

Evaluation Report
for TRRUST Collective Impact: Youth Transitioning from Care, Vancouver
(Phase 2; July 2016 to September 2017)

November, 2017

McCreary Centre Society
www.mcs.bc.ca



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Evaluation report for TRRUST Collective Impact (Phase 2)

BACKGROUND

In 2014, 40 agencies and 20 young people committed to a Collective Impact (CI) approach to improving outcomes for youth aging out of government care in Vancouver (TRRUST Collective Impact). McCreary Centre Society (McCreary) was asked to evaluate TRRUST Collective Impact starting in September, 2015.

This is the second evaluation report produced by McCreary and covers Phase 2 of the collective's three phase initiative.

Phase 1

Phase 1 of TRRUST (September, 2015 to June, 2016) entailed assessing if there was a shared vision as well as willingness and ability to move forward collectively to support youth transitioning out of care in Vancouver.

In this Phase, collective principles and a common agenda were ratified. The common agenda included three key success pillars, specifically Caring Connections, Access to Meaningful Experiences, and Opportunities for Growth (based on individual needs, wants, and readiness).

McCreary's Phase 1 developmental evaluation focused on the initiative's process and evolution, and collected information on successes, challenges, and lessons learned. McCreary distributed evaluation surveys at the four community gatherings that took place from the fall of 2015 to June, 2016, as well as a separate survey to 14 agency decision-makers who attended the CI Leaders' Summit (March, 2016). In addition, focus groups and interviews were carried out with community partners to supplement the survey data with more in-depth qualitative information.

Phase 1 evaluation findings indicated that most community partners who attended TRRUST gatherings consistently felt emotionally safe at the gatherings; that they were kept informed of the initiative's progress; hopeful that positive change would arise; and inspired to stay involved.

Findings also showed a number of improvements over time, including a greater percentage of partners who felt decision-making processes were open and transparent; that people of diverse cultures and backgrounds were represented; partners agreed on the initiative's ultimate goal; partners were ready to move forward; there was representation from youth; and youth were treated as partners.

Participants identified a number of successes during Phase 1, including agreement on a shared vision and goals, the identification of a backbone agency (McCreary was selected), and organizations' desire to move forward and take action.

Throughout Phase 1, partners did not typically feel they had a clear goal for their own contribution to the initiative, and felt that clarification on agencies' and individuals' roles and responsibilities would be helpful moving forward.

The majority of partners were interested in staying involved in Phase 2 and felt the initiative would likely succeed if it continued.

(The final Phase 1 evaluation report is available at http://www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/ci_evaluation_report_phase_one.pdf)

Phase 2

The goals of Phase 2 (July, 2016 to September, 2017) included developing a governance structure, developing shared measures, and implementing the Caring Connections success pillar.

Five community gatherings took place in the second phase of TRRUST. Further, community partners had the opportunity to join one or more working groups (clusters) that addressed the three success pillars identified in Phase 1. The clusters included Education & Employment, Housing, Caring Connections, Meaningful Experiences, and Shared Measurement.

This evaluation report focuses on community partners' feedback from Phase 2, as well as changes over time since the start of the evaluation in September, 2015. It also summarizes the collective's activities, outputs, and progress toward outcomes in relation to supporting youth transitioning out of care in Vancouver.

The focus of Phase 3 is to move beyond the Caring Connections success pillar to work on the other pillars (and to sustain action and achieve outcomes across pillars). However, some of this work on these pillars started in Phase 2.

METHODOLOGY

In Phase 1, the evaluation was predominantly process-oriented because the goal was to assess if there was a shared vision as well as willingness and capacity to move forward collectively to support youth transitioning out of care in Vancouver. The goal of the evaluation in Phase 2 was to continue to assess process, as well as activities, outputs, and progress toward outcomes relating to the Caring Connections pillar and more generally to supporting youth transitioning out of care in Vancouver.

McCreary distributed evaluation surveys at the nine community gatherings that have taken place since the fall of 2015 (two gatherings occurred prior to this date). Surveys were distributed at four gatherings during Phase 1 and at five gatherings during Phase 2. The brief surveys have included both open-ended and forced-choice questions.

