assessment is needed to understand the immediate and long-term outcomes of HW. A deeper understanding of how SM values and tools affect the lives of youth beyond the scope of HW programming would allow the organization to adjust their practices to better serve the needs of the youth and the wider community. Are the lessons learned at HW carried out beyond HW walls? Has the HW training led to youth acquiring and sustaining jobs elsewhere? How do youth function outside of a SM workplace? These questions require further research and analysis.



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#### **ABOUT CURE**

**The two key missions of Center for Urban Research and Education are:**

**to encourage, facilitate and promote research on urban issues by Rutgers-Camden faculty and their collaborators around the nation; and to help train the next generation of urban scholars by providing opportunities for students to become involved with ongoing research projects.**

**CURE encourages, facilitates and promotes innovative research by scholars at Rutgers University and around the nation on issues that face Camden, New Jersey, the Philadelphia metropolitan region and other large cities and metropolitan cities in the U.S. and abroad. It also helps train the next generation of urban scholars by providing opportunities for students to become involved with ongoing research projects.**

**Through its research and partnerships, the center creates innovative solutions that promote equity and opportunity in communities throughout the nation. CURE seeks to increase the understanding of cities through cross-disciplinary research, instruction and civic engagement and by providing links to regional, national and international networks in pursuit of new ideas and approaches that address urban issues.**

**A forum for collaborative, inter-disciplinary scholarship, CURE helps to inform public policy development and decision-making at the local, national and global levels.**