

# YOUTH GUIDANCE

**GUIDING KIDS TO BRIGHT FUTURES**

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# Mission & Expertise

**Mission:** Youth Guidance creates and implements school-based programs that enable at-risk children to overcome obstacles, focus on their education and, ultimately, to succeed in school and in life.

Youth Guidance serves more than **10,000 youth, meeting them where they are** in approximately **80 Chicago schools** and providing:

## Counseling and Prevention:

- Becoming a Man (B.A.M.)
- Working on Womanhood (W.O.W.)

## Youth Workforce Development

## Community and After-School



# BAM Target Population

In the 2015-16 academic year, BAM has served **2,759 students at 52 schools**.

In the 2016-17 academic year, BAM served **4,031 students in 61 schools**.



- Young men in grades 7-12
- Residency in high risk environments
- Economically disadvantaged
- 67% African-American; 30% Latino

**Participants in the initial University of Chicago Crime Lab Study:**

- Had an **average GPA of 1.74/ (D)** at program entry
- Over **30% of students had been arrested** at program entry
- More than **50% of students were over-age** for their grade

# Program Model



## BAM PROGRAM MODEL

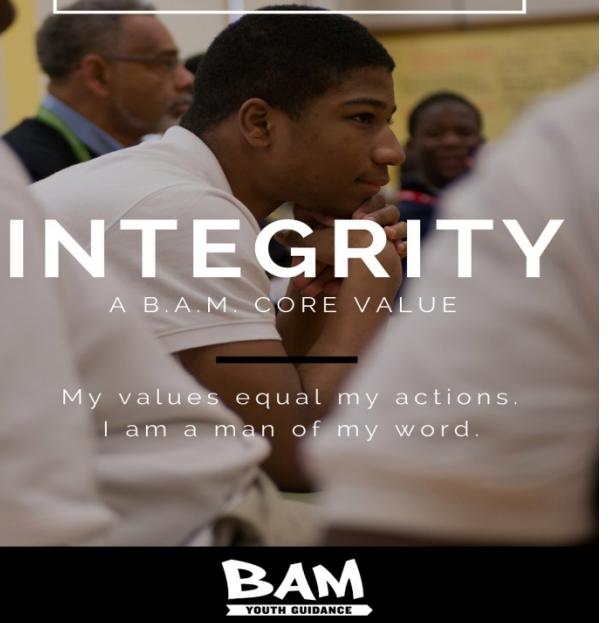
Youth Guidance's Becoming a Man (BAM) program is a school-based counseling program that guides young men to learn, internalize and practice social cognitive skills, make responsible decisions for their future and become positive members of their school and community.

### B.A.M. Circles

- Groups of 12-15 young men within a school that meet weekly with BAM Counselor during school day for 2 years
- Safety, trust and accountability in a positive peer groups
- Counselors use check-ins, stories, role-playing, and group missions to teach social cognitive skills, including: self-awareness, emotional regulation, responsible decision making and social awareness
- Core values exploration



BECOMING A MAN



BECOMING A MAN

**POSITIVE  
ANGER  
EXPRESSION**  
A B.A.M. CORE VALUE

I learn that anger is a normal emotion that needs to be expressed.

How I express my anger is a choice, whether as a savage or as a warrior.

**BAM**  
YOUTH GUIDANCE

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BECOMING A MAN

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

A B.A.M. CORE VALUE

I am responsible for the consequences of my actions whether intended or unintended.  
I take ownership for what I do and avoid projecting blame.

**BAM**  
YOUTH GUIDANCE



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**VISIONARY  
GOAL SETTING**  
A B.A.M. CORE VALUE

I create a vision for myself, for who I am, and how I want to be seen in the world.

I create a vision that is focused on making my community and the world a better place.

I set goals based on my vision and make responsible choices that help me achieve those goals.

**BAM**  
YOUTH GUIDANCE



# B.A.M. Approach

- Help youth assign meaning to their life experiences—both in and outside of the BAM group—and facilitate the integration of their new learning into their emerging sense of identity as men.
- Strengthen youth's ability to weigh the potential consequences of their actions in high-stakes situations.
- Facilitate experiential activities and structured reflections that help BAM students deliberately *choose* responses to challenging situations both within and outside of the BAM circle.
- Help student participants become more aware of the connections between their thoughts, feelings, and actions and positively express their emotions.
- Engage with youth in real-time during BAM activities to help youth apply new learning to contexts outside of the BAM circle, e.g., school, classroom, neighborhood, etc.