In addition to the surveys, community partners have documented TRRUST-related activities, outputs, and outcomes in an Outcomes Diary which has been distributed at the Phase 2 gatherings.

Updated evaluation findings have been presented at most community gatherings (beginning in November 2015). The purpose has been to share information with partners about the collective's thoughts and perceptions of the initiative and about the progress of the initiative, and to help inform its ongoing development.

Limitations

The evaluation only includes the views of TRRUST community partners who have attended community gatherings and have participated in evaluation activities. It does not include the views of those who have disengaged from TRRUST, or the views of those who have chosen not to engage at all (e.g., their reasons for not engaging).

This Report

This report focuses on findings from the evaluation surveys that were completed at the Phase 2 gatherings. This report also includes results on changes across community gatherings to assess if participants' thoughts and feelings about the initiative have changed over time. All comparisons included in this report are statistically significant at $p < .05$. This means there is up to a 5% likelihood the results occurred by chance.

Quotes from participants who took part in the evaluation are included throughout the report.

EVALUATION PARTICIPANTS

In Phase 1, most individuals who attended community gatherings completed an evaluation survey before they left those gatherings. In Phase 2, the survey completion rates dropped somewhat. This was likely due in part to the structure of the gatherings which involved many service providers leaving at lunch and being replaced by their colleagues who attended the cluster meetings after lunch, and the absence of a collective closing of the gathering after the cluster meetings.

| | Gathering date | Number of attendees | Surveys completed | Survey completion rate |
|---------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Phase 1 | September, 2015 | 44 | 32 | 73% |
| | November, 2015 | 35 | 27 | 77% |
| | February, 2016 | 38 | 31 | 82% |
| | May, 2016 | 30 | 21 | 70% |
| Phase 2 | September, 2016 | 27 | 18 | 67% |
| | November, 2016 | 28 | 17 | 61% |
| | February, 2017 | 55 | 27 | 49% |
| | June, 2017 | 32 | 20 | 63% |
| | September, 2017 | 40 | 22 | 55% |

It is important to note that participants were not always the same at each meeting. For example, 1 in 3 participants (33%) at the most recent gathering (September, 2017) were attending their first TRRUST gathering.

Over half of participants at that gathering had attended two or more previous meetings, including 29% who had attended six or more past gatherings. Fifteen percent of individuals who attended the gathering were youth, but only a few of these youth completed a survey.

Most participants at the September, 2017 gathering were representing a community-based social service organization, and 13% were from government. Percentages were comparable among participants at the earlier gatherings, except for the February, 2017 gathering where 25% of participants were from government (at that gathering, MCFD presented on strategic priorities for young adult supports).

FINDINGS

This section includes TRRUST-related activities, outputs, and progress toward outcomes; partners' feedback about the overall TRRUST initiative (and changes over time); and partners' feedback about the Phase 2 collective gatherings.

Activities, Outputs, & Progress toward Outcomes

The following details are based on information from the Outcomes Diary; the project manager's reports; advisory and CYL meeting minutes; and brief feedback forms completed at TRRUST-related events.

Membership & governance

The collective membership includes 128 individuals and more than 40 organizations. In Phase 1, partners identified individuals, agencies and sectors who they felt should be encouraged to participate in the initiative, and many of these joined the collective in Phase 2. These have included the Vancouver School Board and post-secondary institutions. Others were approached but do not currently have the capacity or mandate to join.

A governance structure has been established, which includes a backbone agency (currently McCreary Centre Society), a strategic advisory committee, and a youth advisory committee called the Collective Young Leaders (CYL). The strategic advisory and CYL committees provide leadership for the TRRUST initiative. In addition, five clusters (working groups) have been developed, with each containing an adult and youth co-chair (more details in the *Working groups' progress* sub-section that follows).

