

MAY 2021

# **EBP+ COLLABORATIVE**

**DEVELOPING AN ALTERNATIVE TO INCARCERATION FOR  
YOUTH OF COLOR WITH SERIOUS AND VIOLENT CHARGES**

**INTERIM RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE EBP+ MODEL**



# INTRODUCTION

The + is us. The essential piece that must be present in the work that our programs, services, and organizations share with our communities is that we are of, from, and a part of our communities. This collaborative is formed of a diversity of cultures, heritage, ancestry, and location, but connected by a common thread of care, love, and commitment to the well-being of our people. We are who we serve.

We are rooted in our communities' culture, values, beliefs, and experiences. Our communities are welcome to bring their full selves into our buildings, our groups, and our one on one work. We recognize and honor our unique traditions, healing, and spiritual practice. We meet people where they are at and engage on what matter most now. Our youth and families set the priorities, their voice is valued and respected. Youth, parents, and the family we choose are centered in our work.

We embrace the leadership and service models that work for our participants' positive outcomes. The leadership and staff providing service reflect the experience and history of the communities we serve. We honor that there is not one, but many roads to effective, responsive, and accountable service. Whether in partnership with public authorities, community funded, or fully volunteer we elevate the trust of the served to indicate what works best.

We have lived experience. We are recovering from addiction, violence, and hard times. We have lost loved ones. We have cared for relatives and relations harmed by what happens on the margins of our society. We have been incarcerated. We have experienced trauma.

**"We who are healing help others on their path to healing."**



We own the design, the story, and all the outcomes of our work. The systems we operate in have never proved their effectiveness. For many community based programs, wishing to serve their youth and families, evidence-based practice has been a means to exclude. We wish to flip the script. We see a future of evidence-based practice that is rooted in community from the ground up. Using the best of modern understanding and ethical practice, rooted in our collective cultural traditions we can do the best work with our people.

In the wake of the murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery in the midst of a global pandemic, the inequities in our public safety systems cannot be brushed aside. At this moment in our society people of all walks of life are in the streets declaring we embrace a new way to move forward. Generations of struggle to preserve the bodies, the minds and the dignity of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color have erupted in acts of civil disobedience, continued community organizing, and the reaffirmation that ideas that would best serve the people reside with the people. Corporations, foundations, and government entities have made statements of solidarity and commitments to support new and better policy. We require evidence of their resolve. The inequities that have moved people to the streets are the same inequities that motivated this collaborative to come together. We will continue our work to build the system we need.

**"There is no service without the consent of the served. The + is us."**



## INTRODUCTION

# WHO ARE THE COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS?



The EBP+ Collaborative consists of the following organizations: Barrios Unidos, Santa Cruz, CA; Ceres Policy Research, Oakland, CA; Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ), Oakland, CA; Community Connections for Youth, Bronx, NY; Fathers and Families of San Joaquin, Stockton, CA; Innovative Justice Solutions, Oakland, CA; La Plazita, Albuquerque, NM; Latino Network, Portland, OR; Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center, Portland, OR; Youth Advocate Programs, Harrisburg, PA. These organizations have worked together to document and evaluate their approach to community-based programs.

A policy brief describing the model is available [here](http://bit.ly/ebp-policy-brief): <http://bit.ly/ebp-policy-brief>.

"We govern collaboratively and we develop our logic models, surveys, reports, and presentations collaboratively. This may create inconveniences as we make group decisions. But the how we work together is just as important as the final products."