# Program Impacts

Outcome	Measure
<b>Increase social emotional skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emotional regulation</li><li>• Long-term internalization of BAM values that influence decision making</li></ul>	• Pre/post reports from student, BAM counselor, school, and family
<b>Increase school engagement</b>	• Dropout rates • Grades • Promotion to next grade
<b>Reduce destructive behaviors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Violence</li><li>• Criminal behavior</li><li>• Disciplinary infractions</li></ul>	• Crime and school data relative to frequency of violence, suspensions, etc.



# BAM's Impact on Social Emotional Skills

BAM uses the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) to measure social-emotional learning improvements, with a special focus on improving four "internal assets". The assessment is designed for 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade students and consists of 58 questions. It is scored on a scale of 1-4, with higher scores being better. Most BAM students initially score 1-2 on all assets; BAM's outcome target is for 60% of those students to see pre-post score improvements on each asset.

	What does it measure?	% of BAM students initially scoring 1-2 who had improved pre-post scores
<b>Commitment to learning</b>	Do you have a sense of the lasting importance of learning and a belief in your own abilities?	<b>52%</b>
<b>Positive values</b>	Do you have strong guiding values or principals to help you make healthy living choices?	<b>63%</b>
<b>Social competency</b>	Do you have the skills to interact effectively with others, make decisions, and cope with new situations?	<b>61%</b>
<b>Positive identity</b>	Do you believe in your own self-worth and feel that you have control over things that happen to you?	<b>60%</b>



# Building Evidence of What Works

The University of Chicago Crime Lab has conducted two RCTs of BAM in Chicago Public Schools.  
The results of both studies are in the Quarterly Journal of Economics.

**BAM Study I: 2009-2010**

RCT: 2740 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders (1267 control, 1473 BAM)

- ▼ **45% decrease** in likelihood to commit violent crime during program year\*
- ▼ **26% decrease** in likelihood of being arrested during program year
- ▼ **38% decrease** in likelihood to commit “other” crime during program year\*

\* Statistically significant

**NEW FINDINGS RELEASED TODAY: BAM II Study: 2-year Study (2013-2015); RCT 2064 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders (1048 control, 1016 BAM)**

- ▼ **50% decrease** in likelihood to commit **violent crime** during program year\*
- ▼ **35% decrease** in likelihood of **being arrested** during program year\*
- ▼ **43% decrease** in likelihood to **commit “other” crime** during program year\*

\* Statistically significant

- Additional Findings:

- **BAM Increased high school graduation rates by 19% for 2009-10 BAM study participants**
- For every **\$1** invested, the researchers estimate a return of **\$30** to society, based on the crime impacts alone. Potential increases in participants' future earnings resulting from the impacts on high school graduation may mean the return on investment is far higher.



# Scaling Lessons Learned: B.A.M. Training Academy

## B.A.M. Counselor Qualifications:

- M.S.W. or Master's in Counseling strongly preferred.
- B.A. in related field required
- Culturally competent
- Minimum of two years of group counseling experience
- Youth engagement experience
- Openness to men's work

## B.A.M. Training Academy

- Curriculum training (ongoing, gradual release)
- Job shadowing
- Mankind Project weekend retreat
- Inward Journey
- E-Learning video modules

## Coaching on Counselor Core Competencies

- Clinical processing
- Group development
- Modeling
- Youth engagement
- Systems change leadership

## Scaling Lessons Learned: Fidelity Monitoring

Utilization of real-time performance monitoring and evaluation dashboards, which track:

- Student-level attendance/participation records
- Group-level progress through the B.A.M. curriculum
- Adherence to curriculum elements
- Administration of social emotional assessments
- Individual counseling
- Brief encounter supports and other interactions.

Ongoing analysis of this data allows program leadership to better understand program mechanisms and enable coaches and supervisors to provide high impact technical assistance.