The strategic advisory is comprised of 11-14 members, with membership including statutory and non-statutory partner agencies, two CYL representatives, and funders. The strategic advisory has met approximately every eight weeks during Phase 2 (mostly via teleconference and twice in person). At least half of the advisory members have generally attended advisory meetings, and all meetings are minuted. Key activities of the strategic advisory include receiving reports from the backbone organization, project manager and CYL; identifying priorities for TRRUST gatherings; budgetary planning; and reviewing progress against the collective's objectives. Members of the committee have also met with delegates from other Collective Impact initiatives to share learnings.

The CYL are comprised of youth with government care experience (membership has ranged from 6-8 youth). They have learned about governance and are central to all decisions regarding TRRUST. The CYL have met monthly to plan and discuss their involvement in TRRUST, including their contributions to each cluster; co-facilitation of workshops in the community; and involvement in other events and activities pertaining to supporting youth transitioning out of care. They have also taken a leadership role at collective gatherings, and named the collective "TRRUST." Seven CYL members have been involved with TRRUST for over one year, including four who have been involved for two or more years. Due in part to their involvement in TRRUST, a CYL member was successful in obtaining a one-year internship with the provincial government.

The CYL have presented their Journey Maps (which they created in Phase 1) to increase awareness of the needs of youth transitioning out of care, and awareness of what agencies and individuals can do to support youth's transition. Presentations and workshops have taken place

with various agencies and professionals, such as the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, MCFD, cross-Ministry committee, Vancouver School Board, VCH Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions, the New Zealand Rata Foundation delegation, and Youth Matters. Workshop feedback forms have indicated that most attendees felt the workshop was relevant and informative, and they appreciated hearing youth's passionate accounts of how the system needed to change to best support youth transitioning out of care. A total of 400 copies of the Journey Maps have been distributed. The CYL also created a transition brief for the provincial government.

Working groups' progress (clusters)

“Feeling good about where we are going. Big shifts have happened since subcommittees/clusters have started.”

Five working groups were developed based on the collective's key priorities. The original five were Opportunities for Growth (which encompassed housing, employment, and education); Caring Connections; Meaningful Experiences; Evaluation; and Shared Measurement. The evaluation cluster was later disbanded as there was overlap with shared measurement, and evaluation is a component of all cluster activities. Opportunities for Growth was divided into two clusters due to the diverse priorities it encapsulated, and a Housing cluster and Education and Employment cluster were formed. Community partners reached consensus on the objectives of the clusters at the June, 2017 TRRUST gathering.

The TRRUST clusters have met approximately monthly since June 2017, including at the quarterly collective gatherings. Most of the clusters have over 15 members. The clusters have identified potential new members who can support their objectives, and these individuals have been approached to join the cluster and to attend the collective gatherings.

The Caring Connections cluster received \$10,000 from Vancouver Foundation to host 3-4 social activities for youth with care experience (aged 17-19) to connect with peers and have fun. The first event was a trip to the waterslides, which 12 youth attended. All these youth completed a feedback form at the end of the event, and the vast majority reported they made a new connection and were interested in attending the next event. Their suggestions included having more events and engaging more young people to attend. Three additional events have been scheduled for December 2017, January 2018, and February 2018. Each event will be hosted by a different collective partner organization.

The Housing cluster received a \$10,000 grant from Vancouver Foundation to carry out research on youth housing in Vancouver. This research involved experiential youth researchers interviewing service providers about housing inventory; developing and distributing a housing survey for youth in and from care; carrying out youth focus groups; conducting a literature search on innovative models; and writing a final report. Strategies to provide housing support to 100 youth transitioning from care in 2018/2019 will be completed in December once the housing report is published. It is anticipated that the Housing cluster's research project will inform the development of a proposal for a Housing Navigator who will connect youth transitioning out of care to housing.

The Education and Employment cluster developed a youth employment survey in partnership with McCreary's Youth Research Academy (YRA). The survey included questions about barriers and supports associated with finding and keeping employment, and the type of employment youth were interested in securing. Close to 80 youth have completed the survey to date.

The Education and Employment cluster continues to partner with Youth Futures Fund and Office of the Representative for Children and Youth to ensure post-secondary tuition wavers and wrap-around supports are available to youth transitioning out of care. The cluster is also working to increase supports for youth in K-12.