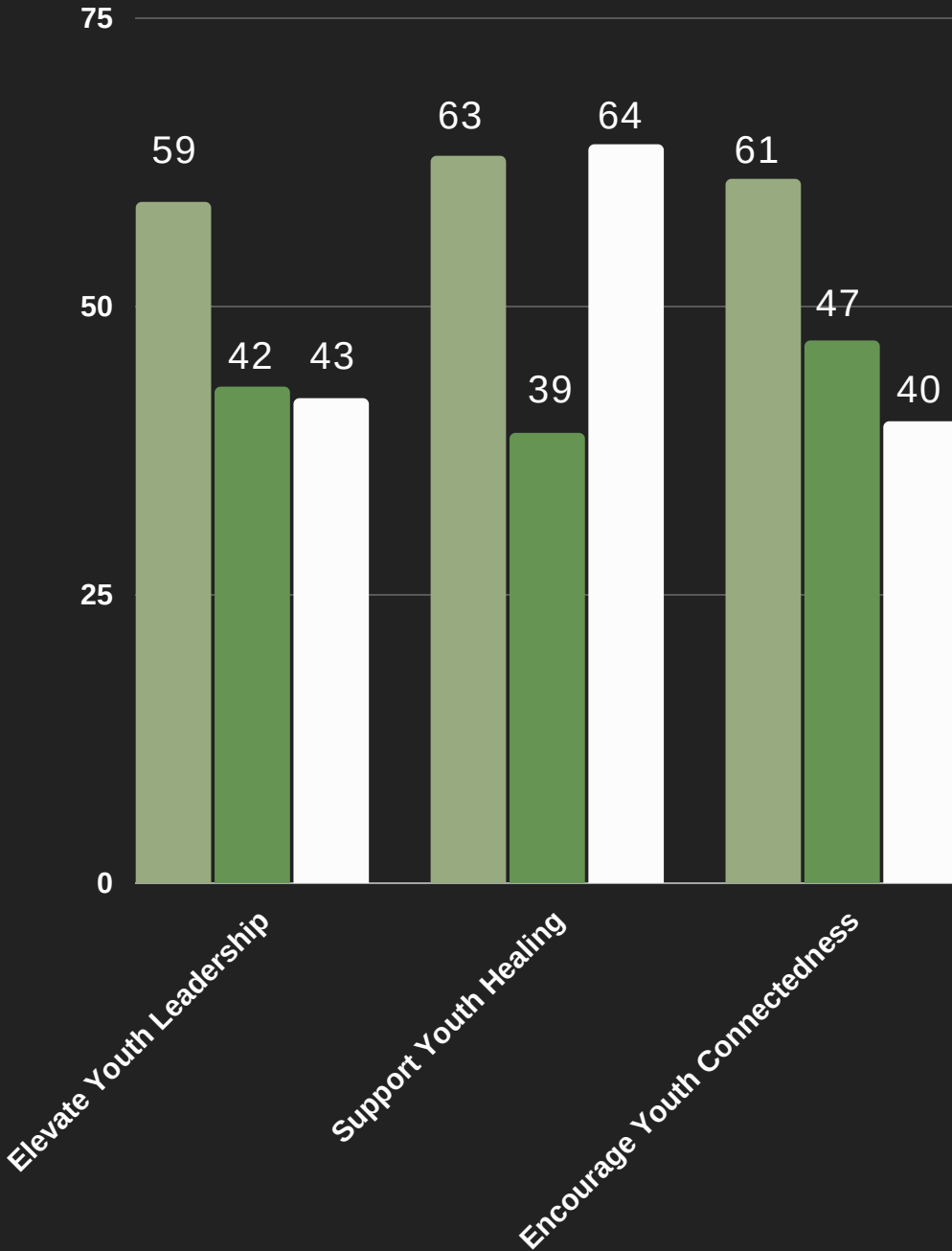
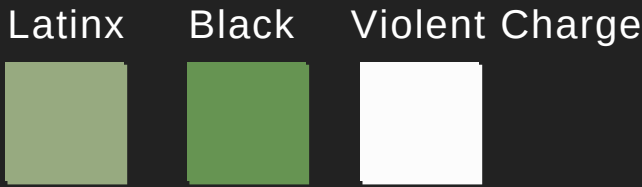
# EVALUATION METHOD

EBP+ Collaboration members collected surveys and the beginning and end of programming between 2017-2019. We had over 500 pre-participation surveys and 150 post-participation surveys. Ceres completed t-tests to see if there were significant changes over time for 20 different survey items and five scales. We also completed analyses of variance and binary regression analysis tests to determine whether particular groups of youth benefited more than others.

## FINDINGS

- The survey measured improvements in five categories: Elevating Youth Leadership, Facilitating Youth Resourcefulness, Supporting Youth Healing, Encouraging Youth Connectedness, and Mobilizing Forward Movement.
- There were positive gains in every category.
- There were statistically significant gains for all of the survey questions in the categories under Elevating Youth Leadership, Supporting Youth Healing, and Encouraging Youth Connectedness.
- Under the category of Facilitating Youth Resourcefulness the survey item that measured "having positive adults in youth lives" saw a statistically significant gain.
- Under the category of Mobilizing Forward Movement, the survey item that measured "I think about my future when I make decisions" saw a statistically significant gain.

# FINDINGS



- The chart shows that 63% of Latinx youth reported an improvement in healing, 61% reported improved feelings of connectedness, and 59% reported an improvements in youth leadership.
- The chart also shows that 47% of Black youth reported improved feelings of connectedness, 43% reported an improvement in youth leadership, and 39% reported an improvement in healing.
- Finally, the chart shows that 64% of youth charged with a violent crime reported an improvement in healing, 42% of reported an improvement in youth leadership, and 40% reported improved feelings of connectedness.

The chart above also reflects the specific findings for Latinx and Black youth as well as youth who were charged for committing a violent crime.

# IMPLICATIONS

Many other evidence based practices either shape how the justice system provides services (i.e. the use of risk assessments) or identifies specific programs that shape youth outcomes. The vast majority of individual programs identified as best practices are designed to improve youth behavioral health.

In contrast, the EBP+ approach aims to improve other types of socio-emotional outcomes such as healing from trauma, leadership, connections with supportive adults and peers, and pride in community. Our field needs a deeper understanding of how youth need support in these other areas of their lives in order to thrive.

## ONGOING RESEARCH



While organizations led by formerly incarcerated people of color have often been studied by outside academics and evaluators, this research was designed and continues within a tradition of elevating the expertise of the communities most impacted by mass incarceration. This has decentered the organizations that have traditionally held intermediary roles. Instead, the formally trained researchers work as equal partners with other collaboration members. All collaboration members have participated in the interpretation of findings as well as the completion of this report.

Even through COVID-19, the EBP+ Collaborative is engaged in ongoing research to increase the number of matched surveys from across the country. We will also continue to compile and analyze data related to recidivism. A final report is expected at the end of 2021. For more information, contact the following representatives:



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