# Chapin Hall Qualitative Study

## Data & Methods



# Sample

- Purposeful design – leverage variation
- 29 youth interviews
  - 7 different schools
  - Currently in groups with 8 different Counselors
    - 11 first year BAM participants
    - 18 second year BAM participants
- 10 Counselor interviews
  - 9 from 8 different schools

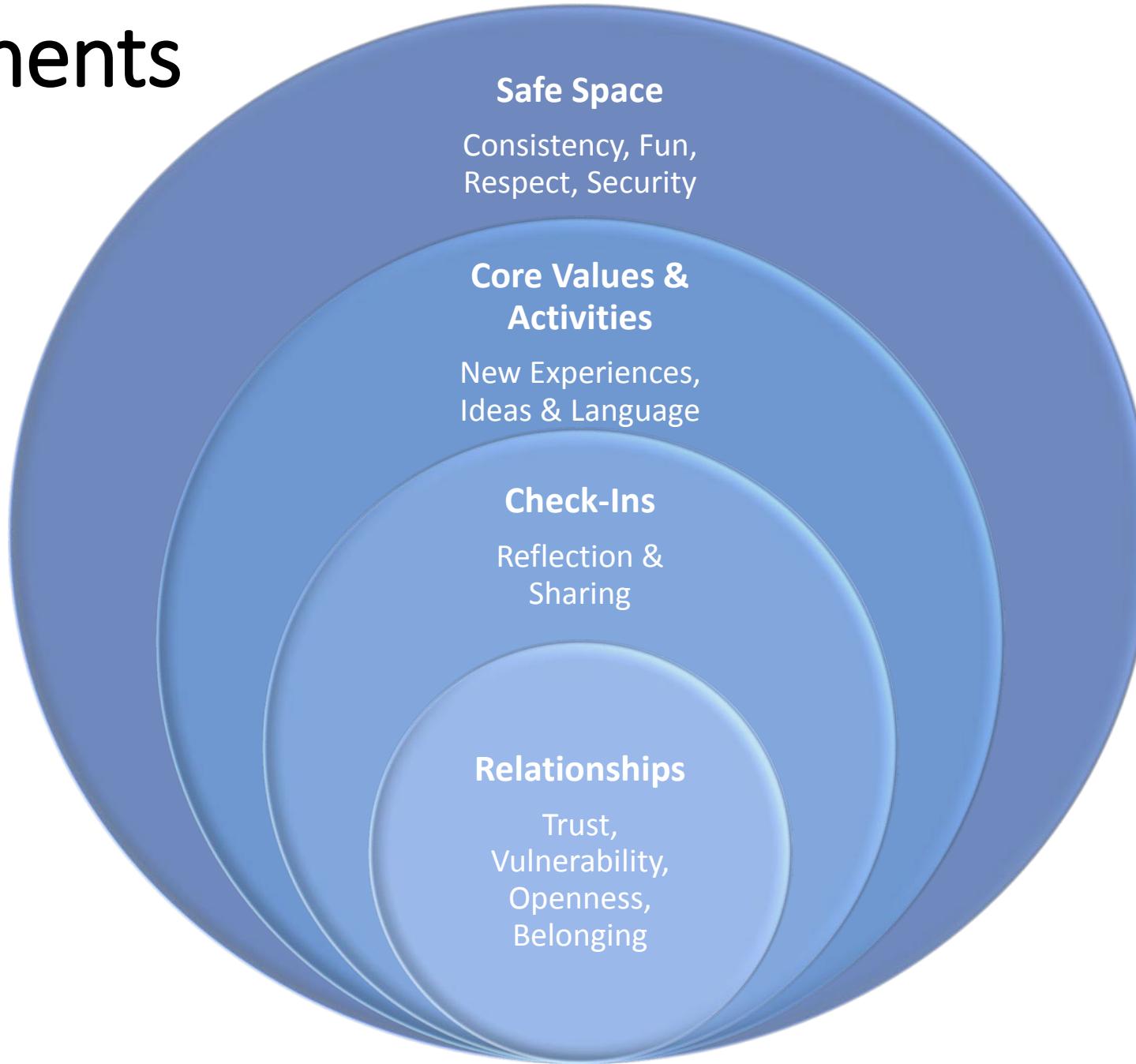
# Methodology

- Iterative approach to interviewing, coding, and analysis
- Inter-coder reliability checks
- Weekly team meetings
  - Coding for pre-determined “buckets”
    - Relationship with BAM Counselor
    - Other relationships
    - Core values
    - Curriculum activities
    - Impact of BAM
  - Open coding for themes that emerge from the data
  - Constant comparison for saturation of themes and patterns