TRRUST, through the Meaningful Experiences cluster, developed a partnership with the City of Vancouver Parks and Recreation Board. This partnership will involve the Parks and Recreation Board's youth outreach team taking on the role of Opportunity Navigator, once funding is secured. The individual in this role will connect youth with funding opportunities to take part in art and/or sport activities while in care and once they transition out of care.

The Meaningful Experiences cluster has also submitted a brief pertaining to the Vancouver Parks and Recreation Board implementing an ID bank in their community centres for youth with care experience. Given that 28% of youth in Vancouver age out without ID, the purpose is to increase youth's access to ID in order to improve their access to community centres and other community supports.

The Meaningful Experiences cluster, in partnership with the Metro Vancouver Alliance, have been working with TransLink to eliminate fare-evasion tickets among youth with care experience, because these unpaid tickets contribute to poor credit ratings and to barriers to obtaining a driver's license.

A brief survey was distributed through the Shared Measurement working group to assess the type of data that partner agencies were collecting. The survey findings indicated that most data collected has been program-specific, and that around 30% of partner agencies have not implemented measures to evaluate their services. The November 2017 TRRUST gathering will focus on shared measures at a systemic level. Further, \$9200 funding has been secured through Vancouver Coastal Health to enhance the capacity of partner organizations to collect shared measurement data and to develop a shared measurement framework for TRRUST.

Other progress

TRRUST partnered with MCFD, community agencies, post-secondary institutions, and businesses (e.g., SuperStore, UBC) to organize an information fair and market place for youth transitioning out of care in 2017/2018. More than 30 service providers and organizations participated in the event ("Connect2Thrive"). Twenty-five youth attended the event, and a total of 95 transition kits were delivered to youth connected to MCFD or VACFSS. TRRUST's Collective Younger Leaders (CYL) assembled the transition kits ahead of the event, and took part in a panel discussion at the event. The event was funded by MCFD, who have committed to fund a second Connect2Thrive event in April 2018.

A few youth attendees provided written feedback about the Connect2Thrive event, including the following:

“I am so grateful that I got the opportunity to be familiar with great resources and the transition kit helps a lot! Thank you for putting this event together... Your generosity and support is greatly appreciated. It was a great event and I highly recommend every youth aging out to go!!!”

“I could write an essay about how happy I am to know that there are resources to help youth in all situations. This entire event was very worth going to... Endless support as soon as I walked in! You made me feel reassured in all aspects of my life. I cannot thank you guys enough.”

“You all made me very happy and helped out so much! I really admire the former youth at the event. Very brave of them to share their stories and encouraging us to take advantage of all the support we have and that life does get better.”

The collective is also recording and monitoring other outcomes occurring for youth transitioning out of care, which TRRUST has contributed to. These include the expansion of the Agreement with Young Adults Program; the introduction of tuition waivers at all BC post-secondary institutions; and a meeting at the legislature between youth transitioning out of care and Members of the Legislative Assembly to discuss the implications of current legislation on youth in care and some proposed changes young people would like to see.

Information sharing

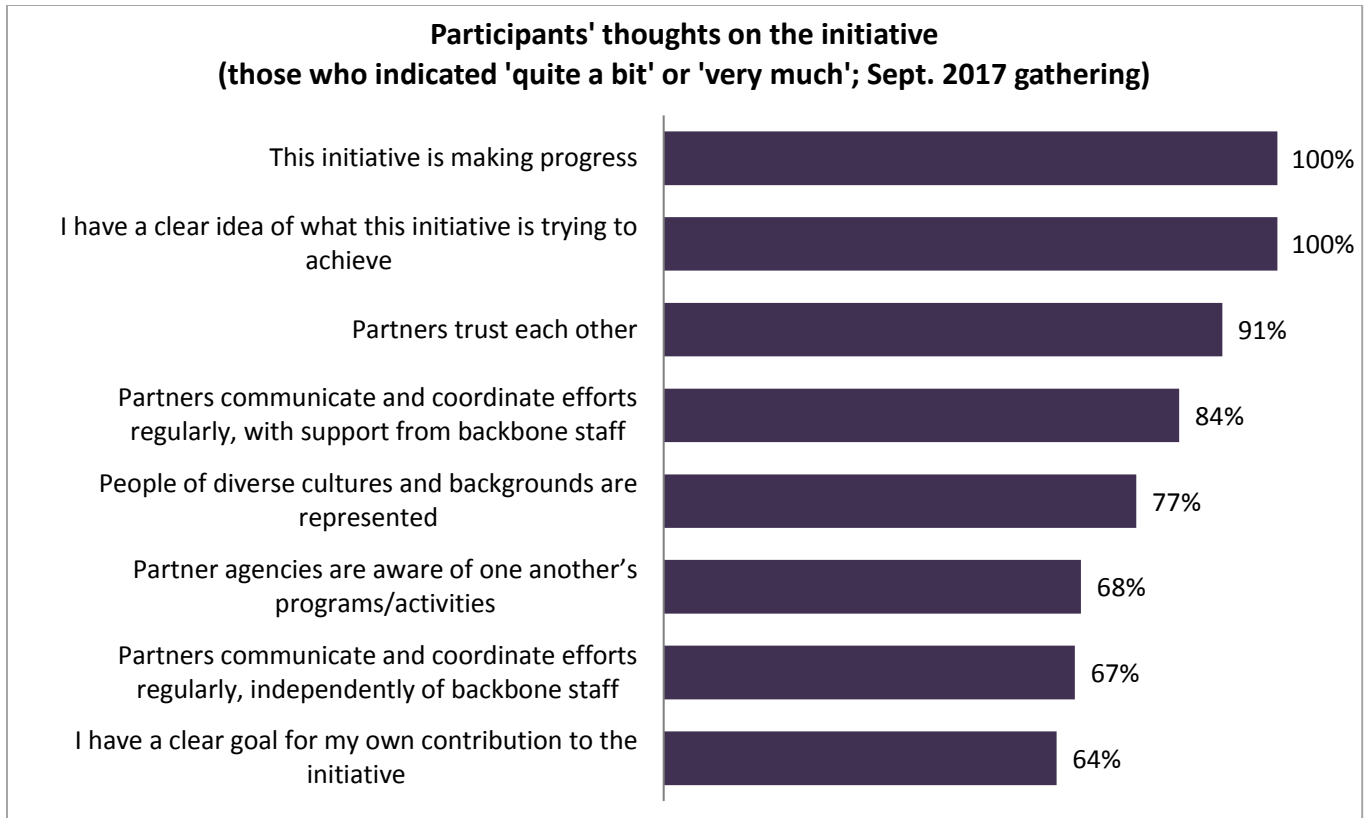
Information on TRRUST-related work which has occurred between gatherings has been shared with collective members through four newsletters in Phase 2, and through report-backs at each gathering. Also, the website has been re-organized and additional information has been added.

Feedback about the Overall Initiative

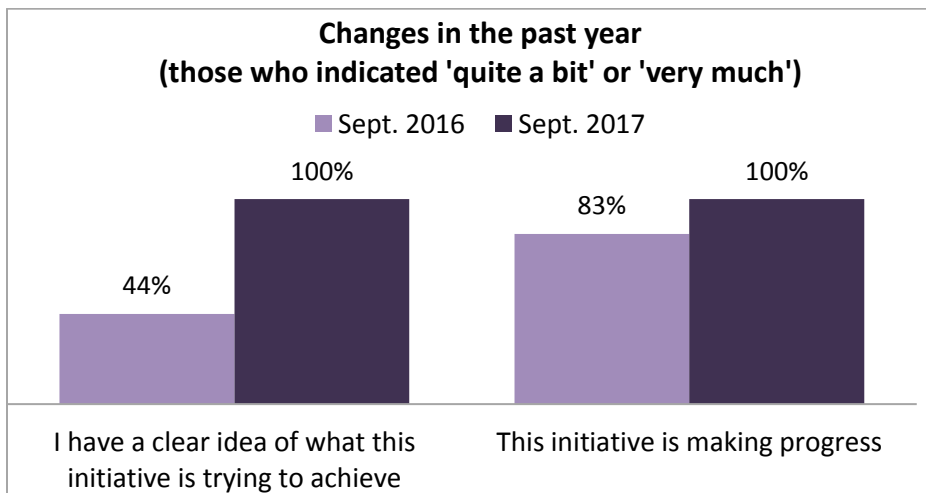
Feedback about the initiative is based on data from the brief surveys that partners completed at the end of each gathering. Findings from the most recent gathering (September, 2017) are presented, to provide the most current snapshot, and are also compared against findings from earlier gatherings to document changes over time.