# Findings



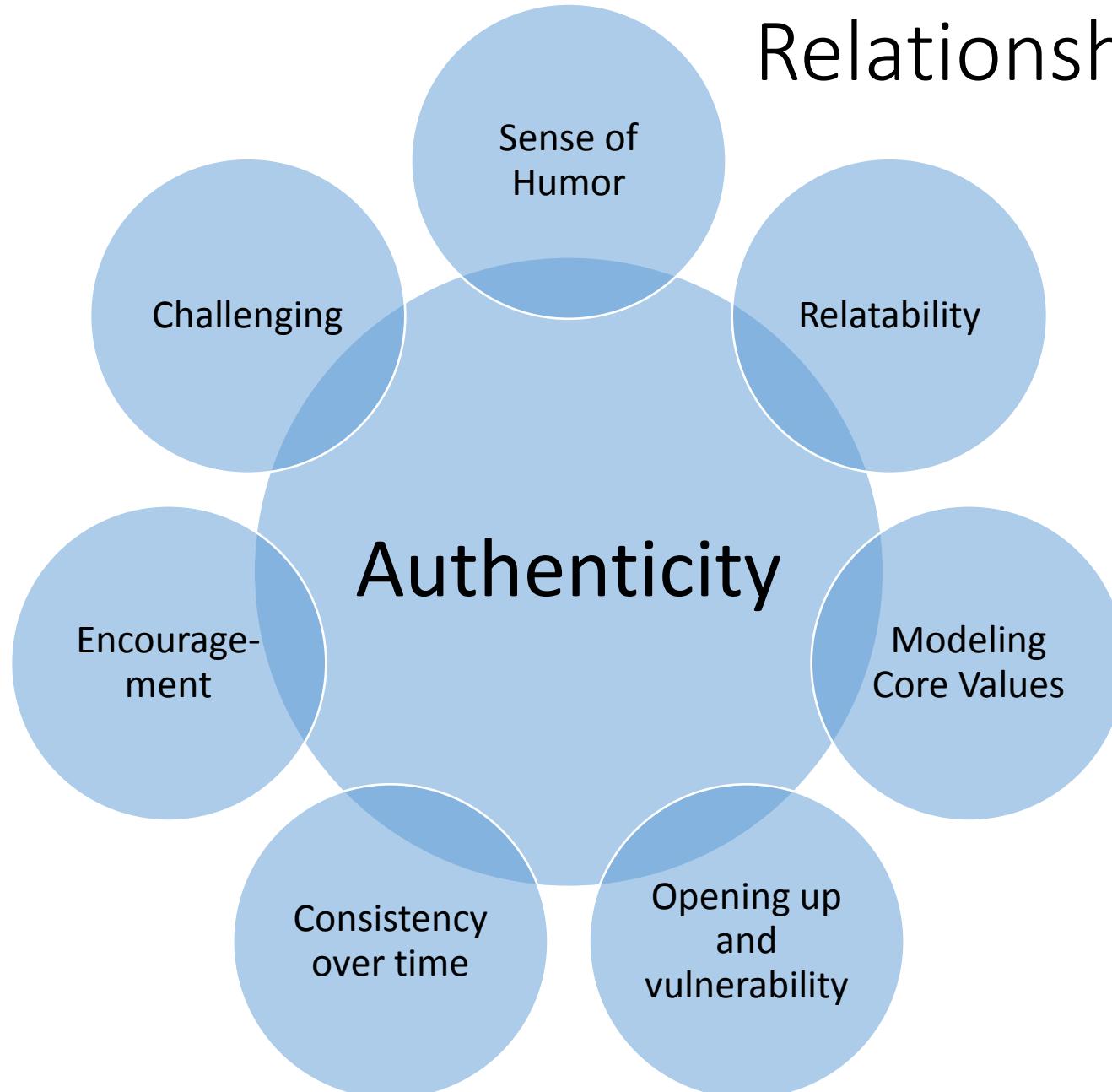
# Components



# Curriculum: Emotion Work and Moral Development in Action



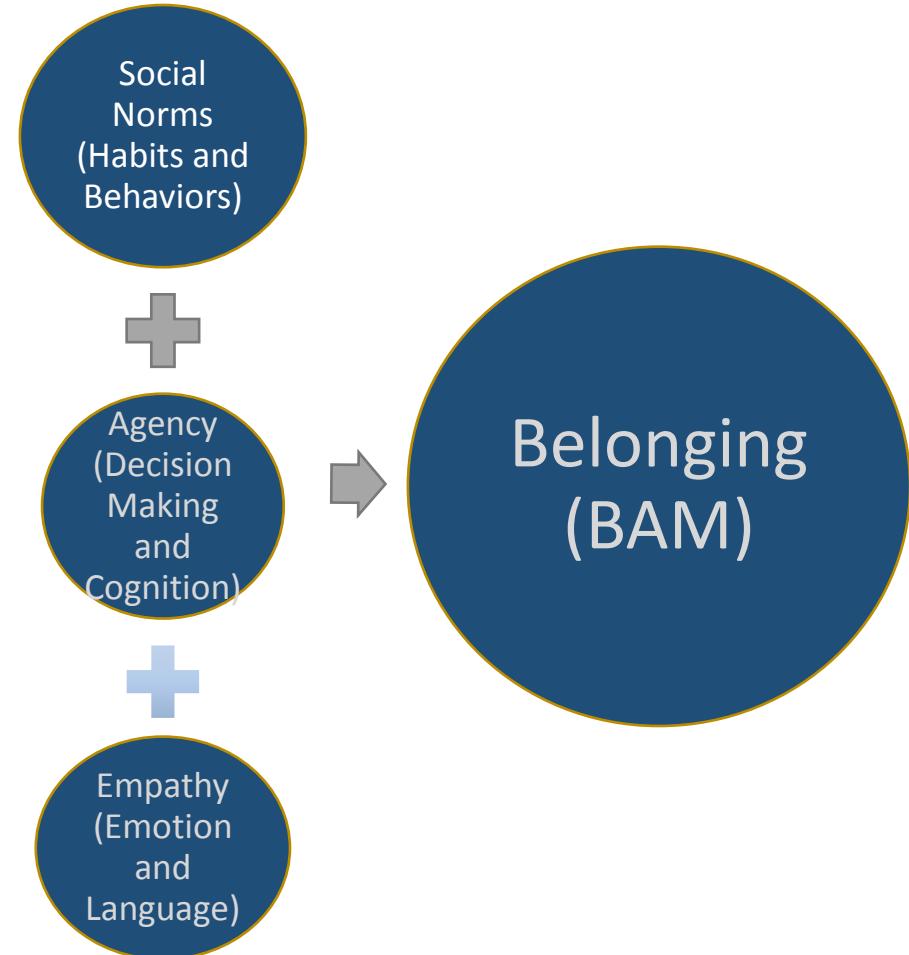
# Counselor Relationships



## Through:

- Group work
- Curriculum
- Activities & Special Events
- 1-on-1 Counseling
- “Brief encounters”
- Family engagement
- Advocacy in school

# New Ways of Knowing and Showing Oneself



# Why Safe Space Matters - Unique

*They don't do that in every other classroom. We get to talk about what we really feel. We get to talk about what's bothering us. In school, we don't get the chance to do that. We either bottle it up like I've always done, or we lash it out on other people and get in trouble for it. In BAM, you get to talk about it and not get in trouble. You get to talk about it and actually get help, you know?*

*(youth interview)*



# Youth Perspective on Core Values

*Integrity, when I say I'm gonna do something, I'm a do it... because I expect the same thing from everyone else, you know? Whether it's my father telling me he's going to take me to the park, or someone like saying they're gonna call me after they get off work... I take that to heart. If you don't do something, I'm gonna remember that... I'm same way with other people, I do this to myself.*

*(youth interview)*



# Why Youth Love Check-Ins

*[Check-ins] matter a lot to me because, I could just basically listen to myself, see how myself doing. Usually, I just go through the day without thinking about what really going on. When I think about PIES and stuff then I can redirect myself if I'm feeling bad or if I'm feeling good, to continue doing what I'm doing that making me feel good.*

*(youth interview)*



# Changing

*I love BAM. It's really helped me out, because ever since, well before I even got to high school, I was always a troublemaker in school... I wouldn't even listen to the teachers. I would just like blow them off. I wouldn't care. And ever since I met [BAM Counselor], something about him, he's been motivating us to do better in school, making right decisions.*

*(Youth interview)*

# Questions & Answers

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