As illustrated in the following graph, the majority of community partners who completed a survey at the most recent gathering felt positively about their experience in the initiative overall. For example, most felt they had a clear goal for their own contribution to the initiative, compared to a minority who felt this way in the past. However, participants attending their first TRRUST gathering were less likely to feel they had a clear goal for their own contribution compared to those who had also attended previous gatherings (there were no other differences between participants attending for the first time and those who had attended multiple gatherings).

Most participants felt that partners regularly communicated and coordinated efforts with support from backbone staff, as well as independently of backbone staff.



All participants reported they had a clear idea of what the initiative was trying to achieve and that the initiative was making progress. These percentages reflected an increase from the previous year (September, 2016), when a minority indicated having a clear idea of what the initiative was trying to achieve.

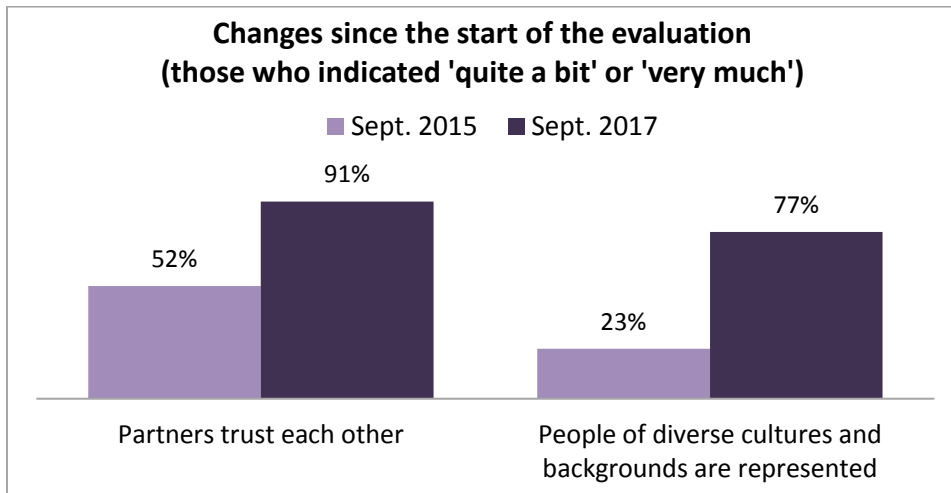


Note. Participants were not necessarily the same at each gathering.

At the beginning of Phase 2, a little under half of gathering participants were aware of one another's programs and activities which support youth transitioning out of care. A "spotlight" component was subsequently incorporated into the gatherings which offered community partners an opportunity to briefly share information about their programs and initiatives to

increase the collective’s awareness of the various community supports available to youth transitioning out of care. This appeared effective, as by September 2017 the majority of partners reported they were aware of one another’s programs.

A steady increase over time was seen in the percentage who felt that people of diverse cultures and backgrounds were represented. Also, around half of participants at each gathering in Phase 1 felt that partners trusted each other, compared to the majority of participants who felt this way at every gathering in Phase 2.



Note. Participants were not necessarily the same at each gathering.

In addition, there was an increase in the percentage who felt that partners had agreed-upon strategies to solve the problems that youth experience as they transition out of care (29% in September, 2015 vs. 68% in June, 2017 when the question was last asked).

TRRUST Gatherings

Content

The TRRUST gatherings in Phase 2 have typically consisted of a combination of guest speakers and interactive activities to address partners’ interests which had been identified in Phase 1. To orient people who are new to TRRUST, a short film explaining Collective Impact has been shown at two of the gatherings in Phase 2, and an orientation session for youth who are new to the initiative has taken place at the start of the gatherings.

Based on partners’ Phase 1 feedback, half-day community gatherings have replaced full-day gatherings, with working group meetings taking place during the second half of the day. Also based on suggestions from Phase 1, a later start-time has been implemented (with gatherings now beginning at 10:00am instead of 9:30am) and the day of the week on which gatherings are held varies every time, so that a wider range of individuals can attend.

In addition, in response to partners’ feedback in Phase 1, the Phase 2 gatherings have started with a round of introductions (names and agency affiliations) so that people know who is in the room.

The backbone agency (McCreary) has provided updates on progress, funding proposals submitted, and grants received, and has shared examples of successful Collective Impact initiatives around the world.

Evaluation findings from the previous gathering have also been shared at the gatherings, along with details on how any TRRUST-related processes or activities have been changed based on partners' evaluation feedback.

The gatherings have included a knowledge sharing component, where partners have had the opportunity to share pertinent knowledge they gained, such as through conferences or workshops they had attended. Also, based on partners' feedback, a "spotlight" component has been incorporated which has entailed brief information sharing about community programs and initiatives available to youth transitioning out of care.

At each gathering (since the implementation of clusters), members of each cluster have presented on their progress, using a standardized template, and have continued to work on their identified objectives during the cluster meetings after lunch.

What participants liked

At the end of each gathering in Phase 2, participants were asked what they had liked about the gathering. Responses were consistent across gatherings. Participants commonly indicated they appreciated the cluster updates, the sharing of information, and hearing from various partner agencies about their programs and services which support youth transitioning out of care.

Participants also expressed appreciation for the opportunity to network and connect with dedicated individuals who are working toward a shared goal, as well as the resulting sense of community that has developed.

What participants liked...

"Presentations from each cluster—good to hear about past and current work being done."

"The housing research sneak preview was really interesting."

"Meeting people from other programs and youth—all working to the same goal."

"Networking"

"The genuine interest and compassion for youth at risk."

"Opportunity to connect, network with community partners and hear the great work that other clusters are doing."

"I really appreciated the comfortable sharing environment."

"Sharing information. Learning from one another."

What participants learned

When asked at the end of each gathering what they had learned, some partners indicated learning about different Collective Impact models in North America and their successes, which had been shared as part of the Backbone updates.

Others identified learning about research and statistics relating to youth transitioning out of care. For example, some mentioned the housing statistics that were presented at the most recent gathering. These statistics (e.g., a high percentage of youth not having supportive adults to help them find housing after transitioning from care) had been generated from TRRUST's youth housing survey which had been completed by youth in and from care. A few partners added that these statistics suggested that important work still needs to be done to best support youth transitioning out of care.

In addition, partners reported learning about different youth supports and programs in the community, through the "service spotlights" (e.g., VCH Transition Group). They also learned about the progress that each TRRUST cluster was making (e.g., the work with TransLink around efforts to eliminate youth's transit fines).

Also, participants identified learning about key contacts at various partner agencies, and expanding their networks as a result.

Some of those attending their first TRRUST gathering reported learning more about the Collective Impact model and process.

What participants learned at the gatherings...

"I learned about the Collective Impact process and about the various initiatives that the different clusters are working on."

"I learned what Collective Impact does! Made some new connections."

"Love hearing about other Collective Impacts through North America and their successes."

"About housing issues, and many initiatives that are happening."

"Valuable information about housing challenges and barriers. Nice to get update on VCH Transition Group."

"Current initiatives surrounding education, caring connections, and housing as it affects youth."

"I learned more about the other clusters and what they are working on. I also learned a lot about the housing research, the interesting work that happened in Anaheim and new programs through VCH."

"Excellent networking experiences."

"There's lots of work to be done!"

When asked what they will do with what they learned, responses were similar across meetings. Some partners indicated they would share the learnings with colleagues who were not at the gathering, or would find a way to share the information with youth. Some participants were motivated to maintain the momentum in their cluster and to continue working toward affecting change. Others reported they would consider becoming more involved in TRRUST events, such as next year's "Connect2Thrive" event, and would try to attend future gatherings.

Participants' suggestions

Participants' suggestions for TRRUST gatherings included the following:

- They appreciated the TRRUST gatherings which offered refreshments in the morning, including coffee, and suggested that these refreshments should be available at all future gatherings.
- Participants appreciated the gatherings that opened with an Aboriginal Elder, and felt that all the collective gatherings should start this way.
- Some suggested incorporating a brief break in the morning, and reducing the time allocated for lunch.
- Participants felt there should continue to be a balance between guest speakers to enhance learning on the one hand, and networking and collaborative working opportunities on the other.
- Some indicated they valued hearing about other successful Collective Impact initiatives, and felt these should continue to be shared at the gatherings to provide concrete examples and ideas to support the initiative's progress.
- At each gathering, there could be a list or visual representation of partner agencies' programs to help partners become more aware of the community supports available to youth.
- A couple of participants indicated they would like to see more involvement of private industries at TRRUST gatherings, and more support from corporations to help youth transitioning out of care.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

This evaluation report includes findings on TRRUST-related activities, outputs, and progress toward outcomes; partners' feedback about the overall TRRUST initiative (and changes over time); and partners' feedback about the Phase 2 gatherings.

One goal in Phase 2 was to develop a governance structure. A governance structure was formalized, with McCreary as the backbone agency. The majority of participants at the most recent gathering felt that partners communicated and collaborated with support from backbone staff, as well as independently of the backbone. This finding is promising because it suggests that while the backbone is providing needed support, there is also momentum within the collective which enables activities and collaboration to take place autonomously to reach the ultimate goal of supporting youth transitioning out of care. The governance structure also includes a strategic advisory committee which meets regularly and a youth advisory committee (CYL) who have taken on leadership roles within the community.

The other goals of Phase 2 were to develop shared measures and to implement the Caring Connections success pillar. Partner agencies were surveyed on the measures they used in their programs, but shared measures have not yet been developed. The survey findings confirmed that the collective needs significant support in this area, due to the complexity of developing shared measures. A goal for the next TRRUST gathering is for partners to gain a better understanding of shared measures and to begin the process of developing such measures. Further, funding has been secured to enhance the capacity of partner organizations to collect shared measurement data and to develop a shared measurement framework for TRRUST.

Although not all the goals of Phase 2 have been achieved yet (i.e., shared measurement framework), clusters beyond Caring Connections have been working toward specific objectives, which is a goal of the next Phase. Three clusters have secured funding for targeted objectives, including Caring Connections whose cluster members have received funding to organize social events for youth with care experience to enhance their connections with peers. Most youth at the first event reported making connections because of their involvement.

The various cluster activities have likely contributed to participants in Phase 2 having a clearer idea than in Phase 1 of what the initiative is trying to achieve (as seen in the survey data). Their work on accomplishing targeted objectives through their cluster has likely helped to make the overall goals of the initiative seem more concrete and achievable.

The implementation of clusters in Phase 2 has likely also contributed to the reported increased sense of trust from Phase 1, by enabling individuals from different agencies to work together and to get to know one another.

While most participants a year ago felt the initiative was making progress, an even greater percentage (100%) felt this way at the most recent gathering. This shift is also likely due in part to the activities of the various clusters.

The implementation of an Outcomes Diary has facilitated the documentation of the collective's activities, outputs, and progress toward outcomes, and can help to identify gaps and challenges (e.g., challenges with shared measurement). We will continue to use the Outcomes Diary, and to distribute evaluation surveys at upcoming gatherings. We will also continue to ask the collective for their input on evaluation strategies to best capture the successes, challenges, and lessons learned specific to this initiative.